



# THE Hans India



**Indian women top medal charts with 4 gold**  
The Indian women's team delivered a historic performance at the Asian Boxing Championships 2026, finishing on top of the medal charts with a total of 10 medals, including four gold, two silver, and four bronze, underlining their dominance. **P10**

**When global fragility becomes everyone's burden**  
When fuel prices surge on the streets of Colombo, fertilisers slip beyond the reach of African farmers, and Asian governments exhaust fiscal space to hold down subsidies, the reflex explanation is domestic mismanagement. That diagnosis is convenient—and often wrong. **P6**

**TCS Q4 net profit jumps to Rs13,718 cr**  
Country's largest IT services company TCS on Thursday reported a 12.22 per cent jump in its March quarter net profit at Rs 3,718 crore. The Tata Group company reported a net profit of Rs12,224 crore in the January-March period. **P11**

**Priyanka Mohan captivates with striking photoshoot**  
Actress Priyanka Mohan made a strong impression in Tamil cinema with her breakout performance in Doctor alongside Sivakarthikeyan. The film became a massive success, and Priyanka's charm, natural acting, and confident screen. **P12**

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**WINDOWS**

**Kharge's speech sparks row; BJP MLA seeks apology**

MANGALURU: A political controversy has erupted after remarks attributed to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge during an election meeting drew sharp criticism from BJP leaders.

BJP MLA Vedavyas Kamath described the statements as "highly objectionable" and accused Kharge of using language that could provoke communal unrest. Referring to the reported comparison of BJP and RSS to a "poisonous snake," Kamath said such rhetoric was unacceptable in a democratic society.

"While differences in ideology are part of democracy, statements that can incite violence or disturb communal harmony must be condemned," he said. Kamath also took aim at the Congress party, accusing it of preaching constitutional values while allegedly engaging in divisive politics. He termed it "ironic" that the party had earlier proposed measures to curb hate speech.

The MLA called on Kharge to issue an immediate apology to the BJP, RSS, and the people of the country. The Congress has not yet issued an official response to the criticism.

**Five B'deshi nationals caught smuggling gold worth Rs 5 cr**

BENGALURU: In a major crackdown at Kempegowda International Airport, officers from the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) have arrested five Bangladeshi nationals for trying to smuggle gold worth approximately Rs. 5 crore by hiding it inside their body cavities.

The accused were caught while attempting to carry out the illegal operation with the help of local contacts. Recent intelligence indicated that an international smuggling gang had become active in moving gold through Terminal-2 of the airport.

Acting on specific information, DRI officials conducted an operation and nabbed the five suspects. From them, authorities recovered 3.356 kg of gold valued at about five crore Rupees. The consignment included solid gold pieces as well as gold in paste form packed inside capsule-shaped packets.

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## Over 68 per cent voter turnout in Bagalkot, Davanagere South Assembly segments

BENGALURU

OVER 68 per cent voter turnout was recorded in Bagalkot and Davanagere South Assembly constituencies in Karnataka, where bypolls were held on Thursday, as Congress is eyeing retention of the key seats, while the BJP seeks to make gains there.

According to the Election Commission, the turnout in Bagalkot was 68.74 per cent, and it was 68.43 per cent in Davanagere South.

The polls were necessitated by the deaths of senior Congress MLAs H Y Meti (Bagalkot) and Shamanur Shivashankarappa (Davanagere South). Counting of votes will take place on May 4.

Although the outcome of these by-elections is unlikely to have an immediate impact on state politics, the contest is seen as a matter of prestige for both the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP.

While the Congress faces

the challenge of retaining both seats, the BJP aims to wrest them and deliver a setback to the ruling party, which is currently witnessing an "internal power struggle" over leadership.

A total of over 2.59 lakh voters were eligible to cast their votes at around 319 polling stations in Bagalkot, where nine candidates were in the fray. In Davanagere South, over 2.31 lakh were eligible to vote across 284 polling stations, with 25 candidates contesting.

Officials said elaborate security arrangements were made for the smooth conduct of bypolls. In Bagalkot, a video circulating on social media alleged that money was distributed to voters.

"The matter has been inquired immediately and an FIR has been registered at Navanagar Police Station, Bagalkot, and further investigation is under progress," the Chief Electoral Officer's office said in a statement.

The BJP has fielded former MLA and 2023 defeated candidate Veerabhadrayya Charantimath from Bagalkot, and a fresh face, Srinivas T Dasakariyappa, from Davanagere South. The Congress has given tickets to family members of the late legislators in both constituencies. Bagalkot candidate Umesh Meti is the son of H Y Meti, while Samarth Mallikarjun from Davanagere South is the grandson of Shamanur Shivashankarappa.



## 254 killed in Lebanon

**China denies reports of support to Iran's military; Iran says no negotiations on nuclear enrichment programme; permission to pass Hormuz needed: Iran; Iran publishes chart showing likely sea mines in Hormuz; Israel kills Al Jazeera correspondent in Gaza drone strike**

BEIRUT

HOSPITALS in Beirut and across Lebanon are struggling to cope with hundreds of casualties after the Israeli military launched more than 100 air strikes within a 10-minute window. According to civil defence, at least 254 people have been killed and more than 1,100 injured, with the death count expected to rise as many remain in a critical condition. Rescuers are still working to reach those reported missing or trapped under the rubble of destroyed buildings.

Iran issued a stern warning against any violation of the ongoing ceasefire arrangement between the



Islamic Republic and US-Israeli coalition forces aimed at halting the hostilities in West Asia for two weeks, stating that any breach would trigger a swift and strong response, as reported by Iranian state media ISNA.

China's Defence Ministry on Thursday denied reports that Chinese firms provided satellite imagery and semiconductor chip manufacturing equipment to the Iranian military in the midst of the US-Israeli war against Iran.

Iran firmly ruled out any negotiations over its nuclear enrichment programme, reiterating that its right to enrichment is non-negotiable, even as it links the issue to ongoing efforts to bring a

complete end to hostilities in West Asia with the US and Israel, as reported by Iran's state news agency ISNA.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has affirmed that Israel will persist in its military operations against Hezbollah.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister said "Anybody who communicates with the Iranian authority has got permission to pass Strait of Hormuz."

Iranian news agencies released a chart indicating that the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard may have deployed sea mines in the Strait of Hormuz during the war. The move appears intended to pressure the

United States, as uncertainty continues around a fragile, days-old two-week ceasefire and further negotiations are anticipated in Pakistan.

The charts, published by the ISNA news agency and Tasnim—widely seen as close to the Revolutionary Guard—depicted a large "danger zone" marked in Farsi over the Traffic Separation Scheme, the main shipping route through the strait.

This narrow passage at the mouth of the Persian Gulf has historically carried about 20% of the world's traded oil and natural gas. Al Jazeera's Mubasher correspondent Mohammed Wishah was killed in a drone strike west of Gaza City on Wednesday.

## Concerns over drugs shortage, as pharma firms write to Health Minister

HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

CONCERNS are mounting over a potential shortage of medicines in Karnataka, as pharmaceutical companies have written to the Health Minister highlighting disruptions in drug production and supply.

Although a temporary 15-day pause in tensions between Iran and the United States has eased concerns for Indian ships stranded near the Strait of Hormuz, the situation has not improved domestically. Karnataka continues to face an ongoing LPG gas shortage, which is now affecting multiple sectors, including healthcare.

The pharmaceutical industry has warned that the combined impact of global geopolitical tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran, along with local supply issues, is disrupting the supply chain for essential raw materials. This



has particularly impacted the availability of drugs imported from abroad, raising concerns about continued production. In their letter to the Health Minister, pharmaceutical companies stated that if the situation persists, it could significantly hinder medicine manufacturing in the state.

One of the major challenges highlighted is the shortage of LPG gas, which is crucial for producing petrochemicals used in manufacturing tablet foils. Supply chain disruptions caused by the ongoing conflict have further aggravated the issue.

As a result, drug prices are expected to rise sharply. Industry sources indicate that prices of over 600 medicines—including paracetamol, cardiac drugs, diabetes medications, gastric tablets, cough syrups, and iron tonics—may increase by 15 to 20 percent starting from the first week of April.

Typically, annual price hikes in medicines range between 5 to 10 percent. However, due to the current crisis, a significantly higher increase is anticipated this year, raising concerns among patients and healthcare providers alike.

## Modi attacks TMC over 'lawlessness, infiltration'

HANS NEWS SERVICE SURI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday went all guns blazing against the ruling TMC, accusing it of lawlessness and unleashing 'maha jungle raj' by referring to the Bagtui carnage of 2022, in which around 10 women and children were burnt alive in Birbhum district.

Modi intensified the BJP's infiltration plank, citing last week's gherao of judicial officers in Malda to slam the Mamata Banerjee administration and reiterate his conviction of getting the country rid of "illegal entrants". "I stand before you today to make this promise: Once there is a



change of guard in state power following these elections, I will initiate a special inquiry against the facilitators of infiltration in this state and put them behind bars," Modi declared.

"The Trinamool Congress' slogan of 'Maa-Mati-Manush' (mother, land, people) has become nothing more than empty rhetoric. While 'Ma' is crying and 'Manush' is reeling under the fear of the goons of the TMC regime, land encroachment by infiltrators un-

der the current dispensation has reached dangerous proportions," he added. Referring to the Bagtui killings in Rampurhat, not far from where the PM spoke, Modi said the incident stood testimony to "TMC's maha jungle raj" which thrived on the unholy nexus of syndicate, mafia and corrupt politicians.

"Cottage industry has been rapidly declining in West Bengal, but the TMC has turned crude bombs into a household affair in the state," the PM said. Resuming his discourse on infiltration, Modi said infiltrators were usurping the jobs of locals by accepting work contracts for less money and forcing the indigenous people to migrate.

## LHB coaches introduced on Talaguppa–Mysuru Express

Special trains extended for summer rush

HANS NEWS SERVICE HUBBALLI

IN a major move aimed at enhancing passenger comfort and safety, the South Western Railway has decided to replace the old ICF (Integral Coach Factory) coaches with modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches on Train No. 16205/16206 Talaguppa–Mysuru–Talaguppa

Daily Express. The upgraded service with LHB coaches were officially launched from both Talaguppa and Mysuru stations on Wednesday.

According to railway officials, the train will now run with a total of 18 LHB coaches. The new composition includes one AC chair car, five second-class chair car coaches, and ten general second-class coaches. Additionally, the



train will have a specially designed coach for differently-abled passengers along with a luggage brake van and another luggage-cum-brake van. LHB coaches are known for

their advanced design and enhanced safety features. These coaches are built to reduce the impact during accidents, thereby ensuring greater passenger protection. They also

offer improved riding comfort with reduced noise, better suspension, and smoother travel experience compared to conventional ICF coaches.

Meanwhile, in view of the increased passenger demand during the summer season, the South Western Railway has decided to extend the operation of special express trains running between Bengaluru and Kalaburagi as well as Bidar. Train No. 06207 Weekly Express will depart from Bengaluru Cantonment

to Kalaburagi every Saturday from April 11 to April 25. In the return direction, Train No. 06208 will run from Kalaburagi to Bengaluru Cantonment every Sunday from April 12 to April 26. These services will complete a total of three trips in both directions.

Similarly, Train No. 06539 will operate from SMVT Bengaluru to Bidar every Friday and Sunday between April 10 and April 26. The return service, Train No. 06540, will run from Bidar to SMVT

Bengaluru every Saturday and Monday from April 11 to April 27. These trains will complete a total of six trips.

The railway authorities have stated that these initiatives are part of ongoing efforts to improve passenger amenities, ensure safety, and efficiently manage seasonal travel demand. The introduction of LHB coaches and extension of special trains are expected to significantly enhance the overall travel experience for passengers.

## IN BRIEF

**'Op Sindoor demonstrated progression towards domain jointness'**

BENGALURU: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Thursday said Operation Sindoor demonstrated India's progression towards "domain jointness" and called the military offensive carried out inside Pakistani territory a "defining case study" of operational significance of integration. In May last year, India had launched a military response targeting terror launchpads in Pakistan post the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 Indian tourists.

"Operation Sindoor was India's most powerful tool of progression towards domain jointness. But we need to achieve domain integration and fusion," General Dwivedi said. He was addressing the "Ran Samvad" forum on "Land Forces visualisation of Multi Domain Operation (MDO)," here. The army chief also highlighted the creation of an information warfare organisation and a psychological defence division following Operation Sindoor. He said, "15 per cent of our effort was on managing the disinformation campaign."

He cautioned, however, that key challenges remain, particularly in synchronising operations across strategic, operational and tactical levels and addressing the growing prevalence of hybrid or grey-zone warfare. "These are typically below the conventional military threshold, with the goal to exploit adversary vulnerability," he said, adding that non-kinetic operations are increasingly taking precedence.

**NITK sacks former Registrar after probe confirms misconduct**

MANGALURU: The National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal, has dismissed its former Registrar Ravindranath K. after a departmental inquiry established serious administrative misconduct.

The action follows his suspension on September 12, 2025, initiated at the direction of the Ministry of Education. The inquiry examined allegations of procedural irregularities and professional impropriety under the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964. Sources said the charges were found to be grave and were substantiated during the inquiry process, prompting the Board of Governors to unanimously approve the penalty of dismissal. Before the final action, Ravindranath's tenure as Registrar had already been terminated, as he was found to be holding the position beyond the five-year limit prescribed under the NITSER Act and institutional statutes.

In a statement, NITK emphasised that it maintains a strict zero-tolerance approach to misconduct. The institute said the decision reflects its commitment to transparency, accountability, and adherence to ethical standards in administration.

**Formulate model SOPs for trekking safety: Minister Khandre**

BENGALURU: Karnataka Minister for Forest, Ecology and Environment Eshwar Khandre has instructed authorities to formulate a standard operating procedure (SOP) for trekking safety, intended to serve as a national model. The Minister issued the instruction in writing to the chief wildlife warden in the wake of the disappearance of a woman from Kerala in the dense Tadiandamol forest, and the search for a minor girl in Chandradrona hills, his office said in a release on Thursday.

Like the 'e-Gastu' app already developed by the Forest Department and the 'MStripes' app used in tiger reserves, if a similar kind of app is temporarily installed on the mobile phones of trekkers during the trek, it will be easier to track those who go astray, hence the Forest Minister has directed to take steps to develop the app and provide group insurance to trekkers, it said.

## GRIEF TO GLORY

**Despite losing mother during exams, student tops state**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALURU

In an extraordinary story of courage and determination, Disha, a student of Alva's College in Moodbidri, has emerged as the state topper in the Commerce stream of the Second PUC examinations—despite losing her mother in the mid-

dle of her exams. A Commerce stream student from Moodbidri, Disha secured the first rank in the state by scoring a perfect 600 out of 600 marks. Alva's PU College authorities and lecturers congratulated Disha on her outstanding achievement.

Disha, daughter of Dinesh and Savita from Puttige Padavu near Vidyagiri,

was preparing for her board examinations when tragedy struck. Her mother suffered a sudden fall on the eve of her Mathematics exam and passed away just a day before her Economics paper.

Even as she grappled with profound grief, Disha chose to continue writing her exams, refusing to let the setback derail years of

hard work. Her disciplined preparation played a crucial role. She had been waking up as early as 3.30 am daily to study and had completed her syllabus well in advance through rigorous internal assessments conducted by her college.

In her darkest hour, support came from her lecturer Veena, who not only com-

forted her but also provided her a place to stay, ensuring she could attend the examinations without interruption.

"I was slightly worried about scoring full marks in English, but my teachers' guidance helped me overcome that," Disha said. She credits the student-friendly teaching approach, timely



syllabus completion, and continuous evaluation system at her college for her success.

With aspirations of becoming a Chartered Accountant, Disha's achievement is not just academic—it is a powerful testament to resilience, reminding many that even in loss, determination can lead to triumph.

## PRICE CRASH

**War hits Belagavi farmers, cabbage crops destroyed**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BELAGAVI

THE ongoing conflict in the Middle East has begun to impact farmers in Belagavi district, with vegetable growers facing severe losses due to a sudden collapse in demand. Farmers in villages such as Kadoli, Jafarwadi, Gondawadi, Belagundi, Handigund, Yellur and Uchgaon are now destroying their cabbage crops as traders refuse to purchase the produce.

According to farmers, the price of cabbage has plummeted drastically in recent weeks. While a 70-kg sack fetches barely ₹100 in the wholesale market, retail prices have dropped to just ₹1-₹2 per kg. This is a sharp fall from ₹40-₹50 per kg just three months ago. The decline reportedly began around two weeks after the escalation of war in the Middle East. The fall in demand has been attributed to



disruptions in the hospitality sector. Many hotels and small eateries have reduced or halted cooking activities due to LPG cylinder shortages, leading to a drop in vegetable consumption. Additionally, Belagavi-grown vegetables, which are usually despatched to states like Maharashtra, Goa, and Andhra Pradesh, are now witnessing poor demand from outside markets as well.

Frustrated by mounting losses, farmers have started

destroying standing crops using rotators or allowing cattle to graze on them. Farmer Appasaheb Desai expressed anguish over the situation, saying the emotional and financial distress has left cultivators devastated.

He pointed out that farmers invest months of hard work, only to see their produce go unsold. Another farmer, Mohan Kademani, said the cost of cultivation has become unbearable. "We spend nearly ₹45,000 to ₹50,000 per

acre, including saplings, fertilisers, labour and irrigation. For two acres, I expected returns of at least ₹2 lakh, but now traders are refusing to buy. We are forced to destroy the crop," he said, urging the government to announce compensation and minimum support prices for vegetables.

Officials from the Horticulture Department acknowledged the crisis. Joint Director Mahantesh Murgod said cabbage is grown extensively in the district, covering thousands of hectares across seasons. He noted that the war has disrupted demand, causing price crashes and distress among farmers.

He assured that officials will assess the situation on the ground and report to the government for necessary action. The crisis has once again highlighted the vulnerability of farmers to global events, with many now demanding urgent government intervention to prevent further losses.

**Mentally unstable woman lives with husband's body for 10 days**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
CHIKKAMAGALURU

IN a deeply disturbing incident from Chikkamagaluru district, a mentally unstable elderly woman reportedly lived with the decomposing body of her husband for nearly 10 days, unaware of his death. The incident came to light in Banakal village of Mudigere taluk, shocking the local community.

The deceased has been identified as 77-year-old Cyril Monis, who was living with his wife at their residence in Banakal. According to sources, he had been unwell for some time and passed away at home. However, his wife, who is said to be mentally unstable, did not realise that he had died and continued to stay with the body as it decomposed.

The couple's son works in Bengaluru, while their daughter is settled abroad. Both children were in regular contact with their mother over phone and would enquire about their father's health. Each time, the mother reportedly told them that



he was doing fine, leaving them with no suspicion initially.

As days passed, the son grew concerned after noticing inconsistencies in his mother's responses and the absence of his father's voice. He then asked a friend to visit the house and check on the situation.

When the friend arrived, he was confronted with a horrifying scene. Cyril Monis had died nearly 10 days earlier, and his body was in an advanced stage of decomposition. Despite this, his wife continued to remain inside the house with the body. Local residents, alerted by a foul smell, informed the police.

Social worker Arif, who assisted in the process, said that

when they reached the house along with police officials, the woman initially refused to open the gate. Upon entering, they found the body in a severely decomposed state.

"The body had decayed and was infested with maggots. With the help of police and locals, we shifted it and conducted the last rites at a Christian cemetery," Arif said.

The incident left residents shaken, as the children were unable to see their father one last time. Locals stepped forward to perform the funeral, displaying compassion and solidarity with the grieving family. A case has been registered at the Banakal Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

**International gang behind rowdy sheeter's brutal murder, say police**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALURU

MANGALURU police have cracked down on a cross-border conspiracy by arresting seven key players in the sensational murder of local rowdy sheeter Arif.

According to City Police Commissioner Sudheer Kumar Reddy, the arrested include Rifath, Juttu Ashfaq, Khalil, Shakir, Irfan, and Rizwan, who took part directly in the killing, along with Irshad who sheltered the accused and aided their activities.

The investigation has exposed that the entire operation was coordinated on an international scale. Two suspects, Mustafa and Ashwir, currently staying overseas, provided monetary support to help the culprits evade capture.

Another individual named Arshad not only supplied arms for the attack but also kept feeding the group details on police activities. Suhail arranged the rented car deployed during the crime



and escaped to Saudi Arabia right after the assault.

Officials suspect a much wider syndicate was involved in the conspiracy. Teams have spread a wide net to locate the other absconding accused, and the police commissioner assured that further arrests are expected shortly.

On the morning of March 27, Arif was heading to the Boloor fish market on his motorcycle when six of the accused tailed him in a car. They intentionally collided with his bike at the Takkottu flyover area.

The moment Arif was

thrown off, the attackers unleashed a ferocious assault using lethal weapons and escaped immediately. Old rivalry has emerged as the root cause of this meticulously planned execution.

To dodge police surveillance, the group relied on sophisticated technical methods. Ashwir from Dubai facilitated this by securing OTPs and enabling international WhatsApp numbers for the team. The accused maintained contact by constantly changing numbers, discarding one before investigators could trace it and shifting to another.

**'Sudden rush on women's reservation driven by poll politics'****CONGRESS MINISTER ACCUSES CENTRE OF ELECTORAL MOTIVES**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KALABURAGI

MEDICAL Education Minister Dr. Sharanprakash Patil strongly condemned the Central government for its perceived hasty decision to implement women's reservation and undertake delimitation of Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies, claiming it reflects political self-interest rather than public welfare.

Speaking at a press conference, the minister questioned why the Centre had remained silent on women's reservation for 15 long years and suddenly taken a cabinet decision now. He pointed out that if the policy had been introduced decades earlier, women would have greatly benefited. He asked who was responsible for the injustice done to women all these years.

Dr. Patil alleged that the proposal for women's reservation has surfaced only because of impending elections in five states. The issue should have

been discussed during the recently concluded Parliament session, where opposition views could have been considered. Instead, he said the Centre appears more interested in political gains than genuine women's empowerment.

He claimed that during the Bihar elections, the Centre had reduced GST rates and deposited money directly into people's accounts. He questioned where the taxes collected from citizens over decades had gone. In contrast, he noted that the Congress government in Karnataka faces notices even for implementing its five guarantee schemes. He further claimed that the Election Commission seems to dance to the tune of Prime Minister Modi and Amit Shah.

The minister also expressed suspicion over the delimitation exercise, saying increasing the number of constituencies based on the 1991 census appears to be a deliberate attempt to reduce the political strength of southern Indian states. He



suggested that if needed, delimitation should be done on the basis of the 1971 census and questioned the reason behind the current hurry.

On the controversy surrounding Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's remarks, Dr. Patil clarified that Kharge had criticised the RSS ideology as venomous, not targeted any individual personally. He pointed out that BJP leaders have repeatedly used harsh terms like "Urban Naxals," "anti-nationals," "tukde tukde gang," and "looters of the nation" against Congress leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. He asked

why criticism from the other side is considered acceptable while similar remarks from Congress are not.

He condemned the BJP for making light comments against Kharge and advised that any criticism of the senior Congress leader should be made with due responsibility and maturity.

Dr. Patil urged political parties to focus on development issues instead of mudslinging. He accused the BJP of never discussing development and instead specialising in raising sensitive matters for political gain.

The minister also highlighted positive steps in medical education. The government plans to start new government medical colleges in Bagalkot and Ramanagara, which will receive approval after inspection by the National Medical Council. He added that last year saw an increase of 400 medical seats, and this year another 450 seats are expected to be added.

**'Movies are shaped on two tables, the writing table and editing table'****The Short Film Festival underscored the importance of creativity and its origin in the category of short films**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU

JAIN university, hosted the third edition of 'Jain University Short Film Festival 2026' organised by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication. The film festival showcased the compelling and diverse narratives that influence the daily lives of society through the cinematic experience of short films. The event was graced by Kannada Filmfare Critics award for Best actor, Naveen Shankar, for his role of "Aadhi" in the film, Dharani Mandala Madhyadole, along with Dr. Dinesh Nilkant, Dr. Kiran S, Dr. Sangeeta Devanathan and Dr.

Bhargavi D Hemminge.

As a part of the jury for Jain University Short Film Festival, Sri Crazy Minds, Editor, Cinematographer of the Love Mocktail series, underlining the significance of good writing and editing, elaborated "A remarkable movie is shaped on two tables, the writing table for an exceptional story and the editing table for bringing the movie to life." Expanding his quote to the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the silver screen industry, "AI can never replicate the intricacies of human emotion and is a decade too early to be an intrinsic part of the cinematic industry."

Jury panel member, B.S.

Kemparaju, Kannada film Editor, Just Maath Maathali, stressing on the importance of a good story for a good film stated: "The core essence for a good film is a good script; Writing a good script serves as an integral guide for any cinema to be successful."

Naveen Shankar, film actor & Kannada Filmfare award winner, commended the initiative of Jain University and the festival, stating "Opportunities like these film festivals remind us that cinema is not just about big screens, but about ideas, passion, and the courage to start. What starts as a small effort in a college campus can grow into something truly impactful. It's encouraging to see stu-



dents being given the space to explore their creativity and build a voice of their own." Further he added, "short films, in particular, offer an incredible platform for aspiring filmmakers to experi-

ment, understand the craft, and experience the realities of cinema at a foundational level. I am truly impressed by the initiative taken by Jain University to create such platform of opportunities

to showcase creative talents and connect enthusiastic students with film industry."

Underscoring the importance of creativity and its origin in the category of short films, Dr. Dinesh Nilkant, Pro-Vice Chancellor, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) "Creativity makes a difference with the best talents always budding from the colleges and universities and not from big studios. We at Jain University are building such platforms to nurture future film makers."

Accentuating the development of short films from a base to important platforms, Dr. Kiran S Deputy-Dean of Academics, Jain (Deemed-to-be University) stated

"Short films are no longer stepping stones, they are powerful storytelling formats in their own right."

Dr. Sangeeta Devanathan, Deputy-Dean of Academics, Professor, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) highlighted the importance of critical thinking in short films stating "Critical thinking requires us to think creatively." She further compared the current scenario of short films to mainstream films stating that "Gone are the days of movies running two to three hours giving the audience a compelling reason to stay, however now, the short film format is truly the future of storytelling in this art form."

## IN BRIEF

## 86% pass II PUC exam, girls dominate results

BENGALURU: This year too, girl students have dominated the II PUC exam results. The pass percentage has registered a record increase, with 6.10 lakh students passing out of 7.10 lakh who appeared, translating to an impressive 86 per cent success rate.

In the Arts stream, children of farmers have delivered remarkable performances. Two girl students from Indu College in Kotturu town of Vijayanagara district scored 598 out of 600 marks. Archana and Sangeetha from the same college achieved this high score, standing out in the Arts stream.

Archana D M, a student from Baliganur in Harapanahalli taluk of Vijayanagara district and daughter of farmer couple Hanumanthappa D M and Renukamma D M, scored 598 marks (99.66 per cent). Similarly, Sangeetha from Koppal district's Kukanoor, also studying at Indu College, scored 598 marks (99.66 per cent). She is the daughter of farmer couple Shekharagouda Patil and Shwetha.

## Chennais Amirta aviation college signs MoU

BENGALURU: In a significant step towards enhancing global exposure for aviation students, Chennais Amirta International Aviation College has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University College of Aviation Malaysia. The collaboration aims to bring international aviation expertise directly to Indian classrooms and strengthen industry-oriented training.

The MoU was formalised by Chairman Boomee Naathan of Chennais Amirta Group of Institutions and Dean Umar Abdillah Anwar of UNICAM Malaysia.

The signing ceremony was attended by key dignitaries including Kalaiarasan, Chairman of Future Dream Academy Malaysia, Jainanak Singh, CEO of Future Dream Academy, along with senior academic leaders and faculty members of the institution.

## Seminar on 'Innovative Plumbing Technologies'

BENGALURU: Smile Foundation, in collaboration with Ashirvad by aliaxis, India's leading provider of plumbing and water management solutions organised a seminar on "Innovative Technologies in Plumbing" in Bengaluru. The seminar spotlighted a significant opportunity to transform the sector, generate higher employment opportunities by training 44% of the workforce with modern plumbing technologies.

Bringing together industry leaders, Sector Skill Councils, and training organisations, the seminar focused on accelerating technology adoption, expanding on-ground training, and building a future-ready plumbing ecosystem to support India's rapid urban and infrastructure growth.

The seminar served as a cross-industry platform for stakeholders to exchange insights on emerging trends, evolving project requirements, and the role of innovation in improving efficiency and sustainability in plumbing systems.

## Govt extends insurance coverage to root canal treatment

HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

IN a major boost to public healthcare, the government has announced that dental treatments, including root canal procedures, will now be covered under state-supported health insurance schemes.

The decision brings root canal treatment under the ambit of Ayushman Bharat and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya-Mukhyamantri Arogya Karnataka scheme, enabling beneficiaries to access dental care at reduced or no cost.

Announcing the move via a social media post, Health

Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said the initiative marks another significant step toward strengthening public healthcare services in the state.

According to the minister, the coverage includes root canal treatments for both anterior (front) and posterior (back) teeth.

The initiative aims to provide timely, affordable, and quality dental care services across Karnataka.

The treatment packages will follow Central Government Health Scheme Tier-3 standard pricing, along with clear clinical classifications to ensure uniformity in procedures and costs.

The scheme will be implemented through the Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust (SAST), and will cover all associated treatment expenses. This means patients will not be required to pay any additional charges for eligible procedures, further easing the financial burden on families.



## 'Women must step forward to make reservation bill effective'

BENGALURU

PADMA Shri awardee, Dr Vijayalakshmi Deshmane, on Thursday hailed the Women's Reservation Bill as a historic and bold reform, urging women across the country to actively participate in politics and take responsibility for nation-building.

Notably, after the Parliament's Budget Session reconvenes on April 16, the primary agenda will be to discuss and debate proposed amendments to the Women's Reservation Act, 2023 (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam), officially known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Thursday, shared a video message urging collective support for the Women's Reservation Bill by all political parties.

Speaking to IANS, she credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for pushing forward a long-pending reform, saying that the decision reflects a strong commitment towards women-



led development.

"I would like to begin with a very beautiful slogan — if PM Modi is there, everything is possible. This long-pending, historic Bill had remained pending for a long time. Prime Minister Modi and his Cabinet have taken a very bold decision," Deshmane told IANS.

She emphasised that the Bill is only the first step, and its true success will depend on women stepping forward and making their presence

felt in the political arena. "Now, it is up to the women of the country to take responsibility, enter politics, and make it 100 per cent effective. I request young, dynamic women to come forward, join politics, and contribute to nation-building," she said.

Deshmane highlighted that the move would significantly strengthen India's democratic framework by ensuring greater representation of women in legislative

bodies. "This is the number one step that is going to increase the seats for women in Parliament, and that helps quite a lot in our democratic setup. Democracy is a numbers game. So, this decision will definitely empower women and accelerate the country's progress," she added.

Praising the Centre's broader push for women-led development, she said the Bill presents a "golden opportunity" for women to take leadership roles and shape the future of the nation.

"This is how we can respond to a Prime Minister who believes in women-led development. I thank the Central government, especially Modi ji, for taking such a visionary step. He has done a wonderful job during his tenure," she said.

The Women's Reservation Bill seeks to reserve one-third of seats in Parliament and state legislatures for women, a move widely seen as a transformative step towards inclusive governance and gender equality.

## 'Too early to draw definitive lessons from West Asia conflict'



BENGALURU

DESCRIBING the West Asia war as a critical case study in modern warfare, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi on Thursday said it was too early to draw definitive lessons from the conflict. Addressing the 'Ran Samvad' forum on "Maritime Forces -- Visualisation of Multi Domain Operation (MDO)", he said the Indian armed forces were closely tracking developments in the West Asia conflict to derive lessons for future operations.

"It is too early to draw definitive lessons. The war is still going on. We are monitoring what is happening, what is working, what is not working, and learning the correct lessons," Admiral Tripathi said during the question-answer session. The Navy Chief emphasised that one of the most striking takeaways from the conflict is the heightened vulnerability of military assets across domains.

At the time, he was a Cabinet minister in the Siddaramaiah-led government. Although his name surfaced, no action was initially taken against him.

The BJP later made it a major issue, with former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa vowing at election rallies that Kulkarni would be sent to jail if the BJP came to power.

The case was subsequently handed over to the CBI, and Kulkarni was arrested. He spent more than nine months in jail before securing bail from the Supreme Court.

portance of resilience, particularly in sustaining supply chains under prolonged hostilities.

Admiral Tripathi further noted that carrier battle groups continue to remain central to maritime power projection, demonstrating their operational effectiveness even in contested environments, while their vulnerability depends on the adversary's capabilities and the balance of offensive and defensive systems. The Navy chief said the services are analysing the conflict "on a near 24x7 basis" and will incorporate lessons at an appropriate time, stressing that modern warfare now demands constant adaptation to rapidly evolving technological and operational realities.

Emphasising that maritime forces have always operated across multiple domains but now face a far more complex and interconnected battle-space, Admiral Tripathi said the Indian Navy is reorienting its strategy to deliver integrated multi-domain effects in an era defined by speed, scale and simultaneity.

He highlighted the need to align strategic thought with technological capability amid evolving global security challenges and rapid technological advancements. "Today, there is no fixed system of war, no rigid doctrine that we can blindly rely upon,"

Admiral Tripathi said. The Navy Chief noted that ongoing instability in India's extended neighbourhood, particularly tensions in West Asia and disruptions to maritime traffic, underline the interconnected nature of modern security. He said distance no longer insulates nations from consequences, while technological advances are compressing decision-making timelines and merging operational domains.

Drawing from India's civilisational strategic thought, he said multi-domain operations are not entirely new, citing Kautilya's concept of integrating diplomacy, deception and force. "The pursuit of national objectives extends beyond any single form or domain of conflict," he observed. Explaining the evolving maritime battlespace, Tripathi described it as a "dense yet more transparent, layered yet deeply interconnected grid extending from the seabed to space". He identified three defining attributes shaping this grid -- speed, scale and simultaneity.

On speed, he pointed to artificial intelligence-driven systems that compress decision cycles. "Speed is no longer merely an enabler of warfare, but a distinct capability," he said, noting that modern systems can process vast datasets and enable precision strikes in significantly reduced timeframes. At the physical level, the Navy is restructuring its force to be "capable, resilient, and inherently networked", with seamless integration between sensors and shooters across domains, he noted.

Highlighting indigenous capability, Admiral Tripathi said the Navy's combat management system has evolved into a key enabler of multi-domain operations, integrating inputs across domains for faster decision-making and coordinated engagement.

## Spl court adjourns verdict in BJP leader's murder case to April 15

BENGALURU

THE Special Court for MLAs/MPs in Bengaluru has adjourned the pronouncement of its judgment to April 15 in the murder case of BJP leader and Zilla Panchayat member Yogesh Gowda, in which sitting Dharwad Rural Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni is an accused.

The case dates back to 2016 and the court will also decide the fate of 21 other accused in connection with the incident. The court was scheduled to deliver the verdict today. It stated that the pronouncement of the judgment is in its final stage. Counsels

representing both sides have submitted thousands of pages of Supreme Court judgments in reference to this case.

Vinay Kulkarni and the other accused persons were present in court. Vinay Kulkarni is listed as accused number 15. The case was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) by the state government. At the time the allegations surfaced, Kulkarni was serving as a minister and district incharge minister.

Yogesh Gowda was hacked to death by a group of assailants at a gym in Dharwad city on June 15, 2016. He had politically

challenged Kulkarni, and the incident soon took a worse turn.

Kulkarni was arrested in 2020 and released on bail in 2021. He was accused of influencing witnesses, following which the CBI sought cancellation of his bail, alleging violation of bail conditions. The court accepted the plea and revoked his bail.

Subsequently, Kulkarni, who is currently the Chairman of the Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board, surrendered before the authorities and was recently released on bail again.

It may be recalled that Kulkarni was accused of

conspiring in the murder of Yogesh Gowda.

At the time, he was a Cabinet minister in the Siddaramaiah-led government. Although his name surfaced, no action was initially taken against him.

The BJP later made it a major issue, with former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa vowing at election rallies that Kulkarni would be sent to jail if the BJP came to power.

The case was subsequently handed over to the CBI, and Kulkarni was arrested. He spent more than nine months in jail before securing bail from the Supreme Court.

BENGALURU

INDIRA IVF, one of India's leading fertility service providers, today announced the inauguration of its new fertility centre in RR Nagar (Rajarajeshwari Nagar), Bengaluru. The launch marks a continued step towards strengthening access to organised and technology-enabled fertility care in

## Indira IVF launches new fertility centre

the city. The centre, located on the second floor, above Kushal's Showroom, Jawaharlar Nehru Road, opposite Balakrishna Ranga Mandira, BEML Layout, third stage Rajarajeshwari Nagar, will

offer a comprehensive range of fertility evaluation and assisted reproductive services supported by Indira IVF's standardised clinical protocols and laboratory systems. The inauguration ceremony

was graced by Dr. Shyam N. Gupta, Centre Head, Indira IVF JP Nagar, Bengaluru, who attended the event as the Chief Guest. The event was also attended by Dr. Prajwal B K, Consultant Gynaecologist, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Centre Head, Indira IVF Rajarajeshwari Nagar, along with senior representatives and medical professionals from Indira IVF.



HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

THE High Court has dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking to declare as invalid the Centre's protocol guidelines on singing all six stanzas of Vande Mataram, ruling that the song is not mandatory like

the national anthem. The petition was filed by Bengaluru-based advocate Somashekar Rajavanshi and was heard by a division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhrui and Justice Vibhu Poonacha.

At the outset of the hearing, counsel appearing for the Centre clarified that the

## High Court dismisses plea against Vande Mataram singing guidelines

Ministry of Home Affairs' order uses the term "may be sung," which indicates that singing Vande Mataram is not compulsory. The counsel also pointed out that the Supreme Court of India had recently dismissed a similar plea on the issue.

Accepting the argument, the High Court observed that Vande Mataram has not been incorporated into any statutory framework mandating its singing. The bench noted that the wording in

the Centre's order reflects a permissive, not mandatory, approach. Referring to the Supreme Court's stance, the court ruled that the song cannot be equated with the national anthem in terms of compulsion and dismissed the petition.

Background of the case The petitioner had challenged guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which were published on its official website regarding national songs. The plea

argued that the directive effectively mandated schools to sing all six stanzas of Vande Mataram daily before the commencement of classes.

It was contended that the Constituent Assembly had recognised only the first two stanzas for general use, while later stanzas include references to Hindu deities such as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

The petitioner argued that making all six stanzas compulsory could violate consti-

tutional provisions, including Articles 14 (equality), 25 (freedom of conscience) and 28 (prohibition of religious instruction in educational institutions).

The petition also sought directions to limit the singing to the first two stanzas in schools and to restrain authorities from enforcing the remaining portions, particularly in government and aided institutions.

It further urged that bodies like the National Com-

mission for Minorities and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights examine the potential impact of such guidelines on minority communities.

However, the High Court held that there was no legal basis to treat the guidelines as mandatory and declined to interfere. The ruling reinforces that while Vande Mataram holds significant national importance, its singing remains voluntary and not legally enforceable.



# TG to establish 109 trauma centres along highways: Raja Narasimha

Government has launched a comprehensive Trauma Care Policy aimed at saving lives by immediately transporting victims of road accidents and other emergencies to hospitals, says the Health Minister

HYDERABAD

HEALTH Minister Damaraju Raja Narasimha stated that the government is establishing 109 trauma care centres equipped with all necessary facilities along national and state highways across the Telangana state.

The Minister, along with MLA Arikapudi Gandhi, laid the foundation stone for the construction of a 100-bed critical care block in Kondapur on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Raja Narasimha said the government has launched a comprehensive Trauma Care Policy aimed at saving lives by immediately transporting victims of road accidents and other emergencies to hospitals.

He said the State government is strengthening the emergency response system



Health Minister Raja Narasimha laid the foundation stone for construction of a 100-bed critical care unit in Hyderabad on Thursday



to ensure that help reaches the scene of a road accident or other emergency within ten minutes and as part of this initiative, it is increasing the number of (108) ambulances and establishing 31 Critical Care Blocks across the state.

The Minister said the government has already inaugurated Critical Care Blocks

in Nizamabad, Nalgonda, Karimnagar, Mahabubabad, Jagtial, Sangareddy, Narayanpet, and Adilabad.

The construction of another 21 CCBs is currently underway. We will make all of them operational by the end of this year, he said.

The Minister stated that the State government has today laid the foundation

stone for the construction of a 100-bed Critical Care Block in Kondapur, at a cost of ₹41 crore and is taking measures to complete the construction as expeditiously as possible and to provide medical services equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.

"Health issues are on the rise within the IT corridor

due to sedentary lifestyles. We are currently providing enhanced medical services to the local residents at the Kondapur Area Hospital. In the future, we will introduce even more advanced medical services. These critical care services will prove to be immensely beneficial to the people residing in this area," Raja Narasimha said.

## 1.14 lakh HIV, AIDS patients receiving free treatment: Health Minister

HYDERABAD

MINISTER for Health Damaraju Raja Narasimha on Thursday participated in a human chain programme organised on the cable bridge by the Telangana AIDS Control Society to promote awareness on HIV/AIDS.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister stated that, as part of statewide initiatives, rallies, human chains, and medical camps are being organised to enhance public awareness on HIV/AIDS.

Raja Narasimha explained that HIV is a virus that weakens the immune system and, if left untreated, can progress to AIDS. He clarified that HIV spreads through unprotected sexual contact, transfusion of contaminated blood, and similar causes, and does not spread through casual contact such as handshakes, hugging, or sharing food.

The Minister emphasised that lack of awareness leads to fear, misconceptions, and discrimination, and stressed that awareness is the only solution to address these challenges. He stated that people living with HIV should not face so-



cial discrimination and must be treated with dignity, support, and equal rights.

He further noted that under the HIV & AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017, discrimination against HIV-positive individuals is a punishable offence.

Highlighting medical advancements, the Minister said that while HIV was once considered a fatal disease, timely testing and proper treatment now enable individuals to lead normal lives for several decades. The government is providing free testing, treatment, and medicines. Across the state, 1.14 lakh patients are receiving medical services through 127 testing centres and 33 ART centres. Special screening camps for HIV and TB are also being conducted in government general hospi-

tals and prisons, he said.

The Minister urged youth to avoid sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy habits, and to stay away from drugs, particularly injectable drugs, which significantly increase the risk of HIV and other infections.

Stressing the importance of public health, he stated that without health, wealth has no value. Healthy individuals contribute to healthy families, which in turn build a strong society and a robust state.

He called upon all sections of society to work together towards building a more vibrant Telangana. Health Secretary Christina Chongthua, Commissioner for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Sangeeha Satyanarayana, Collector Ranga Reddy Narayana Reddy and others participated in the programme. (SSS)

## ANGANWADI TEACHERS GET MOBILE PHONES

HANS NEWS SERVICE WANAPARTHY

PEBBAIR municipal chairman Akki Srinivas Goud stated on Thursday that the Anganwadis play a crucial role in delivering government welfare schemes to people more quickly and effectively. At a programme organised under the supervision of ICDS at the municipal office, he distributed smartphones to Anganwadi teachers.

He said the mobile phones would help in improving the functioning of Anganwadi



centres and in regularly updating beneficiary details online.

"There would no longer be delays in recording health data of pregnant women, lac-

tating mothers, and children," he said. Anganwadi teachers expressed their happiness over receiving the phones and hoped they would reduce the workload.

## Rudra Pradeep meets Ramchandra Rao

HANS NEWS SERVICE KHAMMAM

BJP leader Rudra Pradeep on Thursday met Telangana BJP president Ramchandra Rao and expressed gratitude for being appointed as a member of the party's state executive committee.

During the meeting, Ramchandra Rao congratulated Pradeep and advised him to work towards strengthening the Bharatiya Janata Party in Khammam district. He also urged party leaders to focus on the upcoming Khammam Municipal Corporation elections and strive to secure a majority of seats to take control of the civic body.

Pradeep thanked the state leadership for the



opportunity and assured that he would work diligently to expand the party's base in the district. Senior BJP leader Mothukuri Narayana Rao was also present during the meeting.

## Collector assures accreditation cards for eligible journalists

HANS NEWS SERVICE WANAPARTHY

DISTRICT Collector Adarsh Surabhi announced that media accreditation cards will be issued to every eligible journalist. He stated that a district media accreditation committee has been formed.

"As per GO 239, the validity of the accreditation cards issued in 2022 will expire on April 30. Therefore, steps are being taken to issue new cards starting from May 1, with a validity period of two years,"

he said, in a statement on Thursday.

"Journalists are advised to submit their applications with required documents, without errors, on or before April 12. Only the applications received by the evening of 12th will be considered for the first accreditation list. The applications will be reviewed by the district committee, and eligible journalists will be issued accreditation cards. Applications received after the deadline will be considered in the second list," Surabhi said in a release.

## 100-BED GOVT HOSPITAL IN NAKREKAL SOON: GOVT WHIP

HANS NEWS SERVICE NAKREKAL (NALGONDA)

GOVERNMENT Whip and MLA Vemula Veeresham alleged that the previous government had pushed the state into a financial crisis by accumulating debts of nearly Rs 8 lakh crore over the past ten years. He made these remarks on Thursday while distributing Chief Minister's Relief Fund cheques worth Rs 1.78 lakh to 488 beneficiaries in Nakrekal town. During the event, he announced that a 100-bed government hospital would soon be inaugurated in Nakrekal to improve healthcare facilities for local residents.

He also revealed plans to construct an integrated school in Kanaparthi, aiming to provide better educational infrastructure. Recalling earlier commitments,



Government Whip and Nakrekal MLA Vemula Veeresham addressing a gathering

he said that schools on the lines of Hyderabad model institutions would be established in every constituency. Additionally, he mentioned that the government has introduced a tiffin (midday meal) facility in government schools to support students.

Criticising the previous administra-

tion, Veeresham stated that several key irrigation projects in Nalgonda district—such as Dindi, Brahmanavellamla, IT Pamula, and Shivannagudem—were left incomplete. He emphasized that the current government is focusing on welfare and development, highlighting the distribution of ration cards and Indiramma housing schemes to the poor.

Looking ahead, he announced that IIT coaching would be provided in 25 government schools starting next year, aiming to enhance academic opportunities for students from rural backgrounds.

The programme was attended by dignitaries including Dairy Chairman Gutta Amit Reddy, Market Committee Chairpersons Gutta Manjula and Madhava Reddy, and several councillors and local leaders.

## EXPANDING POCHAMPALLY IKAT

### Sri Lankan buyers explore ikat handloom craft

HANS NEWS SERVICE BHOODAN POCHAMPALLY

TWO buyers from Sri Lanka, Irfan and Sajid, visited Pochampally on Thursday to observe the process of making traditional handloom Ikat fabrics and to understand the uniqueness of the designs at the grassroots level.

During their visit, the buyers toured a handloom cluster unit where they observed various stages of the production process. They examined the functioning of handlooms, the preparation of yarn, dyeing techniques, and the method of tying threads (known as "chitkulu chuttadam"), which is a distinctive feature of Ikat weaving.

Speaking on the occasion, Hema, a representative of Telangana Trade Promotion Corporation and Jagadeesh Private Limited, highlighted the cultural



relevance of traditional textiles in Sri Lanka. She mentioned that a significant number of Hindus in Sri Lanka worship Lord Subrahmanya Swamy, and there is a strong appreciation for traditional attire in the country.

She further stated that the purpose of bringing Sri Lankan buyers to Pocham-

pally was to promote Ikat designs in the Sri Lankan market. "Until now, there has been limited awareness about Pochampally handloom products in Sri Lanka. This visit is expected to create new opportunities for introducing these unique textiles to a wider international audience," she said.

## SCARF UP!



Bike riders shield themselves from hot sun by wrapping up their head with scarves in Hyderabad on Thursday  
Photos: Srinivas Setty

## WORDY DUEL TAKES A BITTER TURN...

### Harish goes all guns blazing at Ponguleti for dishing out 'concocted lies' on charges

#### Spoke like builder, not Minister,' says BRS leader

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

BRS deputy leader T Harish Rao on Thursday said that Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has gone on the defensive and spoke not like a minister, but like the owner of Raghava Constructions.

Harish Rao launched a scathing attack on Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, accusing him of trying to divert attention from serious corruption and illegal mining allegations through abusive language and fabricated explanations.

Speaking to the media at Nagapur village, he said the minister's remarks inside the Assembly had only further exposed the Congress government's desperation and moral bankruptcy.

Ponguleti did not speak as a responsible cabinet minister, but as the head of Raghava Constructions, clearly trying to protect his own

family and business interests. When people have no facts, no answers, and no defence, they resort to abuse, distractions and emotional drama, he alleged.

Harish Rao said that in trying to defend himself, Ponguleti ended up exposing the broader corruption in the Congress government. "In the process of defending himself, he has virtually admitted that not just he, but several ministers in this government are tainted," he said.

He pointed out that by referring to the names of senior ministers and the Chief Minister, Ponguleti had opened the door to wider scrutiny over corruption allegations within the government. The most important point was that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had admitted on the floor of the House that irregularities in Raghava Constructions had been detected by government officials, and that a penalty had been imposed.

Rao said that officials from Revenue, Electricity, Pollution Control Board and Mining Departments had jointly inspected the site and confirmed illegal mining activities.

"So who is lying?" Harish Rao asked. "Is Ponguleti right, or are the officials right? Is the Chief Minister wrong? Or are all of them speaking the truth, and only Ponguleti is denying it?" Harish Rao questioned.

Harish Rao also addressed Ponguleti's comments on the Nadargul land issue, and said the BRS government had in fact protected those lands as government property.

He said it was the BRS government that included the land in the prohibited list, fought the case in the High Court, and secured orders that action should be taken against those who sold and purchased ceiling-surplus lands illegally.

He questioned why the Congress



government was now trying to suppress these facts. He questioned whether there were links between Shilpa, Raghava and AQ Square, and asked why the government is not coming clean on these relationships.

Rao demanded that if the government was sincere, it should immediately act against the encroachers, send HYDRAA to the site, and prove its honesty through action rather than statements. He said Ponguleti's attempts at creating noise and drama have failed to bury the facts.

# 3 ANDHRA VILLAGES LEAD RAINWATER REVOLUTION

- Murugummi, Marella and Thangella boost groundwater with over 260 water structures, storing nearly 30 lakh cubic metres
- Community-driven efforts like pond revival, rooftop harvesting, crop planning lifted agriculture, dairy, and livelihoods for 5,900 residents
- Murugummi won 2nd-best panchayat at Water Awards 2024; Marella and Thangella also earned honours

NEW DELHI

THREE villages from the coastal district of Prakasam in Andhra Pradesh have emerged as models of water resilience through community-led rainwater conservation initiatives implemented under the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' campaign, the Jal Shakti ministry said on Thursday.

The ministry noted that villages such as Murugummi, Marella, and Thangella have significantly improved groundwater availability, strengthened livelihoods and reduced distress migration through sustained community participation.

Highlighting the outcomes, the ministry said that Murugummi saw the



construction of 71 water conservation structures with a cumulative storage capacity of about 8.11 lakh cubic metres, providing protective irrigation to 264.5 hectares of agricultural land. In Marella, 53 such structures were developed with a cumulative storage capacity of around 10.04 lakh cubic metres, enhancing agricultural sustainability across 220.5 hectares, it

said, adding that renovation of community ponds and tanks contributed an additional 5.95 lakh cubic metres of storage capacity. Thangella recorded the construction of 71 water conservation structures with a storage capacity of about 5.89 lakh cubic metres, supporting irrigation across 185.3 hectares, while the revival of traditional water bodies added around



A water conservation structure in Marella

3.98 lakh cubic metres more, the ministry said.

The initiative has improved groundwater levels, benefiting around 5,900 people by enhancing access to water for domestic and agricultural purposes, the ministry said in a statement. Earlier, these villages faced acute water scarcity due to erratic rainfall, declining groundwater levels and frequent borewell failures, adversely affecting agriculture and livelihoods, it said.

The ministry said the situation began to change with active community mobilisation through gram sabhas, door-to-door awareness campaigns, Kalajathas (traditional folk theatre), workshops and field demonstrations. Farmers, women, youth and local institutions collectively adopted practices such as water budgeting, crop planning and groundwater sharing, fostering a strong sense of

ownership, the statement added. Adopting a ridge-to-valley approach, the villages implemented a range of rainwater harvesting and conservation measures to capture, store and recharge rainwater, including percolation tanks, farm ponds, staggered trenches, rooftop rainwater harvesting systems and the rejuvenation of community ponds.

It also led to enhanced agricultural productivity, increased milk production supporting dairy activities, restoration of soil moisture and reduction in distress migration as livelihood opportunities improved, the statement said. Murugummi village was conferred the second-best village panchayat award at the sixth National Water Awards, 2024, while Marella was among the top 30 villages, and Thangella was nominated for national recognition, it added. (PTI)

## War of words erupts as Atchanna targets Jagan, YSRCP hits back

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA/VISAKHAPATNAM

A fierce political confrontation erupted after agriculture minister K Atchanna made allegations against YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, triggering a strong and emotional rebuttal from senior YSRCP leader Botcha Satyanarayana.

Addressing a press conference, Atchanna claimed that even leaders within former chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's own party such as Botcha Satyanarayana, in the past, raised suspicions about Jagan Mohan Reddy's role in his father's death. He alleged that Jagan was driven by an unrestrained ambition for power and would "stop at nothing" to become chief minister. The minister further revived past political controversies, accusing Jagan of amassing wealth during YSR's tenure between 2004 and 2009 by leveraging his father's position. He also questioned Jagan's conduct during the period when YSR's helicopter went missing in September 2009, demanding clarity on his whereabouts at that critical time.

Atchanna also alleged that even before YSR's death was officially confirmed, efforts were allegedly underway to mobilize support for Jagan's elevation as chief minister. He also referred to attacks on a private company establishments following allegations



Minister K Atchanna speaking to media at the Secretariat on Thursday



YSRCP MLC Botcha Satyanarayana addressing a press conference in Visakhapatnam

made at the time, and later political developments involving individuals linked to the same corporate group. In a further escalation, the TDP leader drew parallels with the murder of Y S Vivekananda Reddy, suggesting a pattern of political ambition overriding relationships, remarks that added fuel to the already intense political confrontation.

Reacting strongly, YSRCP senior leader and Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council Botcha Satyanarayana lashed out at Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and the TDP, accusing them of resorting to "cheap and disgraceful politics" for political mileage. Satyanarayana turned emotional while recalling YSR, visibly moved as he condemned the remarks. "Is this the level of politics? Don't they feel ashamed?" he said, alleging that the ruling party was deliberately making provocative statements to divert attention from the positive discussions around the MAVIGUN (Machilipatnam-Vijayawada-Guntur) proposal put forward by Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Satyanarayana asserted that the aggressive response from TDP leaders indicated political insecurity. "The intention is clear - divert the MAVIGUN debate and indulge in personal attacks. There is nothing beyond that," he said.

He also criticised the repeated references to the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy, calling it inappropriate to drag a leader who passed away 15 years ago into current political battles. "Political discourse should have limits. Using deceased leaders for gain reflects the fall in standards," he said.

Rejecting the allegations, Satyanarayana maintained that leadership discussions after YSR's death were natural and that several senior leaders at the time had proposed Jagan's name. He said there were still witnesses who could testify to those developments.

The YSRCP leader further accused TDP ministers of holding frequent press conferences to make "baseless and inflammatory" statements instead of focusing on governance. "If you work well, people will support you. Let the public decide," he added.

## Ayyanna calls for 33% youth quota in legislatures

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

ASSEMBLY Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu said youth play an important role in shaping India's future. He was addressing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association West Zone Meeting in Goa on Thursday.

Extending greetings to dignitaries including Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh Narayan Singh, Ayyanna Patrudu said that the central issue in achieving the vision of a developed India by 2047 lies in increasing youth participation in legislative bodies.

Citing statistics, he noted that only 11 per cent of members in the 18th Lok Sabha and 7 per cent in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly are below 40 years of age, despite the country's average age being around 32. This significant gap, he said, must be addressed to ensure better representation and inclusive policymaking.

He stressed that for youth to contribute meaningfully they must first enter politics and succeed in legislative roles. However, prevailing political practices, including disruptions in legislatures and lack of decorum, discourage young aspirants. He called for exemplary conduct



Assembly Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu addressing

- Assembly Speaker stresses greater youth participation at Commonwealth Parliamentary Association West Zone Meeting, calling it key to achieving developed India vision by 2047
- Flags low representation: only 11% in Lok Sabha and 7% in AP Assembly are under 40, despite India's average age being around 32
- Proposes 33% reservation for under-40s in legislatures; urges better political conduct and revival of student politics to attract young leaders

by elected representatives to restore faith in politics as a respectable profession.

Ayyanna Patrudu also pointed out the decline of student politics, once a vital training ground for future leaders. Reflecting on his own journey, he credited NT Rama Rao for giving opportunities to young individuals without political backgrounds, enabling them to rise in public life.

He proposed a bold re-

form, reserving at least 33 per cent of legislative seats for individuals below 40 years on a rotational basis, similar to women's reservation. Such a step, he said, would infuse fresh energy, innovative ideas, and dynamism into governance.

He reiterated that without creating opportunities for youth, expecting their contribution to national development would remain unrealistic.

## Drones Corpn to act as nodal agency for drone ops in AP

Unmanned aerial systems to be used in agriculture, logistics, surveillance, infrastructure and disaster management

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE state government has designated the AP Drones Corporation (APDC) as the exclusive nodal agency for all drone-related activities in Andhra Pradesh, centralising planning, execution and regulation under a single authority.

The decision aligns with the State's Drone Policy 4.0 (2024-29), which aims to expand the use of unmanned

aerial systems across sectors such as agriculture, logistics, surveillance, mapping, infrastructure monitoring and disaster management.

Under the new orders, all government departments, district administrations, public sector undertakings and local bodies must route their drone-related requirements through APDC at every stage, from project conceptualisation to implementation. The corporation will oversee vendor empan-

ment, technical evaluation, execution and operational coordination.

APDC will also act as the central procurement agency for drones and related services, ensuring standardisation and compliance with government procedures. It has been authorised to receive advance payments of up to 90 per cent of the estimated project cost from user departments for executing drone services.

In addition, the corporation will spearhead capacity-



building efforts by coordinating with DGCA-authorized Remote Pilot Training Organisations (RPTOs), academic institutions and other stakeholders to strengthen the drone ecosystem in the State.

APDC will also facilitate regulatory clearances by working closely with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and other authorities to ensure adherence to national drone rules and airspace regulations.

To support its operations, the government has approved a service charge structure: 5 per cent for projects below Rs 50 lakh, 3.75 per cent for projects between Rs 50 lakh and Rs 1 crore, and 2.5 per cent for projects above Rs 1 crore.

Officials said the move is expected to streamline drone adoption, improve efficiency in public service delivery and position Andhra Pradesh as a leader in drone-driven governance.

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE state government has approved the Request for Proposal (RFP) for developing inland waterways connectivity on the Krishna river linking Muktyala to Machilipatnam port, marking a major step towards strengthening multimodal transport infrastructure in the State.

The project will be executed under the Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFOT) model through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP), aiming to unlock the potential of inland waterways for cargo, passenger, and tourism movement.

According to the AP In-

land Waterways Authority (APIWA), the proposed corridor spans 168 km, comprising an 82-km river stretch on the Krishna river — part of National Waterway-4 — and an 86-km canal stretch along the Bandar canal.

The proposal follows detailed feasibility studies conducted by WAPCOS, which assessed traffic potential, industrial demand, and infrastructure requirements, particularly for cargo movement such as cement transport

from Muktyala to Machilipatnam. The study recommended navigation using Class-III vessels, along with key interventions including a navigational lock at Prakasam barrage, repairs to existing lock gates, and removal of low-clearance bridges.

The state government's decision comes after stakeholder consultations held in June 2025, where representatives from the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), government agencies, and

industry participants emphasized the need to develop waterways as an alternative, cost-effective transport mode.

Following this, APIWA floated an Expression of Interest (EoI), which indicated strong market demand for port connectivity through inland waterways, especially in view of Andhra Pradesh's expanding port ecosystem, including operational ports at Kakinada and upcoming greenfield ports at Machilipatnam, Mulapeta, and Ramaya-

patnam. The RFP has already been cleared by the Tender Evaluation Committee and EPC Committee in February 2026. With the government now formally approving the proposal, the project is set to move into the bidding stage. Officials said the initiative is expected to significantly reduce logistics costs, improve connectivity between hinterland industries and ports, and position Andhra Pradesh as a leader in inland water transport on the east coast.

## TTD plans expansion of Srivari Seva, ranking system for sevaks

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI TIRUPATI

TIRUMALA Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) executive officer M Ravichandra announced plans to expand the Srivari Seva programme and introduce a ranking system for Srivari Sevaks based on their performance, enabling them to serve in key areas of the temple, including the sanctum surroundings. Speaking to The Hans India, the EO said the initiative aims to strengthen volunteer services and improve pilgrim management across temples.

The EO said that, as sug-

- EO Ravichandra says higher-ranked volunteers may serve in key temple areas, including sanctum surroundings
- The Seva to be linked with nearly 27,000 temples under endowments dept
- Focus is on accommodation facilities for middle-class devotees in Tirumala

gested by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, the Srivari Sevak system will be expanded by linking it with nearly 27,000 temples under the endowments department.

Volunteers will be engaged in various services such as regulating pilgrim queues during special occasions, assisting devotees, and

even performing small services like preparing flower garlands.

Based on their dedication and performance, sevaks will be assigned ranks, and higher-ranked volunteers may be given opportunities to serve in important locations within the Tirumala temple.

Ravichandra also said



TTD executive officer M Ravichandra

TTD is focusing on improving accommodation facilities for middle-class devotees. At present, lodging options in Tirumala largely cater to upper, upper-middle, lower-income, and poor sections, while affordable rooms for the middle class are limited.

He clarified that no new buildings will be constructed on the hill, but old and dilapidated structures will be rebuilt and allocated to middle-class pilgrims at reasonable rents. Future expansion of accommodation facilities will mainly take place in Tirupati.

The EO stressed the need to ensure a smoother

darshan experience so that devotees get at least a few moments to pray before Lord Venkateswara. Currently, only 15 to 16 hours a day are available for darshan after accounting for daily rituals, and these rituals cannot be reduced as they follow Agama traditions.

However, changes may be considered in certain Arjitha Sevaks introduced mainly for revenue generation. Since TTD's financial position is stable, some paid services may be modified or conducted in seclusion so that darshan can continue during those periods, after consultations with Agama scholars

and Hindu religious heads.

Ravichandra further said TTD is studying pilgrim footfall patterns over the past decade to increase daily darshan capacity. By identifying days with lower crowd levels and issuing more tokens in Tirupati during less crowded periods on the hill, the number of devotees can be increased.

With the help of artificial intelligence technology, TTD aims to gradually raise the daily pilgrim count from the present 80,000 to 90,000 and eventually to one lakh devotees, while ensuring all decisions strictly follow Agama rules and regulations.

## Tepid campus hiring reflects changing contours of IT industry

CAMPUS hiring of engineering graduates has been moving at a snail's pace in recent years. One of the major employers, which are Indian IT firms— are altogether missing or hiring very low numbers. According to HR consultancy firm— Xpheno, fresher hiring in India's IT sector has fallen from a peak of 600,000 in FY22 to about 120,000 in FY25. Many analysts see no change in the overall numbers for FY26, which will be known in a few weeks.

Such tepid hiring trend is driven by a combination of factors. Firstly, demand environment in the IT industry remains subdued. With geopolitical situation remaining volatile owing to Russia-Ukraine war, Iran versus US & Israel conflict and Trump tariffs; enterprises

are cautious in their technology spend since last financial year.

Especially, the US government's decision to impose tariffs on its trading partners has created an uncertainty in several sectors. Though deal pipeline remained robust for most Indian IT companies, the implementation rate of those projects was low. That is the reason that freshers are not required in large numbers as they used to be in earlier years. Second and the most important change has been driven by adoption of AI (artificial intelligence)-powered solutions in the industry.

Many of the entry-level works are getting automated through agentic AI tools. It means companies no longer require as many fresh engineering graduates as

compared to previous years. Such fundamental shift is driving the recruitment trend in engineering colleges. For three decades, Indian IT industry's operational model has been focussed heavily on hiring of new engineering graduates from college campuses.

In a project, freshers and junior employees with 2-3 years of experience comprise the bulk of the manpower. Such employee pyramid has helped IT services companies to keep their employee cost lower as entry level salaries remain low for the industry as whole. However, such established operating model is going through a shift as of now. Many L1 & L2 work loads are being handled by agentic AI tools in recent quarters.

In a way, these AI tools should

be seen as responsible for replacing new engineering graduates in India for now. Do these factors make engineering graduates redundant in the evolving landscape? Answer to this question is still not known to the industry. Because Accenture— world's biggest IT services & consulting company— recently added headcount by hiring freshers.

The CEO of Accenture has said during analyst call that AI will create more jobs for freshers with new roles emerging under the AI domain. This is in contrast to the popular narrative given by analysts, company management and other stakeholders for the last two years. So, no body exactly knows how fresher hiring landscape will evolve in the coming quarters.

But one view that has started

rolling out from HR experts in recent months is that AI is creating demand for new kind of roles. Job roles like prompt engineer, AI ethics analyst, AI data scientist, AI Product Manager, AI product developer, AI data curator, AI integration consultant and others are getting created with the development of AI. It means new job roles are getting created for which young graduates need to be trained for leading in the future. Therefore, the demand for freshers may have come down temporarily but is likely to continue in the wake of new technology developments. Moreover, Indian IT industry's whole operating model revolves around hiring freshers and any pivot from such established way will take time to evolve.

## When global fragility becomes everyone's burden

APURVA RAKESH PANDEY

### SEARCH FOR STABILITY IN AN UNEQUAL GLOBAL ORDER

WHEN fuel prices surge on the streets of Colombo, fertilisers slip beyond the reach of African farmers, and Asian governments exhaust fiscal space to hold down subsidies, the reflex explanation is domestic mismanagement. That diagnosis is convenient—and often wrong. The drivers of these crises are frequently located far from national capitals, embedded in strategic decisions taken by a handful of power centres whose economic aftershocks travel effortlessly across borders. Contemporary conflicts may be geographically contained, but their costs are anything but.

This asymmetry—between where decisions are made and where consequences are felt—has become a defining feature of the global order. Power is concentrated; risk is globalised. Energy markets, shipping routes, insurance premia, and capital flows no longer merely reflect economic fundamentals. They have become transmission belts for geopolitics, carrying strategic intent into household budgets, food prices, and balance sheets across the developing world.

History makes this pattern unmistakable. The oil shocks of the 1970s did not remain an OPEC-West confrontation; they translated into 10-15 per cent inflation and debt crises across much of the Global South. The 1991 Gulf War and the sanctions regime that followed erased nearly half of Iraq's GDP, but their secondary effects reverberated through energy markets and regional

economies. The lesson was clear even then: when conflict intersects with global systems, its radius expands dramatically.

Globalisation was supposed to temper such outcomes. Interdependence, it was argued, would raise the cost of conflict and therefore restrain it. In practice, interdependence has done something else—it has accelerated the export of conflict-related costs. The Russia-Ukraine war of 2022-23 offers a textbook illustration. Wheat prices rose by 35-40 per cent; fertiliser exports were disrupted by 20-25 per cent. For low- and middle-income countries, this translated into food inflation of 8-12 per cent, fiscal stress, and renewed balance-of-payments pressures. The war did not have to be global to destabilise global livelihoods.

The problem intensifies when conflict threatens strategic chokepoints. The Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly a quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade—and significant volumes of LNG and LPG—passes, has once again become a pressure point amid escalating tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran. Even limited disruption here sends oil prices swinging and insurance costs soaring, with immediate consequences for transport, manufacturing, and household energy bills far beyond West Asia. Geography, in such cases, becomes a multiplier of instability.

What emerges is a consistent sequence. Strategic choices are taken first, often



**Globalisation was supposed to temper such outcomes. Interdependence, it was argued, would raise the cost of conflict and therefore restrain it. In practice, interdependence has done something else—it has accelerated the export of conflict-related costs. The Russia-Ukraine war of 2022-23 offers a textbook illustration. Wheat prices rose by 35-40 per cent; fertiliser exports were disrupted by 20-25 per cent. For low- and middle-income countries, this translated into food inflation of 8-12 per cent, fiscal stress, and renewed balance-of-payments pressures. The war did not have to be global to destabilise global livelihoods**

with narrow security or political objectives. Economic consequences follow later, diffusing through global markets. Advanced economies, cushioned by deeper capital markets and institutional buffers, absorb part of the shock. States with limited fiscal capacity and high import dependence absorb far more. When Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister James Marape remarked that countries like his are forced to pay for conflicts in which they have no role, he was not making a moral appeal; he was describing a structural reality.

This is why the prevailing international order increasingly looks less like a system that resolves imbalances and more like one that manages them—often poorly. It reacts

to crises after costs have already been socialised across vulnerable economies, rather than preventing those costs from being externalised in the first place.

It is in this context that India's contemporary diplomacy merits attention. Its shift from Cold War non-alignment to present-day multi-alignment is not rhetorical flexibility; it is strategic realism. India's engagement with the Global South has focused less on symbolism and more on stabilisation—through vaccine diplomacy, food and fertiliser assistance, and diversified energy sourcing. Securing permanent membership for the African Union in the G20 was not merely an act of inclusion; it linked representation to agenda-setting

in the world's premier economic forum.

Yet stabilisation cannot rest on ad hoc measures alone. The next phase demands institutional ballast. Groupings such as BRICS and the wider Global South offer part of the answer, not as ideological counterweights but as shock absorbers. Instruments like the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and the New Development Bank, combined with local-currency trade and cross-border payment systems, can reduce exposure to volatile capital flows and dollar liquidity cycles. Their promise, however, depends on political discipline—on whether members can place collective resilience above bilateral competition. Still, alternative platforms are not substitutes for systemic reform. The architecture of global governance itself must be recalibrated to internalise the costs it currently externalises. Sanctions regimes need clearer economic impact assessments; trade rules must become more flexible in the face of supply-chain disruptions; financial systems require mechanisms that prioritise crisis liquidity for vulnerable economies.

Coordinated responses through the United Nations could strengthen multilateral crisis management, while the World Trade Organisation needs the mandate and agility to keep trade flowing during geopolitical shocks. In parallel, the United Nations Security Council must become more representative

and more accountable, particularly when sanctions and interventions impose diffuse economic costs far beyond their intended targets.

Representation alone, however, is insufficient without accountability. Emerging powers must deploy their growing economic weight not just to expand markets, but to shape rules. Rule-making, not rule-following, is where lasting stability is built.

None of this assumes an end to power politics. Competition will persist; rivalry is intrinsic to international life. The challenge is not to abolish it, but to contain it within frameworks that dampen volatility rather than amplify it. If that effort fails, global fragility will cease to be episodic and become structural—a permanent condition rather than a recurring crisis.

A more inclusive and accountable decision-making order would not eliminate conflict, but it could prevent its costs from being indiscriminately exported. Stability, then, would no longer be a privilege enjoyed by a few resilient economies, but a shared global public good. The question confronting the international system is stark: will competition be allowed to slide into cascading instability, or will it be balanced by cooperation capable of sustaining a more predictable world?

*(The writer is an alumnus of the University of Allahabad and writes on International Relations and Strategic Affairs)*

## BR Ambedkar: A national thinker and reformist beyond misconceptions

DR KIRAN KUMAR GOLLA

BR AMBEDKAR, whose birth anniversary is celebrated on April 14, is often misunderstood, seen narrowly as a Dalit leader or as a critic of Hinduism. The fact is that he was neither anti-Hindu nor anti-national. He was a reformer who challenged social injustice, not religion itself, and a patriot who sought to strengthen India's unity through justice and fraternity. His writings and books reveal a thinker deeply committed to building a modern, democratic India.

Ambedkar's intellectual legacy is preserved in his books, which show the breadth of his concerns. In *The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution* (1923), his doctoral thesis at the London School of Economics, he analysed India's monetary system and argued for a managed currency. This was not a sectional concern but a national economic vision, anticipating debates that would later shape India's financial policy. In *Annihilation of Caste* (1936), perhaps his most famous work, Ambedkar evaluated caste as a social system, not Hinduism as a faith. He argued that caste was incompatible with democracy and justice, and importantly, appealed to Hindu reformers to reinterpret scriptures in ways that aligned with equality.

His *Thoughts on Linguistic States* (1955) examined how India should reorganize states based on language, showing his concern for national integration and federal stability. Finally, *The Buddha and His Dhamma* (1957), published posthumously, outlined his interpretation of Buddhism as a rational, ethical, and egalitarian philosophy. His turn to Buddhism was not anti-Hindu but a reaffirmation of India's plural spiritual heritage.

Ambedkar's take on caste was often misread as hostility toward Hinduism. In An-



nihilation of Caste, he wrote: "The Hindu society must be reorganized on a religious basis which would recognize the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity."

This shows he was not rejecting Hinduism but urging reform so that its ethical core could shine through. His challenge was to social practices, not to faith itself. He believed that religion, when aligned with justice, could be a force for national unity.

Ambedkar's nationalism was pragmatic and ethical. In *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, he warned that ignoring linguistic identities could weaken India; however, his solution was not separatism. Instead, he proposed a federal structure that respected diversity while preserving unity. Similarly, his role in drafting the Constitution was a patriotic act, as he embedded safeguards for minorities and fundamental rights to strengthen the country's democratic fabric.

In his final speech to the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar cautioned against hero worship and authoritarianism, saying democracy in India must rest on "constitutional morality." Such warnings were not anti-national; they were protective of India's demo-

**In Annihilation of Caste, he wrote: "The Hindu society must be reorganized on a religious basis which would recognize the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity." This shows he was not rejecting Hinduism but urging reform so that its ethical core could shine through. His challenge was to social practices, not to faith itself. He believed that religion, when aligned with justice, could be a force for national unity. His nationalism was pragmatic and ethical.**

cratic experiment. His economic writings reveal his concern for national development. In *The Problem of the Rupee*, Ambedkar argued for stability in currency to protect India's economy. He also wrote on agricultural reforms, advocating redistribution of land to ensure productivity and fairness. These were not sectional demands, but national policies aimed at uplifting all Indians. His economic vision was about creating a fair system for all, ensuring that India's modernization did not leave its rural majority behind.

Ambedkar's embrace of Buddhism was a reclamation of an Indian tradition that embodied rationality and compassion.

In *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, he presented Buddhism as a philosophy of equality and ethics. His choice was not a rejection of India's heritage but a reaffirmation of its pluralism. He sought a spiritual foundation for modern India within its own civilizational resources. By turning to Buddhism, Ambedkar was not abandoning the country's traditions but reinterpreting them to meet contempo-

rary needs. Ambedkar's vision of democracy went beyond institutions. He insisted democracy must be a social ethic, respect for dignity, equality of opportunity, and fraternity. His writings and speeches consistently warned that political democracy could not survive without social democracy. This was a profoundly nationalist concern, as he wanted India's democracy to endure and flourish. His insistence on fraternity was not divisive but integrative, binding India together across caste, religion, and language.

Examples of his national spirit abound. In the Constitution, Ambedkar ensured fundamental rights and affirmative action were enshrined in law, not to divide but to integrate India.

His work on currency and agriculture addressed national stability and growth. His ideas on linguistic states balanced diversity with unity. His call to reinterpret Hindu scriptures was aimed at strengthening India's moral foundation. Each of these contributions shows a thinker deeply invested in India's future, not an adversary of its traditions or unity.

Ambedkar was not anti-Hindu or anti-national. He was a reformer who sought to purify religion of social distortions and a patriot who worked tirelessly to build a just and united India. His books—*Annihilation of Caste*, *The Problem of the Rupee*, *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, and *The Buddha and His Dhamma* illustrate his breadth as a thinker.

His legacy is one of integration, bringing together India's ancient values and modern aspirations. To honour Ambedkar is to recognize him as a national visionary whose ideas belong to all Indians.

*(The writer is Asst. Professor, EFLU, Hyderabad)*

## LETTERS

### Defining moment for Indian democracy

WITH reference to the article published in The Hans India newspaper on April 9, the call to push forward women's reservation marks a defining moment in India's democratic journey. The essence of the article is to bring out the urgency of stepping up women's participation in legislative bodies and to carry forward the long-pending vision of equality rooted in our Constitution. The origin of this initiative can be traced back to decades of debates, draft bills, and committees that sought to carve out space for women but could not see it through. Now, with renewed political will, the nation is set to take this reform forward and turn it into a transformative force. It seeks to reach out to women from all walks of life: rural homemakers, urban professionals, tribal women, and those from marginalized communities thereby opening up equal opportunities. Women from both rural and urban areas will benefit as the policy aims to break down structural barriers and bring them into the mainstream. Language, too, should not stand in the way, as empowerment cuts across linguistic divides and builds on shared aspirations. Only when institutions and citizens come together can this initiative truly turn into a nationwide movement that lifts up women and strengthens democracy.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

### Is Pakistan the new 'Vishwa Guru'?

THE proposed ceasefire for two weeks between Iran and the USA was indeed a welcome move. The entire world was looking forward to freedom from war's repercussions namely the energy crisis and crippling of the world economy. Pakistan taking the aid of China took the initiative of arranging a meet of warring nations in Islamabad. Pakistan, despite its record of sheltering the terrorist groups, seems to succeed in assuming a 'Vishwa Guru' facade.

P R Ravinder, Hyderabad

### II

THOUGH fragile, the two week US-Iran truce is crucial for stopping a high casualty, 39-day regional conflict, reopening of critical Strait of Hormuz to stabilize global oil prices, and creating a temporary diplomatic window to manage nuclear tensions. The temporary truce has helped global markets react positively with falling oil prices and rising stocks, while regional sectors seek stability amid continued yet restricted military threats. A lasting truce could ease global supply chain pressures and reduce shipping insurance premium. Despite the truce, deep disrupt persists with reports of continued violation in Lebanon and potential for a swift return to a conflict if negotiations fail. Anyhow, President Trump's acceptance of Pakistan's proposal for a two week ceasefire in the war with Iran is a welcome move, since the truce has brought a sigh of relief to the international community especially to the Indians.

P Victor Selvaraj, Tirunelveli

### III

THE terrorist country like Pakistan is not a "credible player" in the ongoing Iran-US diplomatic process, even as Islamabad has been involved in facilitation efforts. United States is using Pakistan's role for its own strategic reasons. Under President Donald Trump has given importance to Pakistan by trusting them and sidelining the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and has back stabbed him in the name of bogus friendship which is humiliation and insult to Modi in the eyes of the world countries.

Bhagwan Thadani, Mumbai

### Sooryavanshi, the man of the moment

V AIBHAV Sooryavanshi is making waves in the cricket world with his explosive batting style. The 15-year-old sensation is known for his fearless approach, as evident from his record-breaking performances in the IPL and Youth ODIs. He smashed a 35-ball century in the IPL, the fastest by an Indian, and a 52-ball hundred in the Youth ODI series against England U-19. His fearless way of hitting sixes came to view when he hit Jasprit Bumrah for a first ball six. His deft placements and sound defence add to his repertoire as a class batsman in the top order. Moreover he is confidence personified and would like to become top star in the days to come.

Gundu C K Maniam, Tiruchi

thehansreader@gmail.com

## BENGALURU ONLINE

### Despite losing mother during exams, student tops state

MANGALURU: In an extraordinary story of courage and determination, Disha, a student of Alva's College in Moodbidri, has emerged as the state topper in the Commerce stream of the Second PUC examinations—despite losing her mother in the middle of her exams. A Commerce stream student from Moodbidri, Disha secured the first rank in the state by scoring a perfect 600 out of 600 marks. Alva's PU College authorities and lecturers congratulated Disha on her outstanding achievement. Disha, daughter of Dinesh and Savita from Puttige Padavu near Vidyagiri, was preparing for her board examinations when tragedy struck. Her mother suffered a sudden fall on the eve of her Mathematics exam and passed away just a day before her Economics paper.

Even as she grappled with profound grief, Disha chose to continue writing her exams, refusing to let the setback derail years of hard work. Her disciplined preparation played a crucial role. She had been waking up as early as 3.30 am daily to study and had completed her syllabus well in advance through rigorous internal assessments conducted by her college. In her darkest hour, support came from her lecturer Veena, who not only comforted her but also provided her a place to stay, ensuring she could attend the examinations without interruption.

"I was slightly worried about scoring full marks in English, but my teachers' guidance helped me overcome that," Disha said. She credits the student-friendly teaching approach, timely syllabus completion, and continuous evaluation system at her college for her success.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

# CPI to hold 3-day march for rural job scheme

- Party to conduct padayatra from Anantapur to Bandlapalli (April 10-12) to demand MGNREGA protections, with national secretary Ramakrishna and PCC chief Sharmila expected to join
- Accuses Union govt of weakening the employment guarantee framework through alternative schemes that strip legal safeguards and shift funding patterns, risking rural labour livelihoods
- Concluding public meeting will be held at Bandlapalli, the village tied to the programme's early implementation



CPI leaders address a press conference at the party district office in Anantapur, announcing a padayatra from April 10 to 12 demanding continuation of the rural employment guarantee scheme

HANS NEWS SERVICE ANANTAPUR

CPI announced a three-day padayatra from Anantapur to Bandlapalli from April 10 to 12, demanding the continuation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Addressing a press conference at the CPI district office, party leaders said that the march will begin at Samatha Gram in Anantapur and culminate in a public meeting at Bandlapalli on April 12. Several prominent leaders,

including CPI national secretary Ramakrishna, Congress state president Y.S. Sharmila, and leaders from various Left parties and farmer organizations, are expected to participate in the march and the concluding sabha. CPI leaders alleged that the Union government has weakened the rural employment guarantee framework by introducing alternative schemes that lack legal safeguards. They expressed concern that changes in funding patterns and implementation authority could adversely

impact rural labourers and small farmers. The party said that the employment guarantee programme had significantly reduced rural distress and migration while improving livelihoods. It warned that any dilution of the scheme could lead to loss of employment rights and increased hardship in rural areas. A large public meeting will be held at Bandlapalli, the village associated with the early implementation of the scheme, with participation from national and state-level leaders.

# Tap water project launched in Kothaburuzu village

- Rs 30 lakh project launched to provide household tap connections under District Mineral Fund.
- 30 households to receive individual toilets worth Rs 4.5 lakh under Swachh Bharat Mission, boosting sanitation and health
- Collector urges shift to horticulture for higher farm incomes; 100-day plan underway to restore tanks and feeder channels for water security



MLA Kotla Jaya Surya Prakash Reddy along with district collector G Raja Kumari inaugurating house tap connection scheme at Kothaburzu on Thursday

HANS NEWS SERVICE DHONE (NANDYAL DISTRICT)

A major step towards improving rural infrastructure was taken on Thursday as District Collector G Raja Kumari launched household tap connection works in Kothaburzu village of Dhone mandal in Nandyal district. The project, costing Rs 30

lakh, is being taken up under the District Mineral Fund. Dhone MLA Kotla Jaya Surya Prakash Reddy was also present at the event. The aim is to provide safe drinking water to every home, as promised earlier by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu during his visit to the village. The Collector said that access to clean drinking water will improve health and living standards of villagers. She also announced that 30 households will get individual toilets under

the Swachh Bharat Mission, with a total cost of Rs.4.5 lakh. She stressed that better sanitation will lead to a cleaner and healthier environment. She added that all approved development works will be completed on time, and pending proposals will be cleared within a week. Speaking about agriculture, the Collector encouraged farmers to shift towards horticulture, which can bring higher income compared to traditional crops. She said crops grown on 7 lakh acres

generate about Rs.4,000 crore, while horticulture on 49,000 hectares earns nearly Rs 7,000 crore. The administration is also working on a 100-day plan to improve water security by restoring tanks and clearing feeder channels. The MLA said the government is committed to rural development and will fulfil all promises, including welfare schemes, housing, roads, and better irrigation methods like drip and sprinkler systems.



MLA Amilineni Surendra Babu interacts with students after inaugurating the new building of Brainy Star Private School in Kalyandurg on Thursday

## Amilineni opens school building, urges parental focus on education

HANS NEWS SERVICE KALYANDURG

MLA Amilineni Surendra Babu on Thursday inaugurated the new building of Brainy Star Private School here on Tuesday and emphasised the importance of parental involvement in students' education. After formally opening the facility, the MLA inspected classrooms, a play area, and science laboratories. Addressing a gathering, he said parents must take greater responsibility in guiding children to become responsible citizens. He noted that both education and

Says both education and values are important for achieving success in life

values are essential for achieving success in life. Recalling his own schooling at Nirmala Convent, he said the English foundation he acquired there continues to benefit him. He also highlighted the government's commitment to providing quality education and nutritious mid-day meals, along with educational kits for students. The MLA appreciated the school management for its growth from a small institution with 25 students to a well-

developed campus accommodating around 250 students. He also pointed to the success of a free teacher training initiative in the region, which helped several candidates secure teaching jobs. Raising concerns about poor road connectivity affecting students' access to schools, he said the issue has been brought to the attention of the Transport Department and assured that necessary steps would be taken.

## NSUI celebrates foundation day with grandeur



HANS NEWS SERVICE ANANTAPUR

THE National Students' Union of India (NSUI) celebrated its foundation day with grandeur here, led by district president Obulesu. State coordinator Naresh Yanamala attended as chief guest and hoisted the flag.

Addressing the gathering, Naresh highlighted NSUI's legacy since its inception under Indira Gandhi, emphasising its tireless struggles for educational reforms nationwide. He praised the organisation for empowering youth and defending student rights, while urging members to uphold democratic values. Naresh criticised the BJP-led central government for allegedly undermining the education system, calling on NSUI to resist these policies. Several local leaders, including Ajay, Naveen, and C V Vinod Kumar, participated in the event.



AP 20-Point Programme Committee chairman Lanka Dinakar, who is on tour of Anantapur district, visited the residence of former minister Dr Palle Raghunatha Reddy on Alamuru road here on Thursday. Along with Dr Raghunatha Reddy, Puttaparthi MLA Palle Sindhura Reddy and PVK Engineering College chairman Palle Venkata Krishna Kishore Reddy welcomed him.

## Water plant assn thanks govt for power sop

HANS NEWS SERVICE ANANTAPUR

THE coalition government in the state has delivered on its election pledge to reduce electricity costs for water plant owners by reclassifying them under Category 3. Water Plant Association state president Rammohan praised the move, vowing support for the government.

During a visit to AHUDA chairman T C Varun in Anantapur on Thursday, Rammohan requested 1.5 cents of land for an association office.



Water Plant Association delegation meets AHUDA chairman T C Varun in Anantapur on Thursday

Varun assured immediate allocation, emphasising the government's commitment

to all sections. District vice president Harish and other leaders attended the event.



## SIMS hospital performs complex pancreas surgery

HANS NEWS SERVICE ANANTAPUR

SIMS Hospital successfully performed a highly complex surgery to remove stones from a patient's pancreas. Bhavani Lokesh, a 27-year-old homemaker from Tumakuru district of Karnataka, had been suffering from severe abdominal pain for a year due to Chronic Calcific Pancreatitis.

Expert surgeon Dr N Mohammed Shahid removed all stones from her pancreas and reattached the organ to the small intestine. The procedure,

typically performed only in major cities like Hyderabad or Bengaluru, was completed with remarkable precision. Lokesh was discharged just five days post-surgery. The medical team included Dr Shahid, along with critical care specialists Dr A Sanjana, Dr Vijay, Dr Arun and Dr Gautam. Hospital managing directors Dr M Ashwath Reddy and Dr G Swaroop Reddy noted that advanced surgical infrastructure is now available locally, ensuring comprehensive healthcare for Anantapur residents.



TUDA Chairman C Divakar Reddy, performing the bhoomi pooja in Tirupati on Thursday

## TUDA initiates steps to shift Telugu Ganga pipeline to Mangalam-Renigunta road

- The 2.9 km road project, which had stalled since 2019, is now progressing with the shifting of the Telugu Ganga pipeline
- In 2019, the then TDP government had sanctioned Rs 19.5 crore for the project, but works came to a halt

HANS NEWS SERVICE TIRUPATI

TIRUPATI Urban Development Authority (TUDA) has taken a major step forward in reviving the long-pending road construction from Mangalam RTO office through Settipalli to Renigunta Road, fulfilling the dream of residents.

The 2.9 km road project, which had stalled since 2019, is now progressing with the shifting of the Telugu Ganga pipeline at Mangalam. TUDA Chairman C Divakar Reddy, performed the bhoomi pooja for these pipeline shifting works.

In 2019, the then TDP government had sanctioned Rs 19.5 crore for the project, but works came to a halt. Now,

under Chairman Divakar Reddy's initiative, TUDA has allocated Rs 2.9 crore from its own funds to complete the pipeline shifting swiftly. TUDA Chairman Divakar Reddy instructed officials to finish the pipeline works at the earliest, keeping public inconvenience in mind. He assured that once the shifting is done, all hurdles for the road construction will be cleared, paving the way for smooth progress through Settipalli to Renigunta Road. Chandragiri MLA Pulivarthi Nani, Tirupati MLA Arani Srinivasulu, Greenery and Beautification Chairman Sugunamma, Yadav Corporation Chairman Narasimha Yadav, TUDA Secretary Dr Sreekanth Babu, EE Ravindraiah were present.

# Anantapur told to lead Viksit Bharat push

- 20-Point Programme Committee chief Lanka Dinakar urges district to excel in education, healthcare, and human resource development to meet national and state goals
- Review covers key Central schemes including Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT, PM Surya Ghar, and PM Kusum
- Rs 277 crore proposals submitted for farm sectors potential aid may exceed Rs 1,500 crore over six years

HANS NEWS SERVICE ANANTAPUR

ANANTAPUR district should emerge as a frontrunner in achieving the goals of Viksit Bharat and Swarna Andhra Pradesh, said Lanka

Dinakar, chairman of the 20-Point Programme Committee, during a review meeting held at the Collectorate on Thursday.

The meeting, attended by MP Ambika Lakshminarayana, District Collector O



District Collector O Anand along with 20-Point Programme Committee Chairman Lanka Dinakar, MP Ambika Lakshminarayana reviews Centrally-sponsored schemes at the Collectorate in Anantapur on Thursday.

Anand, and senior officials, reviewed the implementation of key Central schemes,

including Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT 1.0 and 2.0, PM Surya Ghar, PM Kusum, and

other welfare programmes related to health, education, and rural development. Addressing the media, Dinakar stressed the need for progress in education and healthcare sectors to align with national and state development goals. He highlighted the importance of human resource development and called for effective planning under rural employment and livelihood initiatives to enhance asset creation and employment opportunities. Officials informed that proposals worth Rs 277 crore have been submitted for ag-

ricultural and horticultural development for 2026-27, with potential assistance exceeding Rs 1,500 crore over six years. The review also covered health programmes under the National Health Mission, maternal and child welfare schemes, and drinking water supply initiatives. MP Lakshminarayana urged strict implementation of Central schemes and timely achievement of targets. Collector O. Anand assured that all measures are being taken to ensure effective execution of development programmes across the district.



## Turning adverse circumstances into opportunities

Now earning Rs 1 lakh a month, she is not only financially independent but also creating employment opportunities in her village.

In the quiet village of Bandapalli in Wanaparthy district, 30-year-old Computer Science graduate Peddhabudi Vanaja is redefining what success looks like. At a time when

**A Computer Science graduate from Wanaparthy district, Peddhabudi Vanaja chose entrepreneurship over a conventional job, building a thriving construction support business**

many chase conventional engineering jobs, Vanaja chose a different path—one that not only brought her financial independ-

ence but also created livelihoods for others in her community.

"Despite completing my Computer Science Engineering, I didn't want to sit and wait endlessly for a job. I wanted to build something on my own and create opportunities right here in my village," says Vanaja.

Her journey took a decisive turn through initiatives led by the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), under the guidance of Minister Danasari Anasuya and SERP CEO Divya Devarajan. In collaboration with the National Academy of Construction, the programme introduced women to non-conventional sectors like centring units and construction technologies.

"The training complete-

ly changed my perspective. I realised there is huge demand in construction and very few women are part of it. That gave me the confidence to step in," she explains.

The programme equipped her with technical knowledge—from materials like steel and aluminium to understanding design drawings and managing workflows—along with essential business skills.

"It wasn't just about learning a skill. We were trained on how to run a business—how to plan manpower, manage materials, and execute work properly," she adds.

With institutional support, Vanaja secured a Rs20 lakh loan under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, which enabled her to establish her enterprise. She aligned her business with the growing demand under the Indiramma Housing Scheme.

"Today, I operate three centring units in my village. Each unit supports

construction work, and there is steady demand because of the housing projects," she says.

Now earning close to Rs 1 lakh per month, Vanaja has not only achieved financial stability but also created jobs locally.

"This journey has changed my life. I am earning well, but more importantly, I am able to provide employment to others. People now see that women can succeed even in sectors like construction," she notes.

Vanaja is among 772 women trained under this initiative across the State. So far, 154 have established centring units, while 16 have applied for assistance under PMEGP, with Detailed Project Reports already sent to districts for further support.

"There are so many opportunities if we are willing to step out of our comfort zones. With the right training and support, women can achieve much more than they imagine," she says, summing up her journey.



## Mamta Kulkarni says Indian women are not health conscious

**THEIR LIVES REVOLVE AROUND THEIR HUSBANDS & CHILDREN**

Actress Mamta Kulkarni has opened up about her perspective on how she feels that Indian families, especially the women in Indian families, do not take care of their health and are absolutely zero health conscious.

In a video shared by her on her own social media account, Mamta also said that the lives of most Indian women revolve around their families and taking care of their husbands and children, which is why they do not focus on their own health, stating that is absolutely wrong.

"I have noticed that some Indian families, especially women often do not focus on workouts. They dedicate their lives to their children and husbands, which sometimes leads to poor health. The same applies to men and children, they are often not very health conscious."

The actress also stated that she has seen even men and children in India coming to health clubs but just chit chat and do nothing about their health.

Further, she was seen expressing how important it is for each one to take care of their health.

Citing example of citizens of other countries, Mamta said that from kids to elders, everybody is very health conscious. From vitamin D to gymming, everybody takes care of their health, which is why they are so well built and fitter than Indians.

"Our body needs everything, including



vitamin D. People often laugh at foreigners wearing bikinis, but they don't realise how much vitamin D they are getting. That contributes to better growth and fitness. You will notice that many of them are taller and remain active even in their 80s, running in gyms and staying fit. Even small children are active, they swim, dive, and play."

She also cited her own example and said how she takes care of herself. "I now make it a point to spend time near the sea at least once or twice a week, usually on Saturdays, Sundays, or Mondays. This has been my process for many years, both physically and spiritually. Our body is made up of five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and sky."

She added, "I visit the beach once a week or once in two weeks. What do I do there? I walk barefoot on the sand. It is believed that walking barefoot on the beach can help cure many ailments. When I cannot go to the beach, I visit the health club instead. I go to the pool two to three times a week. I usually go around 2 pm, swim for an hour, and then spend at least another hour or two sunbathing."

She added, "I take sunbaths for two to three hours. I also swim, chat, and spend two to three hours here, sometimes from 1 pm to 5:30 or 6 pm. I also take steam and then, if possible, walk barefoot on the beach. When I was in Dubai, I used to walk barefoot on JBR beach. On Fridays or Saturdays, I would spend time there and walk on the sand for an hour under the sun."

Speaking about the benefits of walking bare feet on sand, Mamta said, "It is believed that the salt in the sand draws out impurities from the body. Some even say that people with paralysis can benefit from this practice if done consistently for a few months."

She concluded, "You should spend time in the sun and in nature to stay healthy. Breathe deeply as I am doing now and meditate. I often meditate while looking at the sun for hours. Come closer to nature, enjoy your food and life, but remember: if you are healthy, you are truly alive. You are your world. Jai Maa Bhavani."

## EAT SMART THIS SUMMER WITH THIS PROTEIN-PACKED DIET

Summer has arrived early, and with beach trips on the horizon, now is the perfect time to kickstart your fitness routine. While gym sessions are essential, diet plays an equally vital role in sculpting and maintaining a healthy body weight. Ritika Samaddar, Regional Head of Dietetics at Max Healthcare - New Delhi, recommends this straightforward, protein-rich plan featuring California Almonds, Greek Yoghurt, and Salmon.



**Morning Kickstart: California Almonds and Boiled Eggs**

Begin your day with a few California Almonds. Rich in protein, healthy fats, vitamin E, and magnesium, they help sustain energy levels without sudden spikes. They are an excellent addition to any fitness-

**Lunch: Grilled Chicken Breast Salad**

Opt for grilled chicken breast tossed with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and cucumber. This meal delivers lean protein, fibre, and hydration from veggies, keeping you light yet satisfied through the afternoon.

**Evening Snack: Greek Yoghurt with Chia Seeds**

Recharge in the late afternoon with Greek yoghurt topped with a teaspoon of chia seeds. This snack delivers probiotics for gut health, sustained energy, and a refreshing, cooling effect.

**Dinner: Baked Salmon with Quinoa**

End your day with a baked salmon fillet served alongside cooked quinoa and steamed broccoli. This nutrient-rich

plate offers omega-3 fatty acids for skin health, anti-inflammatory benefits, and complete proteins to support overnight muscle repair. This simple routine emphasises supporting muscle building, controlling hunger, and aiding weight management. Avoid heavy carbs in the afternoons as they are difficult to digest. Aim for portion control, good hydration and light exercise. These easy, practical tips can help you stay fit and energised during the summer heat.

## Alaya F makes 150 attempts to get a pose right: Know how much to push yourself

Actress Alaya F loves to stay on top of her fitness game. Through her latest so-

cial media post, the 'Jawaani Jaaneman' actress shared that she took 150 attempts to get a pose she saw on Instagram right. Posting a clip of herself attempting the pose, Alaya revealed that the exercise left her with peeled elbows and nausea.

"Here's a short glimpse of some of the 150+ attempts, peeled elbows and no stop nausea it took me to successfully do a pose I saw on Instagram (sic)," she captioned the post.

The 'Freddy' actress further stressed that she is not encouraging anyone to push their physical limit beyond the necessary point.

Alaya said that it is always crucial to listen to one's body.

"PS: this is not me advocating for pushing your body even when it feels completely done. It's always super important to listen to your body because everyone is different! so please be rest assured, I know how much to push myself and when to stop but out of all the things my teachers call me, 'stubborn' is my favourite! Thank you for always making sure than my stubbornness is never at the cost of my safety haha @sunpreet\_sing", she went on to write. Talking about her

professional commitments, Alaya will soon be a part of Hrithik Roshan-produced thriller series 'Storm'.

The much-discussed drama will have Parvathy Thiruvothu, Sriшти Shrivastava, Rrama Sharma, and Saba Azad playing key characters, along with others.

Suvinder Pal Vicky, Ashish Vidyarthi, Rajit Kapur, Ashok Pathak, Gautam Rode, Priyanka Setia, and Ranjan Raj have also been roped in as the ancillary cast.

Talking about his next, Hrithik had shared, "What drew me to 'Storm' was the compelling world that Ajitpal has created. The story is raw, layered, and powerful, with unforgettable characters which will be essayed by incredibly talented actors."



### CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 3 Cooking aids (5)
  - 8 Thick slices (5)
  - 10 A \_\_\_ being: one of us? (5)
  - 11 \_\_\_ roll: having a long spell of success (2,1)
  - 12 Mechanical man (5)
  - 13 Distorted (7)
  - 15 Extremely small (5)
  - 18 Embrace (3)
  - 19 Horse's gait (6)
  - 21 Grades (7)
  - 22 Tinted (4)
  - 23 Gaming stake (4)
  - 24 Mao \_\_\_: thoughtful Chinese
  - chairman? (3,4)
  - 26 Figures of speech, figurative usages of words (6)
  - 29 Azidothymidine; a drug that improves the symptoms of aids (3)
  - 31 Lhasa is its capital (5)
  - 32 Usefulness (7)
  - 34 Form (5)
  - 35 Prefix for "dermis" or "center" (3)
  - 36 Hollywood great \_\_\_ Davis (5)
  - 37 Norse giant (5)
  - 38 Mining for valuable minerals (5)

- DOWN**
- 1 Causes air currents (5)
  - 2 Stricken with shame (7)
  - 4 Goad (4)
  - 5 Inventor \_\_\_ Alva Edison (6)
  - 6 Former Force India driver (5)
  - 7 Egyptian capital (5)
  - 9 Black bird (3)
  - 12 Move backward (7)
  - 14 Pull hard (3)
  - 16 Hold on to (5)
  - 17 Chose or selected (5)
  - 19 Develop slowly (7)
  - 20 Noted film maker Mahesh \_\_\_ (5)
  - 21 Discharge from the army (5)
  - 23 Horns (7)
  - 24 Tie up (6)
  - 25 Israeli submachine gun (3)
  - 27 Metal pin (5)
  - 28 Pasta sauce - "poets" anagram? (5)
  - 30 Like those waters that run deep (5)
  - 32 \_\_\_ arms: riled? (2,2)
  - 33 BSE deal (3)



Solution to April 9

### SUDOKU



Solution to April 9



## Scholarships

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Scholarship Name 1:</b>   | <b>IDRBT Summer Internship Programme (ISIP) 2026</b>   |
| <b>Description:</b>          | IDRBT Summer Internship Programme (ISIP) 2026 is being offered by the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT). It is an opportunity for graduate and postgraduate students willing to undertake projects in the field of technology.  |
| <b>Eligibility:</b>          | Application is open to students, who are about to complete either of the following programs: postgraduate programs in technology or management (with a background in IT or related fields), or four-year undergraduate programs in IT and related domains.   |
| <b>Prizes &amp; Rewards:</b> | A monthly stipend of ₹14,000 with other benefits.  |
| <b>Last Date to Apply:</b>   | 15-04-2026   |
| <b>Application mode:</b>     | Online applications only   |
| <b>Short Url:</b>            | <a href="http://www.b4s.in/hans/IDS12">www.b4s.in/hans/IDS12</a>   |
| <b>QR Code:</b>              | <a href="https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/idrbt-summer-internship-programme-isip-20261775480352.png">https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/idrbt-summer-internship-programme-isip-20261775480352.png</a>  |
| <b>Scholarship Name 2:</b>   | <b>The Cadence/Invecas Scholarship program 2026-27</b>   |
| <b>Description:</b>          | The Cadence/Invecas Scholarship program 2026-27, launched by Cadence Design Systems and Concern India Foundation, supports underprivileged students in Delhi-NCR, Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, and Hyderabad. Since 2016, it has empowered students in fields like B.Tech, MBBS, BDS, B.Pharma, and B.Sc., providing financial aid for educational expenses and career growth.  |
| <b>Eligibility:</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have successfully passed 12th class with a minimum overall score of 80%. Pursuing 12th can also apply on the basis of their previous record.</li> <li>Comes from a lower-income group.</li> <li>Currently reside and study in Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad &amp; Hyderabad only. (Applications from outside these regions will not be considered.)</li> <li>STEM-related courses and females will be given preference. Selected students will receive financial support for key educational expenses.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Prizes &amp; Rewards:</b> | Selected students will receive financial support for key educational expenses.   |
| <b>Last Date to Apply:</b>   | 10-05-2026   |
| <b>Application mode:</b>     | Online applications only   |
| <b>Short Url:</b>            | <a href="http://www.b4s.in/hans/TCSP6">www.b4s.in/hans/TCSP6</a>   |
| <b>QR Code:</b>              | <a href="https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/the-cadence-invecas-scholarship-program-2026-271775480209.png">https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/the-cadence-invecas-scholarship-program-2026-271775480209.png</a>  |
| <b>Scholarship Name 3:</b>   | <b>SBI Youth for India Fellowship</b>  |
| <b>Description:</b>          | SBI Youth for India Fellowship is being offered by the State Bank of India (SBI) Foundation in partnership with various reputed NGOs to graduate students. It empowers graduates to tackle pressing rural developmental challenges by living and working alongside communities while promoting a transformative leadership journey.  |
| <b>Eligibility:</b>          | Application is open to citizens of India/Nepal/Bhutan or Overseas Citizens of India (OCI). Applicants must be between 21 and 32 years old as of the date of commencement of the program. They must have completed a Bachelor's degree before October 1, 2025.  |
| <b>Prizes &amp; Rewards:</b> | ₹16,000 monthly stipend and other benefits.  |
| <b>Last Date to Apply:</b>   | 30-04-2026   |
| <b>Application mode:</b>     | Online applications only   |
| <b>Short Url:</b>            | <a href="http://www.b4s.in/hans/SYFI5">www.b4s.in/hans/SYFI5</a>   |
| <b>QR Code:</b>              | <a href="https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/sbi-youth-for-india-fellowship1775480276.png">https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/sbi-youth-for-india-fellowship1775480276.png</a>  |
| <b>Scholarship Name 4:</b>   | <b>Masters' Union: Scholarship Aptitude Test 2026</b>  |
| <b>Description:</b>          | Masters' Union: Scholarship Aptitude Test 2026 is specifically designed for high-merit, high-potential candidates pursuing careers in Tech & Business Management, Psychology & Marketing, Finance & Economics, Design, Sustainability, Data Science & Artificial Intelligence by providing financial assistance and direct admission opportunities, along with tuition fee scholarships.   |
| <b>Eligibility:</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants must be currently enrolled in Class 12 (any recognised education boards) or have completed it in 2025.</li> <li>Must be aiming to pursue a full-time undergraduate programme in Business Management, Technology, Leadership, Data Science &amp; AI, Design, Sustainability, Finance &amp; Economics, Marketing or related fields.</li> <li>Assessment Requirement: All applicants must appear for the Masters' Union Scholarship Aptitude Test (MUSAT) or qualify for an approved alternate test.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>programme:</b>            | Alternate Eligibility for Data Science & Artificial Intelligence   |
| <b>Note:</b>                 | • JEE percentile above 90%   |
| <b>Prizes &amp; Rewards:</b> | • MUSAT score above 35/45  |
| <b>Last Date to Apply:</b>   | • SAT score above 1500/1600  |
| <b>Application mode:</b>     | check Masters' Union official website to ensure accuracy on eligibility  |
| <b>Short Url:</b>            | Scholarships offering 10% to 80% tuition fee waivers   |
| <b>QR Code:</b>              | 13-05-2026   |
|                              | Online applications only   |
|                              | <a href="http://www.b4s.in/hans/MUSCASP1">www.b4s.in/hans/MUSCASP1</a>   |
|                              | <a href="https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/masters-union-scholarship-aptitude-test-20261773114910.png">https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/masters-union-scholarship-aptitude-test-20261773114910.png</a>  |
| <b>Scholarship Name 5:</b>   | <b>Kiran Pratibha Scholarship 2026</b>   |
| <b>Description:</b>          | The Kiran Pratibha Scholarship 2026 is being provided by the Kiran Foundation to highly talented underprivileged students, who have passed the 8th standard and are at least 14 years old.   |
| <b>Eligibility:</b>          | The application is open to students who have passed Class 8 and are at least 14 years old. Applicants must belong to a family with a monthly income not exceeding ₹20,000. They must not be receiving any other government scholarships.   |
| <b>Prizes &amp; Rewards:</b> | Tuition fee and other benefits.  |
| <b>Last Date to Apply:</b>   | 30-04-2026   |
| <b>Application mode:</b>     | Online applications only   |
| <b>Short Url:</b>            | <a href="http://www.b4s.in/hans/KRPS1">www.b4s.in/hans/KRPS1</a>   |
| <b>QR Code:</b>              | <a href="https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/20261773726816.png">https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/20261773726816.png</a>  |

## Why early career guidance matters for youth

Aligning passion with purpose, early career guidance can help students make informed choices and build a future-ready workforce



GAUTAM RAJGARHIA

"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." This timeless thought by Confucius continues to hold relevance, especially for young students stepping into an increasingly complex and evolving job market. Today, careers are no longer just about earning a livelihood—they are about purpose, fulfilment, and impact.

For India, with one of the world's youngest populations, this conversation is particularly important. Classrooms across the country are filled with potential, yet many students still face uncertainty when transitioning from education to employment. Career deci-

sions are often influenced by societal expectations rather than personal interests, with traditional fields like engineering, medicine, and civil services dominating choices.

However, the modern economy offers far more diverse opportunities—from technology and design to entrepreneurship and social sciences. Early career guidance plays a critical role in helping students navigate these options with clarity and confidence.

When introduced at the school level, career guidance helps students understand their strengths, interests, and aspirations. It encourages them to make choices based on self-awareness rather than external pressure. Exposure to different career

paths, through mentorship and real-world interactions, broadens their perspective and allows them to explore possibilities beyond conventional routes.

Schools can play a central role by integrating career guidance into the education system. Counselling sessions, aptitude assessments, and mentorship programmes can help students build clarity over time. Interactions with industry professionals, career fairs, and workshops on emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and sustainability can further expand their understanding of the evolving job landscape.

Equally important is the development of essential life skills. Communication, teamwork, problem-solving,

and adaptability are now as critical as academic knowledge. Co-curricular activities—debates, sports, and creative pursuits—often serve as platforms where students discover hidden talents that can shape their future careers.

The impact of early career guidance extends beyond individual success. It contributes to building a workforce that is skilled, diverse, and adaptable. Students who pursue careers aligned with their interests are more likely to innovate, perform better, and contribute meaningfully to society. Moreover, structured guidance helps prepare them for global opportunities, making them competitive in an interconnected world.

India's demographic advantage can only translate into long-term growth if its youth are equipped with direction and purpose. Schools must act as enablers, ensuring that education is not just about academic achievement but also about preparing students for life beyond classrooms.

As students step into the professional world, their choices will shape not only their own futures but also the nation's progress. With the right guidance at the right time, careers become more than just jobs—they become meaningful journeys driven by passion and purpose.

(The author is Pro Vice Chairman, DPS).

## Today is International Kids Yoga Day



## Building healthy habits early

Yoga is increasingly being recognised as an important practice for promoting children's overall health and well-being. In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, children are often exposed to long hours of screen time, reduced physical activity, and rising levels of stress. Introducing yoga at an early age can help address these challenges by encouraging both physical fitness and mental balance.

Yoga is not just a form of exercise; it is a holistic practice that integrates movement, breathing, and mindfulness. For children, simple yoga postures improve flexibility, strength, and posture, while breathing techniques enhance lung capacity and focus. Regular practice can also help in improving concentration, which is essential for academic performance.

Beyond physical benefits, yoga plays a key role in supporting emotional well-being. It helps children manage stress, anxiety, and restlessness by promoting

relaxation and self-awareness. In school settings, yoga sessions have been shown to create a calmer learning environment, improving behaviour and attention spans.

Another important aspect of yoga is that it encourages discipline and routine. Practising regularly helps children develop healthy habits that can stay with them into adulthood. It also fosters a sense of balance between body and mind, which is crucial for overall development.

Creating awareness about yoga among parents, teachers, and students is essential to ensure its wider adoption. Schools can incorporate short yoga sessions into daily schedules, while families can encourage simple practices at home.

As children grow in an increasingly demanding world, yoga offers a simple yet effective way to support their physical health, mental clarity, and emotional resilience—laying the foundation for a healthier future.

## Pact to enhance practical learning & international exposure for aviation students

Chennai Amrita International Aviation College has entered into an academic collaboration with University College of Aviation Malaysia to strengthen practical training and global exposure for students pursuing careers in aviation. An MoU formalising the partnership was signed between the two institutions in the presence of academic leaders and representatives from the aviation training ecosystem. The initiative is aimed at aligning student training with evolving global industry requirements.

As part of the collaboration, the college hosted a four-day international training programme from April 6 to 9, featuring sessions by aviation professionals and

alumni. The programme covered emerging areas such as digital transformation in aviation, the role of artificial intelligence, airport operations, and new career pathways within the sector.

According to officials, the partnership introduces a structured academic pathway for students enrolled in aviation degree and diploma programmes. Under this model, students will complete the initial phase of their studies in Chennai, followed by advanced training and internships in Malaysia. The final year includes academic sessions at UniCAM along with hands-on experience at Malaysian airports.

The collaboration reflects a broader focus on experiential learning, with institutions increasingly integrating classroom

teaching with industry exposure. Facilities such as simulation environments and practical training modules are being emphasised to prepare students for real-world aviation roles.

Industry projections indicate a growing demand for skilled professionals in aviation, including pilots, cabin crew, engineers, and ground staff, over the next decade. Educational partnerships of this nature are expected to play a role in addressing skill gaps by providing students with international exposure and industry-relevant training.

The development highlights a continuing trend in higher education, where cross-border collaborations are being used to expand learning opportunities and align academic programmes with global workforce needs.



"The IPL has started exactly how I expected it to, with flatter pitches and high-scoring games. As always, it's interesting to see how the old school superstars like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli perform, but I think this youngster for Rajasthan Royals, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, is the one to watch in the opening few weeks." - Graeme Smith, South African batting great



**Asian Boxing C'ships**

**Indian women top medal charts with 4 gold**

Ulaanbaatar(Mongolia): The Indian women's team delivered a historic performance at the Asian Boxing Championships 2026, finishing on top of the medal charts with a total of 10 medals, including four gold, two silver, and four bronze, underlining their dominance at the continental stage.

Under the stewardship of head coach Santiago Nieva, every member of the women's team returned home with a medal, stamping their authority on the continental competition. With Boxing Federation of India President Ajay Singh in attendance, Minakshi Hooda (48kg) got



things going by claiming the first gold of the day with a commanding 5-0 victory over Mongolia's Nomundari Enkh-Amgalan. Preeti (54kg) continued her sensational run, defeating Chinese Taipei's Huang Hsiao-wen, a three-time world champion and Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallist, by a unanimous 5-0 decision to secure

the top podium finish. Priya (60kg) added to India's gold tally with a clinical 3-0 win over North Korea's Won Un-gyong in the final. Arundhati (70kg) also impressed, registering a 4:1 victory against Kazakhstan's Bakyt Seidish to clinch gold in her category. India added two silver medals to its tally, with Jais-

mine (57kg) finishing runner-up after a strong campaign, while Alfiyan Pathan (80+kg) also secured silver following her final bout. Earlier in the week, two-time world champion Nikhat Zareen (54kg), Ankushita Boro (65kg), Lovlina (75kg) and Pooja (80kg) had settled for bronze medals after semifinal exits. Having confirmed 16 medals, the most of any nation in this edition, India will be looking to finish the tournament strongly, with two men's boxers - Vishwanath Suresh (48kg) and Sachin Siwach (60kg) - in their respective finals on Friday.

**TG finishes runner-up in national gymnastics**

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Telangana gymnastics team delivered an impressive performance to secure second place overall at the Level-wise Boys & Girls National Gymnastics Competition 2026 held in Delhi at The Gymnastic Academy. The team clinched a remarkable tally of 25 silver medals and 2 bronze medals across events, including table vault, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise.

In Level 1, gymnasts Hiya Yadav, Pranavi Shah, Anshul Yadav, and Adwait Akula showcased strong performances. Level 2 saw notable contributions from Manvi Reddy,



Myra Mandava, and Chokkarapu Loukya Virat, while higher levels featured standout efforts from Inara Rukmini, Simone Pestonji, and Khushi Rai. The team was felicitated in Hyderabad in the presence of Priyanka, an international gymnast, national champion, and judge.

**Dist chess selections from April 11**

HYDERABAD: The Telangana State Chess Association will conduct Hyderabad and Rangareddy district Under-7 and Under-11 boys and girls selection tournaments on April 11 and 12 at Lal Bahadur Stadium, Hyderabad. The tournaments will shortlist players for the state championship. Details are available at www.chesstelangana.com or contact 7337578899 and 7337399299, said General Secretary A Jayachandra.

**RR, RCB eye top-order show in Guwahati**

GUWAHATI: Riding on explosive starts from Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Rajasthan Royals will look to extend their dominance, while defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will bank on a rejuvenated Devdutt Padikkal as the two in-form sides lock horns in an IPL clash here on Friday.

RCB have a settled top-order under the watch of the talismanic Virat Kohli, who hasn't shown any signs of rust despite stepping away from T20 internationals in 2024, while Phil Salt also unleashed his explosive abilities in the previous game. Batting one down, Padikkal has carried his domestic form seamlessly into the IPL, signalling a return to his fluent best with an aggressive yet controlled approach. Padikkal had made



**MATCH STARTS AT 7:30PM**

an immediate impact in his debut IPL season, scoring 473 runs for RCB and establishing himself as a stylish batter. However, subsequent stints with Rajasthan Royals and Lucknow Super Giants didn't

quite yield the desired returns. His return to Bengaluru last season, by his own admission, proved to be a turning point, as he played a key role in the franchise finally clinching their maiden title.

The left-hander has begun this season in similar vein, striking back-to-back fifties-- a 29-ball 50 against Chennai Super Kings and a 26-ball 61 against Sunrisers Hyderabad -- and will look to extend his rich vein of form. The likes of skipper Rajat Patidar and big-hitting Australian Tim David provide solidarity in the middle. However, it is RCB's bowling transformation that has stood out. The Royals, meanwhile, have emerged as one of the most explosive batting units this season, powered by the opening pair of Jaiswal and teenage sensation Sooryavanshi. The duo has consistently provided flying starts, combining clean hitting with fearless stroke-play to put opposition attacks under early pressure.

**Siva powers Golkonda Hotel into final**

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

RIDING on T Siva's swash-buckling unbeaten 82, favourites Golkonda Hotel crushed Radisson Blu Plaza by 63 runs to storm into the final of the 10th edition of the Hotels & Restaurants Association of Telangana State T20 Cricket Tournament 2026, played at the New Madies Cricket Grounds on Wednesday.

Golkonda Hotel, appearing in the final for the first time, will now face The Leela Hotel in the title clash.



Golkonda Hotel: 175/6 in 20 overs (T. Siva 82\*, Pankaj 33; Anil Kumar 2/29) beat Radisson Blu Plaza: 112 all out in 16.4 overs (Babu 41; Pankaj 3/17, Praneeth 2/22, Shiva Kumar 2/11) by 63 runs.

**BRIEF SCORES:**

**BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS**

**Ayush enters quarters; Sindhu, Prannoy bow out**

NINGBO: Ayush Shetty continued his fine form at the Badminton Asia Championships as he entered the quarterfinals after beating Chin Yu Jen of Taipei in straight games here on Thursday, while two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy concluded their campaigns with their re-

spective second-round losses. Ayush, the US Open 2025 champion, registered a comfortable 21-16, 21-12 win over the Taipei shuttler in a match that lasted for 41 minutes. Ayush started off his campaign with a stunning win over world No. 7 and fifth seed Li Shi Feng of China, 21-13, 21-16,

in the opening round. He will look to carry the momentum in the quarterfinal when he faces third seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia. Meanwhile, two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and former world championship medallist H. S. Prannoy bowed out after losing their respective second-round matches.

**TFA mourns demise of former national footballer Nithyasheelan**

HYDERABAD: The Telangana Football Association (TFA) expressed deep grief over



the untimely demise of former national footballer Nithyasheelan, at the age of 57. He had represented at the Sub-Junior National Championship in 1988 held in Dhanbad. As a mark of respect, two minutes of silence were observed on Thursday morning at the Gymkhana Football Ground during the ongoing U-20 camp. Similar tributes were paid before the C Division Football League matches. A condolence meeting was also held at 5 pm at the TFA office, attended by coaches, referees, and office bearers, who paid homage to his contributions to the sport. Nithyasheelan is survived by his wife, two sons, and a daughter. The TFA conveyed heartfelt condolences to his family, remembering his dedication and lasting contribution to football.

**Women's Reservation Bill Stalin backs 33% quota, raises suspicion on poll-timed bill**

CHENNAI: Chief Minister M K Stalin on Thursday alleged that the proposed amendment to ensure 33 per cent reservation for women in the midst of polls in states including Tamil Nadu appeared to be yet another political manoeuvre aimed at shaping electoral narratives. Stalin alleged the timing for the proposed amendment led to serious suspicion. "Why push such a far-reaching decision in the middle of state elections. This appears to be yet another political manoeuvre aimed at shaping electoral narratives, much like earlier attempts to influence women voters ahead of the 2024 Parliament elections," he alleged in a statement titled "This is not reform, this is reengineering power." Further, he said: "Let me be unequivocal: we strongly support 33 per cent reservation for women. Our support is absolute. But it must be implemented without increasing seats and without punishing states that acted responsibly. If the intent is genuine, nothing prevents immediate implementation within the existing framework." Demanding fair delimitation, he alleged there was complete opacity on the basis for delimitation and



asked would the exercise rely on 1971 figures from a pre-population control era or the 2021 Census. "Conflicting signals and vague assurances only deepen suspicion." This move would also impose a massive financial burden on states, forcing them to expand or rebuild Legislative Assemblies, all without proper consultation. "This is a direct assault on cooperative federalism. This is not reform, it is a unilateral, politically driven exercise designed to concentrate power, weaken Parliament, marginalise the South, and undermine social justice," he alleged. "The nation deserves answers: why this undue haste, why shift the goalposts, and who truly stands to benefit?" The NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is systematically eroding the very foundations

of Parliament, he alleged. The Dravidian party chief claimed: "What should be a vibrant forum for debate and accountability is being reduced to a hollow ritual, a stage where members may not even get fair time to speak or represent their people. This proposal to increase seats is a direct contradiction of their own slogan of minimum government, maximum governance. It will only inflate expenditure, burden taxpayers, and dilute the quality of parliamentary functioning." This also went against the spirit of Article 1 of the Constitution, which defines India as a Union of States. Ignoring the voices of states and bypassing meaningful consultation is not democratic - it is unitary overreach that undermines the country's federal and plural character.

**Kerala polling sees minor protests over bogus votes**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Assembly polling across Kerala progressed largely peacefully, but protests were reported at several booths on Thursday over allegations of bogus voting. A minor scuffle broke out between Congress and BJP activists at Manalur in Thrissur district after UDF candidate T N Prathapan arrived in the area. According to police, BJP activists prevented people accompanying Prathapan from entering the booth premises, leading to the scuffle. In Wadakkanchery, also in Thrissur district, a voter, Sajeev, was unable to cast his vote after election officials informed him that his vote had already been recorded as a postal ballot. This triggered protests by BJP activists, prompting police intervention. Although election officials offered to allow him to cast a tender vote, he declined. BJP candidate T S Ullas Babu later arrived at the booth and staged a protest. A similar incident occurred in Kuttiady, Kozhikode district, where a woman was denied the right to vote after it was found that her vote had already been cast as a postal ballot. At Malampuzha and Shoranur in Palakkad district, Thrikkaripur in Kasaragod, and Vattiyoorakavu in Thiruvananthapuram, complaints emerged that votes had been cast in the names of original voters, leading to protests. The affected voters were later permitted to cast tender votes.

**From wedding hall to booth: Newlyweds turn up to vote**

PATHANAMTHITTA/WAYANAD(KERALA) A newly-wed couple in Kerala's Pathanamthitta district made a special stop at the polling station on Thursday, heading straight from their wedding to cast their votes. Their detour was a statement on the importance of democratic participation. Joining them in the spirit of the day, another bride from northern Wayanad district also made sure to vote first before heading off to her own wedding ceremony. Divyasree and Ashwant, who got married around 9 am, turned up to vote close to noon right from the wedding hall. Speaking to reporters, the couple said it was a joint



decision to turn up to vote. Ashwant said the wedding date was fixed in January much before the polling date was announced and therefore, it was a coincidence that both fell on the same day. He

also said that he had missed many voting opportunities as he worked outside the state, but he used to vote whenever he was in Kerala. His wife said that she always used to exercise her

right to vote. The couple said that their message to society is that everyone should vote. They said that neither was politically active, but voting was a non-political act. Just like them, Akhila Antony, a native of Meppadi in Wayanad district, arrived to vote in her wedding attire barely an hour before her marriage was scheduled at a church in Mananthavady at 10.30 am. She decided to vote first as it would not have been possible after the wedding, Akhila told media. On seeing her in the bridal attire, polling officials and locals made arrangements for her to vote quickly and after that she left for the wedding venue. (PTI)

**'Mamata interested in 'Khela Hobe' over sports growth'**

MALDA (WB) BJP national president Nitin Nabin on Thursday asserted that West Bengal has fallen behind in sports and other cultural activities, in which it used to lead the country, since Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is more interested in 'Khela Hobe' (political game). Lambasting the mess surrounding football legend Lionel Messi's appearance in Kolkata's Salt Lake stadium

in December 2025, he said it happened because of political one-upmanship. Addressing a meeting with members of sports clubs and NGOs here, the BJP chief said that West Bengal has fallen behind in sports and other cultural activities, in which it used to be the leader in the country, since "the chief minister here is more interested in 'Khela Hobe' (political game)". Criticising the TMC government for the 'Khela Hobe'

(game will be played) slogan, he said, "For them, the sporting arena has become a political playground." The TMC chief is known to raise this slogan during elections in the state. Stating that the time has come to punish such people, he said that states like Haryana, Gujarat, and Bihar have made tremendous advancements in sporting activities. Nabin said that to end this culture, "this corruption and cut-money ridden TMC gov-

ernment has to be sent packing." West Bengal is due for assembly elections on April 23 and 29, with the counting of votes scheduled on May 4. The BJP chief alleged that during the TMC rule, sports clubs are used for preparing a game plan for "booth-capturing during the elections". He asserted it will not be allowed to happen this assembly election, maintaining that misuse of sports clubs for such purposes will be ended by a BJP government.

**AJUP leader terms it AI-generated**

A political controversy erupted in West Bengal on Thursday after an alleged video of Humayun Kabir surfaced on social media, purportedly showing him claiming links with senior BJP leaders and efforts to defeat Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the upcoming Assembly elec-

tions. At a press meet, the Trinamool Congress shared the purported video and demanded an Enforcement Directorate probe into Kabir's alleged claims of proximity with Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the Prime Minister's Office as part of a multi-core

plan to defeat Banerjee in the polls. In the video, which could not be independently verified by PTI, Kabir is allegedly heard saying he is willing to go to "any extent" to unseat Banerjee and has been in touch with senior BJP leaders, including Adhikari. Kabir termed the video as AI-generated and aimed at maligning him and threat-



ened to take legal action. Kabir, who founded the Aam Janata Unnayan Party days after he was suspended by the

TMC late last year, is also purportedly heard claiming that he had communication with the PMO and was advised to coordinate with leaders from other BJP-ruled states. The video further purportedly captures Kabir stating that his strategy revolves around diverting minority votes away from the ruling Trinamool Congress, suggesting that such a shift could

benefit the BJP electorally. In the video, he allegedly mentions having received Rs 200 crore as an advance as part of a Rs 1,000 crore deal to execute the plan. Reacting sharply, senior TMC leader and minister Firhad Hakim said Kabir has been "working in tandem" with the BJP to mislead minority voters. Asking Kabir not to take the emotions and senti-

ment of the Muslim community for granted, he said the video "exposes a deep-rooted conspiracy" aimed at influencing the electoral outcome in the state. Hakim further alleged that Kabir was heard in the video saying that invoking the Babri Masjid issue would be more effective in mobilising Muslim votes, even if it does not ultimately materialise.

"The BJP is trying to manipulate the mandate by using proxy players. This video, if true, confirms our allegations," another senior TMC leader and minister Aroop Biswas said. He also said the AIMIM and its president Asaduddin Owaisi should clarify their stand on the issue. Asked who shot the video, Hakim said, "That is not important."

**Bengal political row over Kabir video**



The current instability has sent shockwaves through the global system. Shockwaves that have disrupted supply chains, erupted geopolitical tensions. At the same time, energy markets have been fundamentally affected, it is in this environment where energy is our backbone

-Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Minister

## BIZ BRIEFS

## Whirlpool's new products

Whirlpool of India Limited launched new refrigerators range in the single door category, designed to address one of the most common challenges faced by users which is the hassle of manual defrosting. With the introduction of its VitamagicPro and IMPRO PLUS ranges, Whirlpool launched the largest range of Automatic Defrost refrigerators in the single door category, offering consumers a more convenient and stress-free refrigeration experience.

## Offer from Paragon

Paragon unveiled a cashback offer on its women's footwear collection, as part of a key initiative to encourage purchase among women consumers. Under the offer, consumers receive an assured Rs 30 instant cashback through a simple QR-based process. Each product comes with a scratch-enabled QR code on the tag, which can be scanned to access the cashback page.

## UltraTech's CSR activity

UltraTech Cement Limited's integrated manufacturing unit Andhra Pradesh Cement Works (APCW) diverted over 800 metric tons of banana pseudostem waste from landfill through a unique model that enables sustainable waste management. To tackle the dual challenges of landfill burden and open-air burning of banana waste in Tadipatri, the unit undertook Project Uday which enhanced livelihoods for 500 farmers and 100 local women entrepreneurs by helping them convert agricultural residue into marketable eco-friendly products.

## Antony Waste, JFE in pact

Antony Waste Handling Cell Limited, an integrated waste management company, announced a strategic partnership with Japan-based JFE Engineering Corporation for two waste-to-energy plants in Andhra Pradesh. This marks the first Japanese FDI into India's waste-to-energy (WTE) sector and JFE Engineering Corporation's entry into India's waste management market. As part of the partnership, JFE Engineering will invest 750 million Japanese yen to acquire a 25 per cent equity stake in Antony Waste's two special purpose vehicles (SPVs).

## XLRI Delhi-NCR's convocation

XLRI Delhi-NCR successfully concluded its 5th Annual Convocation at its Delhi-NCR campus. A total of 207 students graduated this year, including 178 students from the Business Management (BM) program and 30 students from the Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Venture Development (IEV) program, marking another milestone in the institution's growth journey. The ceremony reflected XLRI's continued commitment to nurturing responsible leaders equipped to contribute meaningfully to business and society. The graduating cohort benefited from robust placement outcomes with 576 domestic and 2 international offers.

## TCS Q4 net profit jumps to ₹13,718 cr

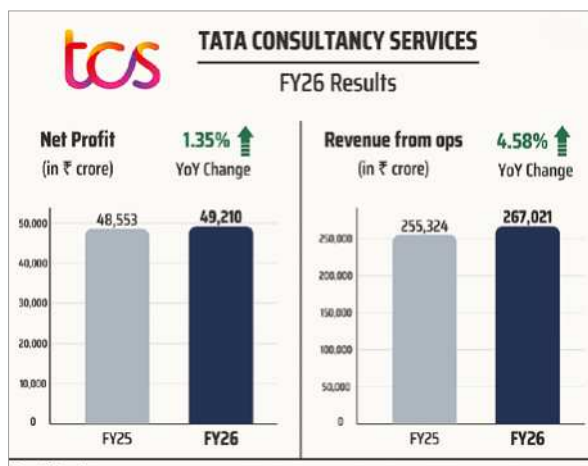
MUMBAI

COUNTRY'S largest IT services company TCS on Thursday reported a net profit of Rs12,224 crore in the January-March period last year and Rs10,657 crore in the preceding December quarter.

The Tata Group company reported a net profit of Rs12,224 crore in the January-March period last year and Rs10,657 crore in the preceding December quarter.

For fiscal year 2025-26, TCS' PAT inched up 1.35 per cent to Rs49,210 crore, as against Rs48,553 crore in FY25. From a headcount perspective, the company added 2,356 jobs in Q4 to take the overall number of employees to 5,84,519 as on March 31, 2026, marking the first quarter of net addition after two consecutive quarters of a fall. The company's employee base declined by 23,460 in FY26, a year in which it began an exercise to cut 12,000 jobs because of changes in the technology landscape.

TCS is the first company in the \$315 billion Indian IT sector to report its earnings for



the fiscal year 2025-26, which saw a deepening of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and subsequent concerns on the employee intensity in the sector which produces one of the best quality jobs in the economy.

In the reporting quarter, its revenue from operations jumped 9.64 per cent to Rs 70,698 crore from the Rs64,479 crore in the year-ago period, while the same for the full fiscal jumped 4.58 per cent to Rs 2.67 lakh crore.

The operating profit margin expanded to 25.3 per cent in the March quarter, up from 24.2 per cent in the year-ago period. Its chief executive and managing director K Krithivasan said this is the third consecutive quarter of sequential growth and added that the momentum was broad based across major markets and industries.

"While the macro-economic headwinds continue, we see sustained customer conviction in technology investments, which positions us well for the opportunities ahead," he said.

It signed new deals of \$12 billion in the three months, led by North America at \$5.4 billion and the banking, financial services and insurance business at \$2.8 billion.

The voluntary attrition stood at 13.7 per cent at the end of the quarter, and the company's chief human resources officer Sudeep Kunnal said it will be reverting to implementing salary hikes across the organisation from April 1 onwards.

## Strong buffers to shield India from oil volatility: World Bank

Growth seen at 6.6% in FY27 despite Middle East-driven oil risks

## WHY INDIA IS RESILIENT

- India has strong buffers: Forex reserves, fiscal space, low inflation
- FY26 growth seen at 7.6%, driven by demand and exports
- India remains fastest-growing major economy despite tariffs

NEW DELHI

THE World Bank on Thursday said India is well placed to weather the ongoing global energy shock, supported by strong macroeconomic buffers such as high foreign exchange reserves, fiscal space and low inflation.

Addressing a conference a day after raising India's GDP growth projection for FY27 to 6.6 per cent, World Bank officials said the country entered the current Middle East-driven oil market volatility from a position of strength. India had already demon-



strated resilience in the face of global trade turbulence in the previous fiscal. World Bank Regional Practice Director for South Asia, Sebastian Eckardt, highlighted that India's strong policy buffers and growth momentum provide room for policy support if required. He noted that structural reforms, including trade agreements and labour initiatives, are reinforcing the country's growth trajectory.

According to the World Bank's latest South Asia Economic Update, India's growth is estimated to have accelerated from 7.1 per cent in FY25 to 7.6 per cent in FY26, driven by robust domestic demand and resilient exports. Growth is projected to moderate to 6.6 per cent in FY27, slightly higher than earlier estimates.

World Bank Lead Econo-

mist for India, Aurelien Kruse, said India remained the fastest-growing large economy in FY26 despite facing high global tariffs. He credited income tax cuts and GST rate reductions for supporting consumption, while exports and investment performed better than expected.

The report described the current scenario as a "major trade shock" with risks tilted to the downside, particularly due to oil price volatility. The World Bank assumes crude oil prices at USD 90-100 per barrel for FY27.

It also commended the government's handling of the energy crisis, noting that authorities balanced supply management with price stability, avoiding extreme measures such as rationing while cushioning consumers from sharp price spikes.

## Blue Star expects 20% volume growth this year

KOLKATA: Air-conditioning and commercial refrigeration major Blue Star Limited expects around 20 per cent growth in volumes and about 25 per cent revenue growth this year, its managing director B Thiagarajan said on Thursday.

He said the air-conditioning industry is currently facing a total cost impact of around 13 per cent, comprising 5 per cent from revised energy labelling norms and about 8 per cent due to higher raw material prices.

"Out of this, the industry has already passed on about 5-6 per cent to consumers, and another 5-7 per cent increase is expected in April to offset the remaining impact," Girish Hingorani, Vice President (Marketing - Unitary Cooling Products), said.

Thiagarajan added that margins, which typically stand at around 8.5 per cent for the business, have been squeezed recently due to cost pressures, with the company focused on pushing sales.

## India Pharma Expo in Hyd from April 23

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

THE India Pharma Expo 2026 is set to emerge as one of the most influential pharmaceutical industry gatherings in India, bringing together the entire pharma ecosystem under one roof. To be held from April 23-25, 2026, at the HITEX Exhibition Centre, Hyderabad, the event will convene industry leaders, policymakers, innovators, researchers, and technology providers to explore the next phase of growth in pharmaceuticals and life sciences.

With the theme "India's Pharma Power - Building Global Bridges in Life Sciences & Innovation," the expo will spotlight India's expanding role in global drug manufacturing, vaccine production, biotechnology research, and pharmaceutical exports. Co-located with the NextGen Pharma Summit & Awards, the event creates a dynamic platform where policy, innovation, and business converge. It offers a unique ecosystem where knowledge meets networking, enabling insights to translate into actionable strategies. The event is being hosted under the leadership of Chief Guest, Shri Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Hon'ble Minister for IT,



Electronics & Communication, Industries & Commerce, and Legislative Affairs, Government of Telangana, and Shri C. Damodar Raja Narasimha, Hon'ble Minister for Health, Medical & Family Welfare, Government of Telangana. It will also feature a distinguished lineup of industry leaders, including Sarvesh Singh, CEO & Director, Telangana Lifesciences; Chakravarthi AVPS, Chairman, FOPE (Telangana & Andhra Pradesh) and Global Ambassador, World Packaging Organisation; K Raja Bhanu, Director General, Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India; Sudarshan Jain, Secretary General, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance; and Dr. Jitendra Sharma, MD & CEO, AMTZ, among many other eminent speakers shaping the future of the pharmaceutical and life sciences sector.

## Chhattisgarh electricity department bags spl award

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

CHHATTISGARH State Power Generation Company Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Thermal Power Station (DSPM) Korba East achieved the third position at the national level with an outstanding performance in the financial year 2025-26. For this achievement, Secretary of Energy and Chairman of Power Generation and Distribution Company Dr Rohit Yadav has congratulated all the officers/employees of Generation Company.

SK Katiyar, Managing Director, Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company, said "Our plants have performed excellently, with DSPM Korba East performing the best and bagging the third position at the national level. It is the result of our efficient management and regular maintenance of the plants that our plant has achieved this record at the national level by performing much higher than



the prescribed parameters. Power units of both (2x250 MW) capacity of DSPM have achieved 91 per cent PLF (Plant Load Factor) in 2025-26. DSPM has increased the pride of Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company by achieving 91 per cent PLF more than the target of 85 per cent set by CEA (Central Electricity Authority) and CSERC (Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission).

Apart from this, Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company has achieved another achievement. The overall performance of the Chhattisgarh State Power Generation in the annual



evaluation of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has also been good, in which the Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company ranks third among the 33 institutions and ranks in the top three category. Shri SK Katiyar expressed happiness over the excellent performance of the Power Generation Company and said that with this achievement, Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company has got a stronger recognition on the energy production platform of the country. We will continue to give our best presentation and strive for the company's progress. Information of DSPM.

## Silver, gold rally falters as West Asia tensions resurface

NEW DELHI: Silver prices declined by Rs 7,800 to Rs 2.43 lakh per kilogram in the national capital on Thursday while gold fell to Rs 1.54 lakh per 10 grams as investors booked profits amid concerns over the durability of the fragile ceasefire in West Asia. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal depreciated by Rs 7,800, or 3.10 per cent, to Rs 2,43,200 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) from Wednesday's closing level of Rs 2,51,000 per kg.

Gold of 99.9 per cent purity also decreased by Rs 1,500, or nearly 1 per cent, to Rs 1,54,900 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had finished at Rs 1,56,400 per 10 grams in the previous market session. Analysts said precious metals witnessed selling pressure as uncertainty around the ceasefire between the US and Iran weighed on investors' sentiment. "Gold prices declined on Thursday, reversing most of the previous session's gains as investors reassessed the fragile ceasefire in West Asia," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

## STOCK MARKETS SLIDE AS CEASEFIRE HOPES DIMINISH

Rising crude prices and Strait of Hormuz tensions dent investor sentiment

## Factors that pulled markets

- Fading ceasefire optimism: Renewed tensions involving Iran and Israel dented investor confidence
- Strait of Hormuz disruption fears: Iran's move heightened worries over global oil supply

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmark indices ended lower on Thursday, with the Sensex tumbling 931 points after a spectacular rally in the previous session, as renewed tensions in West Asia faded the ceasefire-led optimism. The ceasefire deal appeared to be at risk after Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz again in response to Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Weak trends in Asian and



European markets, a jump in crude oil prices and uninterrupted foreign fund outflows also made investors jittery in the domestic market. The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 931.25 points or 1.20 per cent to settle at 76,631.65. During the day, it dived 1,215 points or 1.56 per cent to 76,347.90. The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 222.25 points or 0.93 per cent to end at 23,775.10. From the

30-Sensex firms, InterGlobe Aviation, Larsen & Toubro, Eternal, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the major laggards. Bharat Electronics, Power Grid, NTPC and Tata Consultancy Services were among the gainers. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, jumped 3.27 per cent to \$97.85 per barrel.

"Ceasefire-led optimism faded as renewed US-Iran tensions and ongoing restric-

tions at the Strait of Hormuz pushed crude back up, reviving concerns around India's inflation. Domestically, profit-booking, rising 10-year bond yields, and rupee weakness reduced near-term risk appetite. Financials led the decline after the previous session's sharp rally amid sustained FII selling, while broader markets held relatively steady," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs2,811.97 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs4,168.17 crore. US markets ended significantly higher on Wednesday. "Indian markets witnessed a pullback, snapping the recent five-session gaining streak as sentiment turned cautious amid fading confidence around the US-Iran ceasefire.

## Morgan Stanley sees bull run in market, says will hit 95k mark

Earnings cycle revival, cheap valuations and strong domestic demand underpin bullish outlook

MUMBAI

GLOBAL brokerage firm Morgan Stanley on Thursday said that Indian markets are poised for a strong rally with Sensex likely to touch 95,000 level by December 2026.

In its latest India Equity Strategy Playbook report, the brokerage firm said that the current combination of depressed valuations, improving earnings momentum and cautious investor positioning reflects conditions typically seen near the end of market downturns.

In the base case, the headline index Sensex is expected to touch the 95,000 mark by December 2026, implying an upside potential of 22 per cent from Wednesday's closing, according to the brokerage. It noted that downside risks appear limited compared to potential gains, describing the present phase as an attractive entry point for long-term investors.

The brokerage also pointed out that India's trailing



market performance over the past year is close to historic lows, while relative valuations have declined sharply.

However, underlying fundamentals remain strong, supported by robust domestic demand, policy stability and a recovery in capital expenditure. A major factor behind its bullish outlook is the revival in the earnings cycle. High-frequency indicators point to strengthening trends across consumption, investment and services, even as market expectations remain subdued, the brokerage noted.

Analysts also noted that India's share of global corpo-

rate profits now exceeds its index weight by the widest margin on record.

The brokerage has expected positive earnings revisions going forward and said it remains ahead of consensus estimates. Foreign investor positioning -- which has weakened in recent months -- could further support an upside surprise if earnings momentum continues to improve. On valuations, Morgan Stanley pointed out that the Sensex is currently trading at its cheapest level when measured against gold, a long-term indicator often associated with major market turning points.



## Nani's 'Aaya Sher' from 'The Paradise' sets new record; crosses 100 million views

**N**AURAL Star Nani's much-awaited film *The Paradise*, directed by Srikanth Odela, is already creating massive buzz even before its release. The film has been generating strong excitement with its glimpse, posters, and especially the first single "Aaya Sher," which has turned into a sensational chartbuster.

Composed by Rockstar Anirudh Ravichander, the high-energy track has captured the attention of audiences across platforms. Since its release, the song has been trending continuously on YouTube and social media, achieving an impressive milestone of over 101 million views. Notably, "Aaya Sher" has become the fastest song featuring Nani to cross the 100-million mark, making it a record-setting moment in the actor's career. It is also the first Nani song to reach this milestone even before the film's theatrical release.



A major factor behind the song's viral success is Nani's electrifying screen presence. His energetic dance moves, intense attitude, and catchy hook step quickly went viral, inspiring fans worldwide to recreate the steps. Instagram reels and YouTube dance covers featuring the track have further boosted its popularity.

Produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the SLV Cinemas banner, *The Paradise* is slated for a worldwide theatrical release on August 21, with expectations continuing to rise.

The makers also ensured

## INCA announces first awards winners; Naga Chaitanya, Mirai and Anil Ravipudi shine

**T**HE Indian National Cine Academy (INCA) has officially announced the winners of its first-ever INCA Awards, recognizing outstanding achievements across Indian cinema. Representing twelve languages and twelve film industries, the academy revealed winners in 25 categories, celebrating excellence among actors, filmmakers, and technicians.

In the Telugu category, Naga Chaitanya won Best Actor for his performance in *Thandel*, while Mirai Super Yodha, produced by People Media Factory, was named Best Telugu Film. Popular filmmaker Anil Ravipudi secured the Best Director award for *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam*.

Among the Hindi winners, Ranveer Singh



took home Best Actor for Dhurandhar, while Chhaava, produced by Dinesh Vijan and Maddock Films, won Best Film. Meanwhile, Kannada cinema dominated with *Kantara: A Legend - Chapter 1*, earning multiple honours including Best Actor and Best Director for



Rishab Shetty. The awards also recognised technical achievements such as cinematography, music, editing, choreography, and production design. Winners were chosen by a distinguished jury comprising experienced members from the Indian



film industry. The inaugural INCA Awards ceremony will be held on April 16 in Mumbai, where leading directors, actors, technicians, and producers from across India are expected to attend. The event is set to become a significant annual platform

celebrating the diversity and creative excellence of Indian cinema. The INCA Awards aim to create a comprehensive national platform celebrating talent across multiple regional industries, reflecting the diversity and creative strength of Indian cinema.

## 'Sarkar Bai' launched with grand pooja ceremony

**T**HE upcoming Telugu film *Sarkar Bai*, set against a Telangana social backdrop, was formally launched with a grand pooja ceremony at the Secunderabad Ganesh Temple in Hyderabad.

The film features Sriram Nirmala and Sai Keerthana in the lead roles and is being directed by Lara. During the muhurtham ceremony, producer Tummalapalli Prafull Ram Reddy switched on the camera, while director Lara directed the first shot. Telangana Income Tax officer Dasya Nayak gave the ceremonial clap for the muhurtham scene, and guests extended their best wishes to the film's team.

Speaking at the event, director Lara revealed that the film is inspired by real



incidents from 1985, focusing on issues such as water disputes and caste discrimination. She said the story reflects the struggles and realities of people and aims to highlight socially

relevant themes.

The film also features actors Baahubali Prabhakar, Naga Mahesh, Dil Ramesh, Chalaki Chanti, Chittibabu, Shivani Reddy and Nupur Mukherjee in key roles.

Filmmaker Prem Raj, who attended the event, encouraged audiences to support films rooted in Telangana culture. The makers announced that the remaining cast will be finalized soon and shooting is expected to begin later this month.

## 'Diamond Decoyit' set for release; special free shows announced for women

**T**HE much-talked-about Telugu family emotional drama *Diamond Decoyit* is gearing up for a grand theatrical release across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on April 10. Ahead of the release, the film's pre-release event was held at the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce, where the team shared key details about the project.

One of the major highlights announced by the makers is a special initiative for women audiences. The team revealed that four shows of the film will be screened free of cost for women in theatres across the Telugu states, inviting them to watch the movie in large numbers.

The film features Partha Gopal as the lead actor, who has also produced the project, while Meghana Reddy plays the female lead. Directed by Surya G. Yadav, the movie is described as a family emotional drama filled with strong sentiments and heartfelt moments. The makers believe the film's powerful climax will leave a lasting impact on audiences.



The promotional content has already received encouraging responses. Veteran filmmaker K. Raghavendra Rao appreciated the trailer after watching it, and several film personalities who attended preview screenings reportedly praised the film.

Another notable aspect is that the movie was shot across more than 60 picturesque locations in Kadapa district, offering fresh visuals. With its emotional narrative and family-oriented theme, the team is confident the film will connect with audiences of all age groups.

## ARJUN AMBATI'S 'PARAMAPADA SOPANAM' LOCKS APRIL 24 RELEASE DATE

**A**CTOR Arjun Ambati, who gained recognition with diverse films like *Ardhanari*, *Theppa Samudram*, and *Wedding Diaries*, is gearing up for the release of his latest film *Paramapada Sopanam*. The actor, who also became popular among family audiences through the reality show *Bigg Boss*, is currently playing a key role in Ram Charan's upcoming pan-India film *Peddi*.

In *Paramapada Sopanam*, Arjun Ambati plays the lead role alongside actress Jennifer Emmanuel. The film is presented by Ganaparthi Swetha and produced under the Swayambhu Creations banner by Ganaparthi Narayana Rao and Telaprolu Prasanna Anjaneyulu, with Pulagam Supriya serving as co-producer.

The film is written and directed by Naga Siva, a former assistant director to Puri Jagannadh. He has also handled the story, screenplay, and dialogues, crafting the film as an engaging entertainer aimed at appealing to audiences across dif-



ferent sections. Music for the film is composed by Davzand, who previously gained recognition for his work in the film *Eagle*. As part of the promotions, lyrical songs like "Chinni Chinni Tappulevo" and "Boom Boom," along with the teaser, have received a positive response from audiences.

With post-production work now completed, the makers have officially announced that *Paramapada Sopanam* will hit theatres on April 24. The recently released poster featuring Arjun Ambati in an intense look has also garnered considerable attention online.



## Priyanka Mohan captivates with striking photoshoot

**A**CTRESS Priyanka Mohan made a strong impression in Tamil cinema with her breakout performance in *Doctor* alongside Sivakarthikeyan. The film became a massive success, and Priyanka's charm, natural acting, and confident screen presence quickly won over audiences. With such a powerful debut, many expected the young actress to rapidly rise as one of the leading faces of South Indian cinema.

However, after the success of *Doctor*, Priyanka has been waiting for another major project that can match the scale and impact of her debut. Although she has continued to appear in several films, fans believe she deserves a stronger, more impactful role that can fully showcase her talent and bring her back into the spotlight in a big way.

Despite the wait for a major blockbuster, Priyanka is keeping the spotlight firmly on herself through her growing presence on social media. The actress recently grabbed attention with a striking new photoshoot that quickly went viral online.

In the pictures, Priyanka dazzles in a stylish black embellished spaghetti-strap midi dress paired with a flowing pink organza cape and elegant black heels. Her smoky eye makeup, confident posture, and graceful presence have impressed fans, who flooded the comments section with praise.

The glamorous look has once again reminded audiences of her strong screen appeal and star potential. While fans continue to wait for her next big film announcement, Priyanka Mohan's latest photos prove that she remains a captivating presence both on and off the screen.

## Thiruveer, Aishwarya Rajesh's 'Oh..! Sukumari' wraps filming

**Y**OUNG actor Thiruveer and talented actress Aishwarya Rajesh have teamed up for the upcoming village-based entertainer *Oh..! Sukumari*, which has now completed its entire shooting schedule. The film is directed by debutant Bharath Darshan and produced by Maheshwara Reddy Mooli under the Ganga Entertainments banner.

Both Thiruveer and Aishwarya Rajesh are currently riding high on the success of their previous films, and their collaboration has already generated considerable interest among audiences. The film

marks the second project from Ganga Entertainments after the critically acclaimed *Shivam Bhaje*. Earlier released first-look posters received a positive response, raising expectations around the film.

To celebrate the completion of the shoot, the makers shared a special photograph featuring Thiruveer and the entire team, capturing a cheerful moment as they marked the milestone together.

The film boasts a strong technical crew. Cinematographer C.H. Kushender, known for his work in *Razakar* and *Polimera*, is handling the

camera. Music for the film is composed by Bharath Manchiraju, a disciple of legendary composer M. M. Keeravani. Tirumala M. Tirupati of Balagam fame serves as the art director, while Sri Varaprasad is the editor. Costume design is handled by Anu Reddy Akkati, and popular lyricist Poornachari has penned the songs.

The makers have also announced that *Oh..! Sukumari* will release in multiple languages including Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi, aiming to reach a wider audience across India.

