



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.