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NO TEXTBOOKS YET CBSE asks schools to start teaching 3rd language in 7 days

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made the introduction of a third language (R3) in Class 6 mandatory from the 2026-27 academic session, directing all affiliated schools to comply within seven days, according to an official circular issued on Thursday. Calling the move "urgent and mandatory", the board said all schools must begin implementation immediately, even if textbooks are not yet available. "It has been learnt that many schools have already initiated the implementation of R3... All remaining schools are hereby directed to ensure compliance within 7 days from the date of issuance of this circular," the CBSE said in its notice. Schools have also been asked to start teaching the third language right away, using locally available material until official textbooks are released.

Air India flight makes 'pan pan' call after engine stalls mid-air

MUMBAI: An Air India aircraft makes a 'pan pan' alert while enroute Bengaluru on Thursday. The incident took place on flight AI 2812, an A320 Neo aircraft. The flight, originally to take off at 2.05am, took off at around 2.15am. The aircraft returned to the Mumbai airport at around 2.35am. According to officials the passengers reported soaked during takeoff. One of the officials said, "According to the official information available, there was a sound heard and sparks seen while takeoff. The pilot declared 'pan pan' and returned to the airport a few minutes after takeoff." "It was later known that its engine 2 had stalled," the official added.



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Will Amaravati dent Hyderabad realty?

Telangana's Registration & Stamps Dept starts studying Amaravati's impact on TG realty, including Hyd

Revenue from TG property registrations fell to Rs 14,214 cr in FY25 from Rs 14,588 cr in FY24
Hyd realty in slow

lane for last 3 years due to various reasons
TG officials fear AP's boost to Amaravati may adversely affect



Hyderabad has already gained traction enough to dent Hyderabad's real estate sector, going by the hard talk in certain informed quarters. But will Amaravati really affect the trajectory of the Telangana realty? The

Telangana government too, concerned over this aspect, is studying the ramifications of AP's new Greenfield capital city, which is being developed at a cost of over Rs 70,000 crore, on Telangana's land prices, construction activity,

and investments in realty in the new financial year. The Telangana Registration & Stamps Department has begun analysing the data relating to registration of properties following the recent announcement of

Amaravati as the sole capital of AP. For, already, revenue from registrations in TG decreased to Rs 14,214 crore in the financial year 2024-2025. It was Rs 14,588 crore in FY24. Although the state government expected huge revenue from property registrations in the 2025-2026 financial year; it remained low in the last financial year too. Given this trend, attributed to Amaravati factor, government officials have started raising doubts over the feasibility of achieving the target relating to revenue

from property registration in the new financial year i.e. FY27. The officials said that the government set a target of Rs 19,540 crore, which is Rs 3,000 crore higher than that of last year. A major challenge for the state government is that some real estate developers in Hyderabad are said to be shifting their focus to Amaravati. Some of these developers have already held meetings with officials in Amaravati to gauge the potential of real estate growth in the new capital in the coming years. **Continued on Page 7**

CURBS ON SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS FOR CHILDREN

Lokesh asks officials to prepare guidelines

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

MINISTER for IT and HRD Nara Lokesh, has initiated steps to curb social media exposure among children below 13 years, directing officials to frame guidelines and prepare a draft legislation for the same.

At a meeting held at his Undavalli residence with ministers, officials, and representatives from major social media platforms on Thursday, Lokesh emphasized the need to protect children from the adverse

Age Tokens' via DigiLocker under consideration



impact of digital platforms. He instructed that age-appropriate content guidelines be developed for children aged 13 to 16, ensuring a safer online environment.

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Land resurvey 2.0 will be over by March 2027: CM

HANS NEWS SERVICE GUNTUR

CHIEF Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has declared that the accelerated Land Resurvey 2.0 programme will be completed by March 2027, with the distribution of 1.12 crore pattadar passbooks to farmers across the state.

Addressing a public meeting after participating in the "Mee Bhoomi - Mee Hakku" passbook distribution programme at Surepalli village in the Vemuru Assembly constituency of Bapatla district, he said that the resurvey has



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu participating in the "Mee Bhoomi - Mee Hakku" passbook distribution programme at Surepalli village in Bapatla district on Thursday

already been completed in 6,976 out of 16,816 villages, and 21.23 lakh passbooks have been distributed so far. The Chief Minister said that advanced security features such

as e-KYC, Aadhaar linkage, blockchain technology, QR codes, and digital locking systems are being incorporated to prevent tampering of land records. **Continued on Page 7**

'REGIME CHANGE' VS 'BJP BUYING VOTES'

Modi, Mamata trade barbs at election rallies in Bengal

KOLKATA



PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee traded barbs at separate poll rallies on Thursday ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

While PM accused the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) of 'cruelty', Banerjee alleged that the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) deleted names of more than 90 lakh people from the state's voter lists.

At an election rally in Asansol, Modi said that a re-

gime change in West Bengal was inevitable, as the TMC's "repository of sins" has become full. "A regime change in Bengal is now cast in stone and sought by the people of Bengal. TMC's repository of sins is now full. Asansol is being ruled by syndicate raj, coal and sand mafia," the prime minister said.

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US-Iran truce strains amid Lebanon strikes

TEHRAN

A two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran is teetering on the brink of collapse just days after its announcement, as escalating Israeli military operations in Lebanon expose a critical loophole in the agreement.

While the truce was intended to pause a month of regional hostilities, both Washington and Jerusalem have explicitly confirmed that the deal excludes operations against Hezbollah in Lebanon, creating a diplomatic and military flashpoint that threatens to reignite the broader conflict.

The exclusion of the Lebanese front has drawn sharp condemnation from Iranian officials and international observers.

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US READY FOR NEXT CONQUEST: TRUMP

'Hormuz must be open and safe, else shooting starts'

Asks military to remain near Iran until 'real agreement'

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that US military forces will remain deployed in and around Iran until Tehran fully complies with the "real agreement," warning that any breach would trigger a military response larger than anything seen before.

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Heavy turnout marks high-stakes voting day in Assam, Kerala and Puducherry

NEW DELHI: A surge in voter enthusiasm marked the high-stakes Assembly elections on Thursday, with turnout figures by 3 pm touching a striking 85.21% in Assam, 78.71% in Kerala and 79.40% in Puducherry.

Over 5.3 crore electors turned out in large numbers, reflecting robust participation as they cast their votes to shape the political future of the two states and the union Territory.

Polling commenced at 7 am and is set to continue until evening across 140 constituencies in Kerala, 126 in Assam and 30 in Puducherry.

Officials said elaborate arrangements, including heightened security deployment, extensive webcasting and drone surveillance in sensitive areas, were put in place to ensure free and fair elections.

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WORLD QUANTUM DAY IN AMARAVATI

Indigenous Quantum facility launch on April 14

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

MARKING World Quantum Day on April 14, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will formally launch the nation's first indigenous Quantum Computers testing facility at SRM University in Amaravati and simultaneously launch virtually the Quantum facility centre at Medha towers in Gannavaram near Vijayawada.

With this, Andhra Pradesh is going to emerge as the first state in the country to commission indigenous Quantum computers testing facility, sharpening the broader vision to make Amaravati Quantum Valley the hub of International Quantum Computers. The Chief Minister will witness a live quantum system initiation with the cooling process of the



processor on the Amaravati IQ system being triggered virtually as the system is housed at Medha towers. At the same time, Amaravati IS system will function as an open access set up fully visible to all attendees during the demonstration. With the setting up of the Amaravati Quantum Reference Facility (AQR), India has now

opened sovereign quantum infrastructure. Amaravati becomes the anchor node of a national quantum hardware network positioning India to design, test, certify, and manufacture quantum systems for the world. Part of the state government's flagship programme Quantum Technology Hub, under the National Quantum Mission, Amaravati Quantum Valley will be hosting an IBM 133-qubit Quantum computer and has engaged 80 plus industry and academic partnerships, positioning it to be among the top five global quantum hubs. The launch of AQR on World Quantum Day adds an indigenous hardware dimension to Amaravati Quantum Valley's portfolio, complementing its existing quantum cloud, skilling, and innovation infrastructure.

Continued on Page 7

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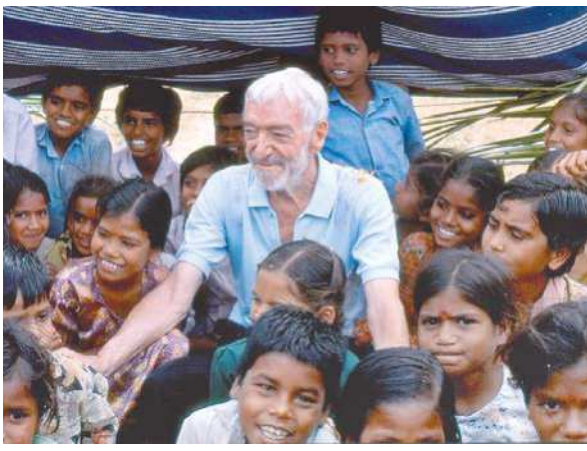
Naidu, Lokesh pay tribute to Vicente Ferrer on birth anniversary

CM hails RDT's service to 25 lakh underprivileged people

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and minister for IT and HRD Nara Lokesh on Thursday paid rich tributes to Vicente Ferrer Moncho, founder of the Rural Development Trust (RDT), on the occasion of his birth anniversary, recalling his immense contribution to the upliftment of the poor in the Telugu states.

In a message posted on X, the Chief Minister praised the RDT for its extensive developmental and humanitarian work, benefiting nearly 25 lakh underprivileged and backward-class people across Andhra Pradesh and



Telangana. He urged people to draw inspiration from Ferrer, who came from Spain and dedicated his life to the welfare of the Rayalaseema region, earning deep respect

among the people. Nara Lokesh, in his tribute, described Ferrer as a "God-given gift" to the poor and lauded his lifelong commitment to social service.

He noted that Ferrer established the Rural Development Trust decades ago and transformed it into a pillar of support for marginalized communities.

Highlighting RDT's contributions, Lokesh said the organization played a key role in building hospitals, educational institutions, housing for the poor, self-help groups, and sports infrastructure, thereby driving inclusive development in the region.

As a mark of tribute this year, Lokesh announced that the government has secured FCRA clearance for the RDT, ensuring that its services continue uninterrupted and reach those in need.

- Recalls YSR's historic padayatra, highlights his pro-poor, secular legacy
- Accuses Jagan of straying from those values, aligning with BJP and capitalist forces

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

ANDHRA Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Y S Sharmila on Wednesday strongly countered YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy through a post on Twitter, questioning his commitment to the ideals of their father, former chief minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy.

Marking April 9, Sharmila recalled that it was on this day 23 years ago that Dr YSR began his historic padayatra in the undivided Andhra Pradesh, aimed at the welfare of the poor and marginalised sections. She noted that he undertook the march as a Congress leader and later led the party to power, earning a permanent place in the

Sharmila questions Jagan's commitment to YSR ideals



hearts of the people. Taking a sharp dig, she questioned Jagan Mohan Reddy's current political stance, asking how he, as YSR's son and a leader carrying his father's name in the party, is upholding those values. She accused him of

compromising with "fascist forces" and aligning with capitalist tendencies, which she said stood in stark contrast to YSR's pro-poor governance.

Sharmila further said that YSR was a staunch secular leader who worked for uni-

ty among all communities, while alleging that Jagan was now bowing to the BJP out of political compulsion and fear of criminal cases. She criticised what she described as silence on issues affecting Dalits, minorities, and other weaker sections, including matters related to Waqf laws, Dalit Christian reservations, FCRA regulations, and "bulldozer politics."

She also raised concerns over alleged incidents of atrocities on Dalits, women, and minorities during Jagan's tenure, stating that such developments would have deeply disturbed YSR.

Calling Jagan's tributes to YSR "ironic," Sharmila remarked that instead of undertaking a Padayatra, he should embark on a journey of introspection ("Atma Vimsarana Yatra") to reflect on his governance and political choices.

Peace rally in Vij on April 14

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

LEADERS of the AP Peace Committee have called upon the public to actively participate in and make the world peace rally, scheduled to be held here April 14th, a grand success. The rally is being organised to protest against imperialist war aggression, which

has become a threat to global peace and human survival.

Peace Forum conveners Golla Narayana Rao, Dr Velaga Joshi, and Muneer Ahmed stated that the rally is being conducted with the support of various service organisations, transcending caste, religion, and social divisions.

The rally will commence at 4 pm from the BR Ambedkar statue on MG Road and will proceed up to the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation Stadium. The organisers demanded an immediate end to ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, involving countries such as the United States, Israel, and Iran. They emphasised that wars can never provide permanent solutions, as they lead to loss of lives and severe economic consequences. They stressed that dialogue and negotiations are the only viable means to resolve conflicts.

They urged people from all walks of life to participate in large numbers and make the event successful.

Protests erupt at private hospital after patient's death

- Family alleges medical negligence after 69-year-old man dies post-surgery
- Relatives claim junior doctors operated without senior supervision, sparking outrage
- Police intervene as protests demand hospital closure and criminal cases against staff

HANS NEWS SERVICE KURNOOL



Family members of the deceased stage a protest in front of KIMS hospital in Kurnool on Thursday

A tense situation prevailed outside KIMS hospital in the city on Thursday following the death of a 69-year-old man, identified as A. Venkata Ramana Reddy, a resident of Uppalapadu village in Orvakal mandal. The deceased had reportedly undergone a surgical procedure at the hospital, after which he was declared dead, triggering protests by his family members and relatives.

The grieving family has

alleged that medical negligence led to his death. They claimed that the treatment provided resembled scenes from the Telugu film Tagore, accusing the hospital of unethical practices. According to the relatives, the surgery was conducted in the absence of a senior doctor, allegedly by junior doctors, and there is no clarity on who actually performed the operation.

Family members questioned how the patient could die within minutes of doctors declaring the operation

successful. They expressed the suspicion over the sequence of events, stating that the patient was taken into the operation theatre and returned lifeless shortly thereafter. The relatives alleged that the hospital attempted to mislead them by claiming the surgery was successful despite the patient already being in a critical condition.

Demanding accountability, the family staged a protest in front of the KIMS hospital, insisting on a clear explanation from the management. They called for the

immediate closure of the hospital and registration of criminal cases against those responsible. With a large number of relatives gathering at the premises and raising slogans, the situation turned tense, prompting concerns over law and order in the area.

Police rushed to the spot and took stock of the situations. On the assurance given by the police personnel to file a case on the authorities responsible, the victim family members gave up the protest.

CM visits Bapatla police stall

HANS NEWS SERVICE GUNTUR

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed satisfaction over the measures taken by the Bapatla district police to reduce road accidents.

He inspected the stall set up by the Bapatla District Police Department and expressed satisfaction with the measures being implemented to prevent road accidents.

He attended 'Mee Bhoomi - Mee Hakku' programme held on Thursday at Surepalli village in Bhattiprolu mandal of Bapatla district, where Pattadar passbooks with the government seal were distributed. On this occasion, he visited the police department stall set up at the public meeting venue.

During the visit, Superintendent of Police B Umamaheswar briefed the CM on various initiatives undertaken to reduce road accidents.

He explained that the "Shiro Raksha - Prana Raksha" programme is being implemented to create widespread awareness about

helmet usage. He further informed that wearing helmets will be made mandatory from April 15, and the "No Helmet - No Fuel" policy will be enforced, especially in the district headquarters. To strengthen road safety, six special road safety squads have been deployed to conduct continuous inspections.

Over the past six months, in coordination with NH authorities, 20 black spots and 78 accident-prone locations have been identified, where safety measures such as speed breakers and reflective barricades have been installed.

Additionally, innovative methods like "Face Wash and Go" to prevent driver fatigue and advanced drone surveillance are being effectively utilised. As a result of these sustained efforts, the district has recorded a 9.47% reduction in road accidents and an 11.63% reduction in fatalities caused by road accidents.

After reviewing these statistics, Naidu expressed satisfaction with the initiatives undertaken by the SP to curb road accidents.

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Lot End Date & Time: 16.04.2026 at 11:30 hrs. (for Sl. No. 1) and 11:40 hrs. (for Sl. No. 2).
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RC.No.11021/54/2026/L-4, (E- 3196978), 09-04-2026
Application of M/s. PHB Infra Developers Private Limited Rep. by Smt. Bathala Greesma requesting for approval of layout for an extent of Ac. 4.7973 Cts., covered in Sy.No.492p, 496p, 501P, 503P, 504p, 505p, 614P of Maddi Village, Padmanabham Mandal, Visakhapatnam district vide file RC.No. 1167/0110/LP/V/MRDA/2025 is under process in VMRDA. Hence, the general public are hereby informed to submit their objections/suggestions any in this regard within 7 days from the date of publication to VMRDA pertaining to the above approval of layout application failing which it will be construed that there are no objections/suggestions etc., and the above approval of layout application will be processed as per rules. Sd/- Metropolitan Commissioner, VMRDA.

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The borrower(s) (whose details are provided in the table herein below), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby informed that the below mentioned accounts are overdue, and the borrowers/account holders have not responded/complied with the communication, and notice sent by HDB Financial Services Limited (the "Company") requesting the borrower to clear his/her dues as per the documents in respect of the below mentioned loan signed/accepted by the borrower(s) (such documents, collectively "loan agreement") and therefore defaulted in terms thereof. The Company has in exercise of its rights as a pledgee, decided to enforce the pledge and therefore hold a public auction of the gold ornaments pledged to the company as security for the loan for the purpose of selling the same and realizing/recovering the dues owned by the borrower(s) to the company. The auction will be conducted on/after 18-04-2026 at the below mentioned local branch of HDB Financial Services Limited from 11.00 am onwards on the date and branches mentioned in the below table:-

Loan No	Customer Name	Date of Loan	Overdue Amount ₹	Branch Name
72630301	Dasari Rajesh	18-10-2025	115855	Anantapur
55735742	Nanavarapu Durga Prasad	08-10-2024	91679	Eluru
70385913	Shalk Aleem Khan	02-09-2025	63102	Eluru
73446920	Badigineni Divya	29-10-2025	13830	Guntur
61594251	Peluri Durgaprasad	21-02-2025	46065	Kakinada
73716565	Kotana Srinivasarao	04-11-2025	17303	Kakinada
73812738	Ramu Sajja	06-11-2025	46338	Kakinada
73875164	Sabbithi Nageswara Rao	07-11-2025	52402	Kakinada
71169172	Tagaram Madhavi	20-09-2025	18262	Nellore
70745648	Tagaram Mallikarjuna	10-09-2025	46866	Nellore
74151370	Annavarapu Naganjali	20-11-2025	21824	Ongole
70168763	Jarugu Nirmala Devi	28-08-2025	37006	Proddutur
73043280	Gajjala Vishnuteja	24-10-2025	51336	Proddutur
61635584	Kalapa Rama Rao Sonti	18-02-2025	33687	Vijayawada
71592656	Mule Ravindra	29-09-2025	18066	Vijayawada-Governorpet
64785908	Peddapudi Karthik Kumar	30-04-2025	18425	Vijayawada-Kanuru
67484381	Kalapa Mariya Das	28-06-2025	21783	Vijayawada-Kanuru
74021090	Ravikiran Telu	14-11-2025	17992	Vijayawada-Kanuru
50075661	Seeram Naga Trinadh	31-05-2024	14475	Vijayawada-Ramavarampattu
73427334	Kanumuri Venkata Sudheer	29-10-2025	83696	Vijayawada-Ramavarampattu
73981201	Pudi Ratnam	12-11-2025	13408	Visakhapatnam
73947895	Injareddy Bora	11-11-2025	50964	Visakhapatnam

The auction shall be conducted on an "AS IS WHERE" and "AS IS WHAT IT" basis and the Company is not making and shall not make any representation or warranties as regards the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. It shall be the sole and absolute responsibility of the potential purchaser to verify, examine and satisfy themselves about the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments prior to placing their bid and for such purpose it shall be open to potential purchasers to examine, at their sole cost and expense, and at the address set out herein above, the gold ornaments whether with or without expert advice 45 minutes prior to the time stipulated for the conduct of the auction. All the bid shall be subjected to such minimum reserve price as the company may deem fit to fix in this regards. The auction process and sale (if any) pursuant to such auction shall be subjected to such further terms and condition as the company may at sole discretion deem fit to impose.

If the borrower(s) mentioned above pays the amount due to the Company in terms of the loan agreement in his individual loan account in full before the auction as mentioned above, the pledged ornaments securing the said loan may be withdrawn from the said auction without further notice. Please note that it is the absolute discretionary power of the undersigned authorized officer of the company, either to postpone or to cancel the auction proceeding without prior notice and without assigning any reason thereof and to reject any or all the bids or offer without assigning any reason for the same.

Place: ANDHRA PRADESH Authorised Officer (HDB Financial Services Ltd)
Date: 10-04-2026

Dy CM launches drinking water project virtually

- Stresses the need to instil confidence and provide security for the future of citizens
- A major drinking water project constructed at a cost of Rs 17.33 crore at Antarvedi was inaugurated

HANS NEWS SERVICE RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

"TRUE development is achieved not merely through construction activities but by improving basic infrastructure and bringing meaningful change in people's lives", Deputy Chief Minister Konidela Pawan Kalyan said on Thursday. He stressed the need to instil confidence and provide security for the future of citizens. He was speaking while virtually inaugurating and laying foundation stones for several development works in the Razole constituency. A major drinking water project constructed at a cost of Rs 17.33 crore at Antarvedi was inaugurated on the occasion. He also laid the foundation stone for rapid sand filter units with a capacity of 6 million litres, being taken up with Rs 5 crore from ONGC funds.

Pawan Kalyan stated that the newly launched



Dy CM Pawan Kalyan

drinking water scheme under the Jal Jeevan Mission would benefit around 30,000 people in 13 villages. As part of the project, a 10-acre pond has been developed along with a water treatment plant having a capacity of 3 million litres and an overhead tank. Water will be pumped from the Gannavaram canal and stored in the pond for supply.

He noted that earlier, drinking water had to be supplied from Antarvedipalem, located about 12 kilometres away, and had to pass through nearly 50 villages, leading to severe shortages. He said the long-standing drinking water problems faced by the region for nearly three decades would now be resolved. The Deputy Chief

Minister further said that once the rapid sand filter units at Gudimellanka are completed with ONGC CSR funds, safe drinking water would be supplied to nearly 1.2 lakh people across 29 villages.

Referring to the goals of the Jal Jeevan Mission introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said the state government, under the leadership of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, is committed to providing 55 litres of safe drinking water per person per day. District in-charge minister Kinjarapu Atchannaaidu, Razole MLA Deva Varaprasad, Konaseema District Collector R Mahesh Kumar and officials of the rural water supply department were present.

SPMVV earns multiple ISO certifications in quality management

HANS NEWS SERVICE TIRUPATI

SRI Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (SPMVV), Tirupati, has achieved ISO certification, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to quality education, efficient administration and continuous institutional improvement.

The renewed certificates were presented to the university authorities by Alapati Sivaiah, Managing Director of HYM International Certifications Pvt Ltd., on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, he appreciated the university for demonstrating a high level of commitment to quality standards, transparency in procedures and the adoption of best practices. Vice Chancellor Prof V

Uma expressed immense pride in the achievement, stating that the certification reflects the collective efforts of faculty, staff and students.

She emphasised that SPMVV will continue to strive for innovation, inclusivity and academic excellence in the years ahead. Registrar Prof R Usha said the ISO certification recognises the university's unwavering commitment to maintaining quality standards, transparency and continuous improvement in both academic and administrative processes.

The certifications awarded include ISO 21001:2018 for Educational Organisations Management System, ISO 14001:2015 for Environmental Management System and ISO 50001:2018 for Energy Management System, along

with Academic Administrative Audit Certification for providing quality education and a Q5 Star Quality Rating Certificate for educational services. The university's DST-CURIE Laboratory also secured the first-ever ISO/IEC 17025:2005 certification in nanomaterial testing from Global Accreditation Services Inc., USA.

Prof T Tripura Sundari, Director of IQAC, who coordinated the process, said the certification reflects adherence to internationally recognised standards in academic processes, governance, infrastructure and student support services.

The evaluation covered teaching methodologies, research practices, administrative procedures and stakeholder satisfaction systems.



SPMVV V-C Prof V Uma, Registrar Prof R Usha, IQAC Director Prof T Tripura Sundari and others along with Managing Director of HYM International Certifications A Sivaiah showing ISO certifications on Thursday

Iranian sisters receive support from multiple quarters

- The Iranian sisters receive Rs.1 lakh aid through Sanjeevani Nidhi – District Relief Fund and SKML Devasthanam
- Say that communication with their families is becoming increasingly difficult in recent weeks
- Mention that they need financial assistance to reunite with their families in Iran



Iranian sisters Zeinab Mohammadi and her sister Soolmaz Mohammadi sharing their woes with the officials in Visakhapatnam

RANI DEVALLA VISAKHAPATNAM

WHEN Zeinab Mohammadi and her sister Soolmaz Mohammadi got themselves enrolled into Pharm.D in 2018, little did they expect that by the end of the course, they would be disconnected from their families and depleted of income sources. With dreams in their eyes, they joined Srinivasarao College of Pharmacy, affiliated with Andhra University, hoping to reunite with their families in Iran and restart a new life after completing the hospital internship programme. However, their life turned topsy-turvy for the sisters following the West Asia war. "It is so difficult to communicate with our families now. Monthly

income that used to be credited regularly came to a grinding halt for us. Now, we do not have any money to reach Iran and reunite with our families. We want this war to end quickly," the sisters told The Hans India. As their programme completes in a couple of months, the Iranian students say they have no financial assistance left, making it increasingly difficult for them to meet day-to-day expenses. With no support forthcoming from their families, they approached the District Collector seeking help. With three children to care for and mounting expenses on the other side, both Iranian students sought the support of the district administration. As their appeal to the Revenue Officer circulated on various social media platforms,

Andhra University dean international affairs Prof. Paul Douglas, said, "A group of Professors and international students are volunteering to lend financial assistance to the Iranian students by collecting funds." Understanding their situation, the school management in which their kids are studying also decided not to force the Iranian sisters to pay fees for their children. In the meantime, district officials spoke to the Iranian sisters' landlord and suggested not pressuring them regarding rent. On Thursday, the Iranian sisters received Rs 1 lakh aid through Sanjeevani Nidhi – District Relief Fund from district collector M Abhisikhth Kishore along with Sri Kanaka Mahalakshmi (SKML) Devasthanam.

Srikakulam-based passengers gain improved access to Lord Venkateswara

- Direct train service from Srikakulam Road to Tirupati to operate soon
- People of the region welcomed the train service which was pending for long
- The Civil Aviation Minister was instrumental in getting the direct train service



Direct train from Srikakulam Road to Tirupati will commence on April 13

VASU POTNURU VISAKHAPATNAM

IT is like winning a lottery for the people of Srikakulam district if they get a confirmed berth on Tirupati-bound trains as they often experience great inconvenience when booking tickets to the pilgrim centre every time. Even if they try to book tickets months in advance for Tirupati, it is almost impossible for them to get confirmed tickets

because there are no direct trains originating from Srikakulam until now. However, the scenario is changing now because the newly-introduced direct train service introduced is expected to transform travel experience for devotees, ensuring greater comfort, improved accessibility and increased berth availability.

The earnest efforts taken by Union Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu eventually yielded desired results as they aided in securing approval for the first-ever direct regular train service between Srikakulam and Tirupati. This initiative marks a major milestone for the region's transportation network.

Working on this long-pending demand, the Railways has officially issued orders to introduce the Tirupati-Srikakulam Road Humsafar Express (17439/40) and the service is set to commence from April 13. According to railway officials, this new train will operate every Sunday evening from Tirupati and

every Monday afternoon from Srikakulam Road, offering a consistent and reliable travel option for North Andhra passengers. Highlighting the journey behind the move, Civil Aviation Minister and MP Ram Mohan Naidu stated that he had been relentlessly pursuing the direct train service to Tirupati for a very long time. He emphasised that his consistent efforts through multiple engagements with the Railway Minister, Railway Board members, DRMs followed by frequent zonal meetings aided in grounding the project faster. Marking the new connectivity for the district, the inaugural run of this significant service will be flagged off from Srikakulam Road station on April 13. In a step to further accelerate railway development in the region, the Union Aviation Minister assured that he is committed to adding more new train services to the district.

SC welfare schemes must reach beneficiaries properly: Jawahar

HANS NEWS SERVICE TIRUPATI

STATE SC Commission Chairman KS Jawahar said that government welfare schemes meant for Scheduled Caste communities should be implemented responsibly and that all departments must work in coordination to ensure equality in society. Jawahar received grievances related to SC communities at the Collectorate in Tirupati on Thursday.

Later, he conducted a review meeting on cases of atrocities against SCs and the implementation of welfare schemes. Speaking on this occasion, he said that caste discrimination has not been completely eliminated from society. While it has reduced in urban areas, it continues in rural regions. The police and revenue departments have a key responsibility in changing this situation and that laws must be implemented strictly. Officials of concerned de-

partments must resolve public grievances without delay, he added. SC Commission Secretary Chinna Ramudu said the police and other officials in the district were working to provide effective, timely and lawful services to the public. District Collector Dr S Venkateswar said that a total of 105 petitions were received during the Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme conducted by the SC Commission Chairman.



Photo for representational only

ANDHRA UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES IE-CELL

HANS NEWS SERVICE VISAKHAPATNAM

MARKING the centenary celebrations of Andhra University, a major step towards fostering innovation and entrepreneurship was taken with the launch of the Pre-Incubation

Centre-Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cell (IE-CELL) in Visakhapatnam. After inaugurating the facility at the innovation conclave organised on Thursday, Vice-Chancellor GP Raja Sekhar emphasised that the IE-CELL would serve as a dynamic platform to nurture

creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit across diverse fields. He highlighted the university's vision to transform students into not just job seekers but job creators by building a strong ecosystem that supports ideation, experimentation and enterprise development.

Established under the aegis of the Institution Innovation Council, the IE-CELL is set to drive structured and impactful programmes such as Proto-Run, Founders Connect and Enterprise CaseX, offering mentorship and guidance to aspiring innovators.

Adding further momentum to this initiative, the VC announced the prestigious 'Centenary Innovation and Impact Grant', which will provide financial assistance of up to Rs. 5 lakh to promising startups in key sectors, thereby encouraging students to

translate their ideas into viable ventures. Professors K Ramasudha, M. Sashi, Partha Pratim Chakrabarti, Shankar Prakriya, M. R. Madhav and Mohan Kancharla along with student leaders Vinay Kumar Tadele, Jaswanth, and Neeraj were present.



Vice-Chancellor GP Raja Sekhar, among other professors, during the launch of the Pre-Incubation Centre-Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cell in Visakhapatnam on Thursday

Working people is vulnerable to health risks even before symptoms surface

- As per the recent data, one in five people under 30 were prediabetic
- Follow-up, continued monitoring and action aid in improved outcomes

HANS NEWS SERVICE VISAKHAPATNAM

ACCORDING to the sixth edition of Apollo Hospitals' Health of the Nation (HoN) 2026 report, India's most common health risks are appearing earlier and remaining hidden longer. Based on over three million preventive health assessments conducted across the Apollo ecosystem, the report makes a compelling case for proactive healthcare. As per the data, one in five people under 30 were prediabetic. More than half were obese, and more than half had abnormal cholesterol. Nearly 7 in 10 were deficient in Vitamin D, and close to half had low Vitamin B12.

Early screening by Apollo Shine Foundation across 20,164 students (aged 17-25) found that two in three had at least one underlying health risk. Among working populations, eight in 10 were overweight. Nearly half had prediabetes or diabetes, while one in four had high blood pressure. These findings indicate that risk factors are already present across younger and working populations, often before they are clinically recognised. Prathap C Reddy, founder chairman of the Apollo Hospitals Group, mentioned: "The true strength of a nation depends on the well-being of its people. For too long, health checks were viewed as routine blood tests and vitals merely a reactive response driven by fear. Health risks are already present in young and working populations, even before symptoms appear." However, doctors stressed that follow-up, continued monitoring and action yield improved outcomes.

Connecting roads to Bhogapuram are in various stages of completion

- The ambitious timeline highlights the government's commitment to fast-tracking one of Andhra Pradesh's most crucial infrastructure projects
- VMRDA Commissioner N Tej Bharat confirmed that compensation was provided for structures affected during road expansion

HANS NEWS SERVICE VISAKHAPATNAM

ENHANCING connectivity and developing infrastructure, Visakhapatnam Member of Parliament M. Sribharat announced that all seven major connecting

roads linking to the upcoming Bhogapuram Greenfield International Airport will be completed by the first week of June. This ambitious timeline highlights the government's commitment to fast-tracking one of Andhra Pradesh's most crucial infrastructure projects. During an extensive inspection along seven major roads on Thursday, the MP, accompanied by Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority chairperson M.V. Pranav Gopal, Metropolitan Commissioner N. Tej Bharat, and senior engineering officials reviewed the progress of the ongoing road works. Stressing uncompromising

standards, the MP directed the officials to ensure quality in every aspect of the construction. As part of the visit, the team evaluated the durability and execution quality of the road development works at Adavivaram junction. Demonstrating a hands-on approach, the MP and officials travelled on two-wheelers along the stretch, interacting with local residents to assess commuting convenience and collect real-time feedback. The inspection further extended to connectivity routes linking these roads to the national highway, highlighting the strategic importance of seamless transit. Speaking on the occasion,

the VMRDA Chairperson said that under the guidance of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, all connecting roads will be completed in time for the airport's operational launch. He noted that the Thimmapuram-Marikavalasa road has already been completed, while the Adavivaram-Sontyam stretch has reached 42 per cent completion, with minor delays attributed to forest land clearances. Further, he highlighted rapid progress across other key corridors. About 62 per cent of the Nerelavalasa-Kothavalasa road is complete, 66 per cent of the Boyapalem-Kapulupadda stretch is complete, and 35 per cent of the Vepagunta-

Pinagadi road is nearing completion. With strong support from both state and Central governments, officials expressed confidence in expediting the rest of the work. VMRDA Commissioner N Tej Bharat emphasised the collective efforts driving the project forward, noting that public cooperation has significantly accelerated progress. He also confirmed that compensation was provided for structures affected during road expansion. While the construction of a major bridge near Gambheeram may require additional time, authorities concerned assured that all other road works will be completed as scheduled.



Visakhapatnam MP M. Sribharat and VMRDA officials examining the progress of the connecting roads riding two-wheelers in Visakhapatnam on Thursday

3 ANDHRA VILLAGES LEAD RAINWATER REVOLUTION

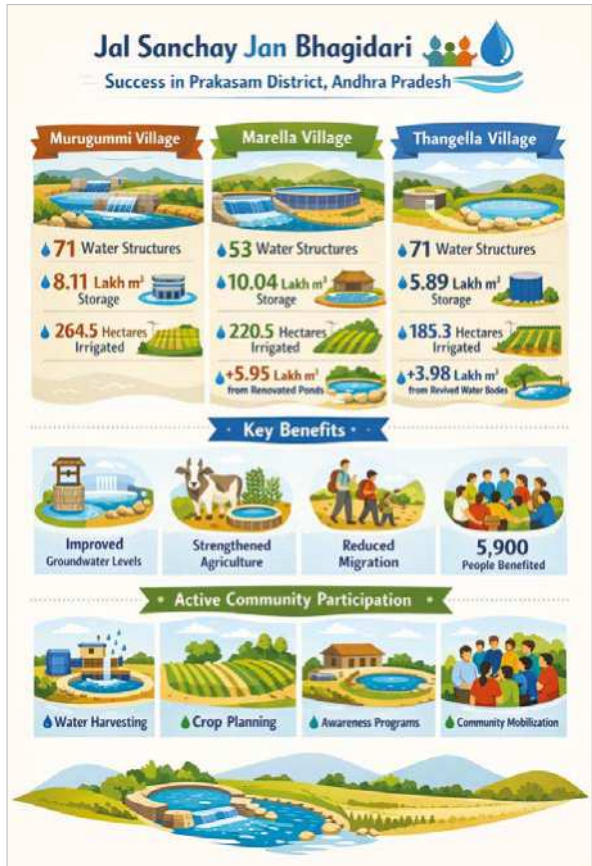
- Murugummi, Marella and Thangella boost groundwater with over 260 water structures, storing nearly 30 lakh cubic metres
- Community-driven efforts like pond revival, rooftop harvesting, crop planning lifted agriculture, dairy, and livelihoods for 5,900 residents
- Murugummi won 2nd-best panchayat at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

CM unveils 3 grid substations to boost power supply

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

ODISHA Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday inaugurated three new grid substations and eight transmission lines established at Rs 600 crore, and assured the people of Bhubaneswar and adjoining areas of uninterrupted and high-quality power supply. He said the new power facilities will benefit about 22 lakh consumers in the region. Majhi launched the new grid substations at Balianata, Satyanagar, and SCB Medical College in Cuttack, in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister K V Singh Deo, who is also in charge of the Energy department and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi. "These projects, which had been stalled for many years due to legal and technical issues, have been successfully completed by our government with firm resolve in just one year. Impossible becomes possible if there is a strong willpower," Majhi said.

He was addressing a public meeting held at Balianata and asserted that the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack will be connected by multiple feeder lines.

The Chief Minister also informed the people that the ongoing underground electricity line cabling



would further ensure an uninterrupted power supply even during cyclones and rainy season. In just one year, the State-owned Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited (OPTCL) has completed four major power projects, he said. "Out of these, the Nayapally Grid has started providing power since last year. That is why we have been able to complete the work of four grid sub-

stations in just one year," Majhi said. Noting that Bhubaneswar's power demand, which presently stands at around 1,000 MW, is projected to be doubled to 2,000 MW by 2030, the Chief Minister said Odisha's power system is being restructured in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Digital India vision. For the first time, a digital grid substation has been built in the State. Similarly, there

are plans to develop a 765 KV transmission system for the State capital.

Deputy Chief Minister K V Singh Deo said, "These new grid substations will act as fresh sources of power for Bhubaneswar and Balianata. People will no longer face low-voltage issues." On this occasion, the Chief Minister said that Rs 300 crore has been sanctioned for the restoration of the Prachi river, while Rs 75

crore has been approved for the second phase of the restoration of the Dhanua river in the Bhubaneswar-Jayadev area.

Along with this, Rs 170 crore has been approved for the restoration of the Daya river and Rs 400 crore for the restoration and improvement of the Daya West Canal under the Sanjeevani Yojana, and he announced that all the work will start soon.

Retired officer surrenders after killing wife

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

A retired government official was arrested by the Commissionerate Police on Wednesday for stabbing his wife to death at his residence at Swastik Nagar at Kuha village under Airfield police limits in Bhubaneswar.

The accused, Debaraj Sarangi, 62, a former senior accountant at the AG Office here, retired around two years ago. After his retirement, Sarangi, who originally hailed from Nayagarh district, was staying with his 55-year-old wife, Priyamvada, in Swastik Nagar area under the Airfield police station.

Police sources said on Wednesday, the couple got into a heated argument and scuffle after Sarangi, who was reportedly under mental stress, insisted on leaving the house, which his wife opposed. Meanwhile, in a sudden fit of rage, the accused first assaulted the victim with his fists and then attacked her with a knife on her face and neck multiple times, leading to her death.

After the incident, Sarangi handed over some cash and the victim's gold ornaments to his daughter, who was staying with her in-laws in Patrapada area of the city. Later, he went to Airfield police station and surrendered, confessing to the crime.

The couple's daughter, Arpita, told mediapersons that her father has been suffering from a liver infection for the past six months. His diabetes had also worsened recently, and he had been losing weight gradually. Worried that his condition might not improve, Sarangi remained under constant stress.

Arpita said she had tried to console her father and assured him that he would recover soon. The investigating officials also, during the investigation, ascertained that the accused had been suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, and liver-related ailments for a long time, and as a result, was experiencing severe mental depression.

The police sources further claimed that the investigation revealed that prior to the incident, Sarangi was reportedly under mental stress and suffering from insomnia, and in a sudden, aggressive state, committed the crime. Following his surrender and confession, Sarangi was arrested by the police and later produced before a court, which remanded him in judicial custody.



Man kills wife, hangs self

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BERHAMPUR

A man killed his wife and then hanged himself from a tree in Ganjam district, police said on Tuesday. The deceased have been identified as Chitrasen Nayak (28), a labourer, and his wife Puja Naik (25), mother of two boys.

According to police, the couple had frequent domestic disputes, and a quarrel on Monday night reportedly escalated into violence. Chitrasen allegedly attacked Puja with a kitchen knife before taking his own life by hanging from a tree around 200 metres from their house.

Locals discovered his body on Tuesday morning. The incident took place at Saranupalli within Belaguntha police limits. Police sent the bodies for post-mortem examination at the sub-divisional hospital at Bhanjanagar.

"Initial investigation suggests the incident may have occurred due to a domestic dispute which escalated into violence," Bhanjanagar SDPO Deepak Mishra said. He said the couple had got married about seven years ago and were blessed with two boys aged six and four years.

LAW TO CURB 'SLUR' ON SOCIAL MEDIA

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

ODISHA Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan on Wednesday said the State government was contemplating bringing legislation to curb the use of offensive and abusive language on social media, noting that these platforms were becoming "toxic media". "Those making vile comments on social media should refrain from doing so. Otherwise, the government will take strict action against them in the coming days," he said in a post on X.

He went on to say that it has been noticed that "social media is in the process of becoming toxic media" "Abusive language is being used in social media, and there are no restrictions on it. The proposed legislation will target obscene and abusive speech, ensuring accountability from those who misuse online platforms," the State Law Minister added.

Sources said the legislation being contemplated by the government will extend to public spaces, bringing the use of abusive language under regulatory scrutiny. The State Law Commission has sub-

mitted its recommendations to curb the rising misuse of social media.

While Odisha BJP's social media chief Umakant Patnaik backed Harichandan, saying there should be stringent legislation to stop social media misuse, the BJD's youth wing president Chinmay Sahu expressed worry that "the BJP may use this proposed law for political benefit and target political opponents". The Congress' student wing leader, Yasir Nawaz, alleged that it was the BJP leaders who used offensive words targeting their opponents on social media.

Neradi issue will be resolved amicably: Min

SUNIL MOHAN PATNAIK
BERHAMPUR

ODISHA Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan has affirmed that the long-standing Neradi project issue will be addressed through constructive dialogue with the Andhra Pradesh government. Emphasising cooperation over conflict, the minister announced the formation of a dedicated committee to steer the matter toward a meaningful resolution.

Speaking during his visit to Mohana block in Gajapati district, Harichandan highlighted that Neradi is not an isolated concern. Odisha, he said, is actively engaging with Andhra Pradesh on several crucial inter-state matters, including Vamsadhara, Kotia, and Polavaram. "The government remains fully alert and committed," he asserted, underlining a broader vision of harmony through negotiation.

Adding a cultural and spiritual note to his visit,



Harichandan attended the consecration ceremony of Hanuman temple at Manikpur Kesharinagar. After offering sacred oblations and performing rituals, he addressed a gathering of locals, blending governance with goodwill.

Promising a brighter horizon, Harichandan assured that all necessary steps would

be taken to accelerate development in the district. The event was attended by Digapahandi MLA Sidhant Mohapatra, Mohana MLA Dasarathi Gamang, and Gajapati Special Development Council Chairman Kamadeb Badanayak. The event thus turned into a confluence of faith, leadership and forward-looking commitment.

NIA begins Bhubaneswar Jan blast probe

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

THE National Investigation Agency (NIA) has begun its probe into a blast in Bhubaneswar in January that left two persons dead, officials said on Thursday. A three-member NIA team visited the Airfield police station here and collected documents, including FIRs and forensic reports, in connection with the blast that took place in Azad Nagar on January 27, a senior police officer said.

Investigators had visited the blast site in January, and examined forensic evidence and CCTV footage as part of a preliminary inquiry, he said. "As per the legal procedure, the case is being handed over to the NIA. Whatever documents they will ask for, we will provide to them," ACP (Zone 2), Bhubaneswar, Krushna Chandra Palei, told reporters here.

The Central agency had written to Police

Commissioner S Dev Datta Singh on Monday, seeking transfer of the case for a detailed probe into a possible terror angle behind the explosion, officials said. The NIA intends to examine possible links to larger criminal networks and ascertain whether high-grade explosives such as RDX were used in the blast.

The Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Commissionerate Police had earlier said four persons were injured when prime suspect Shahnawaz Malik (26), a history-sheeter, was allegedly assembling an explosive device on the rooftop of a rented house. Malik and a woman identified as Lizatun Bibi later succumbed to burn injuries, while two others survived, police said.

"Though it is suspected that Malik may have used some high-grade explosive material, it is yet to be confirmed whether that was RDX," the officer added.



Anant Ambani pledges jobs for KISS students on his birthday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

TO mark his birthday on Thursday, Anant Ambani, scion of Mukesh Ambani family, announced a series of significant initiatives for students of KISS, notably offering employment opportunities in the Reliance Group. The announcement supports scholarships for KISS students this academic year and offers KG to PG toppers a learning visit to Vantara, a massive wildlife centre in Gujarat set up by Ambani. Significantly, 30 Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) graduates will be offered jobs every year across various companies of the Reliance Group, opening sustainable career pathways for tribal

youth. Further enhancing academic exposure, study materials for the current academic year were distributed to all students, strengthening their educational foundation. The announcements are expected to benefit thousands of students across different levels, contributing to their academic growth, skill development and future livelihood. As part his birthday celebration, KISS students organised a grand cake-cutting ceremony, prayers, and a special programme. Ambani hosted a special dinner for 40,000 tribal students, creating a festive and joyful atmosphere across the campus. Students formed a human display inspired by the Vantara logo to express

their heartfelt gratitude. They also offered prayers to Lord Jagannath for his good health, happiness and long life. The celebration was held under the guidance of KIIT and KISS Founder Achyuta Samanta, who conveyed his best wishes on the occasion. Samanta stated that the initiatives would greatly strengthen students' confidence and future prospects. He emphasised that such support holds deep significance for children coming from humble tribal backgrounds, helping open new doors of opportunity.

The event witnessed the presence of students, staff and members of the KISS community, making it a memorable occasion filled with joy, hope and aspiration.

Sasmit Patra quits as BJD's Rajya Sabha leader

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

SENIOR Biju Janata Dal leader Sasmit Patra has tendered his resignation from the post of Parliamentary Party leader of the BJD in the Rajya Sabha. The party supreme and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Thursday accepted Patra's resignation. "President Biju Janata Dal Shri Naveen Patnaik has accepted the

resignation of Dr Sasmit Patra, MP, as leader of the BJD Parliamentary Party, Rajya Sabha, today," according to an official party statement.

Sources said some party MPs had recently demanded his removal from the post in a letter to the party president. Internal rift in the party has reportedly forced Patra to step down as BJD's Rajya Sabha leader. Patra, who is serving his second term in

the Rajya Sabha, has been the BJD's Parliamentary Party leader since 2022, after securing a second tenure in the Upper House.

Meanwhile, it is speculated that corporate honcho and Patnaik's political secretary, Santru Misra, who was elected to the Upper House in the recently concluded Rajya Sabha polls, may replace Patra as the BJD Parliamentary Party leader. It is pertinent here to

mention that a section of the regional party turned against Patra following the party's change of stance during the voting on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill at the last moment in April 2025.

The party, which had earlier announced that it would oppose the bill, voted in its support, triggering widespread discontent among a major section of the party, who launched a scathing

attack on Patra. They had also demanded stringent action against Patra for the flip-flop that left them embarrassed.

Patra, an academic-turned-politician and a two-term Rajya Sabha member from Odisha, has emerged as a prominent voice in Parliament on both national and regional matters. Serving as the BJD's national spokesperson, he has been the party's key

representative in New Delhi and has articulated its position in the Upper House on several important legislative issues.

Earlier this month, Patra had also resigned from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and IT, protesting remarks made by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey about the legendary Biju Patnaik. Dubey was the head of the committee.



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 man power. 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 Accen-ture- 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



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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. Anyway, 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>

AP TO BUILD HAJ HOUSE, AID PILGRIMS WITH RS 1 L EACH

- Minister Farooq orders smooth arrangements for Haj 2026, with 2,000 pilgrims including 352 from Vijayawada
- State to construct modern Haj House in Vijayawada; each pilgrim from the centre to receive Rs 1 lakh assistance.
- Special buses, medical teams, security, and full facilities mandated for hassle-free pilgrimage

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

MINISTER for law and minority welfare NMD Farooq directed officials to make comprehensive and hassle-free arrangements for Haj 2026, as around 2,000 pilgrims from the state are set to undertake the sacred pilgrimage. Of these, 352 pilgrims will depart from the Vijayawada embarkation centre on April 18 and 19.

Chairing a review meeting at Gannavaram, the

minister emphasised that all necessary steps must be taken to ensure a smooth experience. He recalled that during the TDP government in undivided Andhra Pradesh, a Haj House with full facilities was constructed in Hyderabad, and later, an embarkation centre was sanctioned with the efforts of then Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

After state bifurcation, AP pilgrims had to depend on other states for embarkation, he said, adding that the Vijayawada embarkation centre was secured again due to the efforts of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. The minister expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union minority affairs



Minister for law and minority welfare NMD Farooq holds a review on Haj pilgrimage arrangements at Gannavaram on Thursday

minister Kiren Rijju, and civil aviation minister K Ram Mohan Naidu.

He further announced that the state government has decided to construct a

Haj House in Vijayawada with all modern amenities. The government is also providing financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh to each pilgrim departing from Vijayawada.

The minister instructed officials to ensure special arrangements at the Haj camp, including clear guidance on travel procedures, timely visa processing, dedicated

airport counters, separate lounges, and prayer facilities. He called for additional staff deployment, seamless luggage handling, and coordination with the Haj Committee.

Special AC buses will be arranged to transport pilgrims from the camp to the airport. Medical teams, free vaccinations, and ambulance services will be made available. He also stressed strict security measures, traffic management on National Highway-16, and vigilance against cyber fraud.

Adequate drinking water, sanitation, uninterrupted power supply, CCTV surveillance, fire safety measures, and daily media updates were also mandated to ensure the successful conduct of Haj 2026.

Three teenage girls drown while taking selfies

HANS NEWS SERVICE
PADERU (ASR DISTRICT)

A tragic incident claimed the lives of three teenage girls in Alluri Sitarama Raju district on Thursday after they accidentally slipped into a waterfall while attempting to take selfies.

The incident occurred near a waterfall close to Mulagummi village in Ananthagiri mandal. Another girl who fell into the water along with them is reported to be in critical condition.

According to police, the deceased have been identified as Trisha (17), Ratna Kumari (16), and Pavitra (16), all residents of Jumbavala village in Hukumpeta mandal. The girls had recently appeared for their Intermediate examinations

and had gone to visit the waterfall along with their friend Anjali.

While standing at the edge of the waterfall and taking selfies, the four reportedly lost their balance and fell into the water. Trisha, Ratna Kumari and Pavitra died on the spot.

Anjali, who sustained serious injuries in the incident, was rescued by locals and shifted to a hospital in Lungaparti. Doctors said her condition remains critical. Police rushed to the spot and launched rescue operations. The bodies were shifted for post-mortem examination, and a case has been registered, and an investigation is underway. The deaths of the three girls have cast a pall of gloom over their native village.

Lokesh asks officials to prepare guidelines

Continued from P1

The Minister made it clear that strict action would be taken against individuals posting derogatory or abusive content, particularly targeting women. He also directed officials to study global best practices, specifically from countries like Australia, Singapore, and Denmark, in safeguarding children in the digital space.

As part of a broader strategy, Lokesh announced large-scale awareness initiatives. Students will be educated on the effects of social media during "No Bag Day," while parents and children will be sensitized through biannual Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Awareness programs will also extend to women in Self-Help Groups, focusing on online safety.

A key proposal discussed was the introduction of "Age Tokens," potentially integrated with DigiLocker, to enable reliable age verification on digital platforms. Lokesh directed officials to examine its feasibility and incorporate findings into a comprehensive report, including aspects requiring central government intervention.

Social media representatives present at the meeting outlined existing safety mechanisms and grievance redressal systems, assuring full cooperation with the state government's initiatives.

Additionally, the Minister ordered immediate steps to appoint an Adjudicating Officer under Section 46 of the IT Act to strengthen enforcement mechanisms in cyber-related issues.

WILL AMARAVATI DENT HYDERABAD REALTY?

Continued from P1

"If the investors in Hyderabad shift to AP, Telangana state will face a big jolt, particularly in terms of revenue generation from the property registrations," an official said.

Officials of the Registration & Stamps Department also concede that growth in real estate has not gained traction in the last three years due to various factors, including HYDRABAD impact, economic slowdown, and certain political reasons.

Now, the AP government is drawing big plans to promote Amaravati as a destination for investments. Major realty companies which had announced high rise projects in Hyderabad may shift some of them to the neighbouring state if the Andhra government announces, in the coming days, comparatively better incentives to promote construction. Officials warned: "It may not be an easy task to convince real estate developers to stay in Hyderabad and develop their ventures at this critical juncture."

The state government would do well to hold a meeting with representatives of the realty soon to discuss the issues involved in the context of planned investments in the city, they added.

Indigenous Quantum facility launch on April 14

Continued from P1

It may be recalled that with the initiative of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Quantum journey started in April last year.

Giving details to the media on the launch of Quantum Computers testing facility centre here on Thursday, PS Pradyumna, secretary to Chief Minister stated that it's a dream come true for people of Andhra Pradesh, with the initiative of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for the first time in the country indigenous Quantum Computing testing facility is going to be launched on April 14. He said the Chief Minister insisted on bringing indigenous hardware component manufacturing ecosystem in Amaravati to promote Quantum technology. The SRM University contributed in this direction and made it accessible to students. The secretary said people enjoyed the fruits of computer technology for more than three decades and now it is time to switch over to AI and Quantum technology. He said the Chief Minister stressed the need for updating skills of youngsters as per the requirements of emerging quantum technology and following his call lakhs of students got enrolled for skill training programme. In IIT-Chennai itself 2.5 lakh students enrolled for skill training programme.

SRM-AP Vice-Chancellor Ch Satish Kumar and Quantum technology experts were present.

Students denied entry at JEE Mains exam centre

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

TENSION prevailed at Oxford College in Guntur on Thursday as parents of students staged a protest alleging serious irregularities in JEE Mains hall-ticket issue by the college management.

According to parents, students who went to appear for the exam on Wednesday were denied entry at the examination centre after their hall-tickets were identified as fake. Several students were seen in tears,

claiming they were not allowed to write the exam.

Students expressed deep distress, stating that their two years of hard work and future prospects have been severely affected.

Police reached Oxford College to control the situation. Parents said around 40 students who attended the NEET exam and nearly 15 students who appeared for JEE Mains were affected due to the issue.

They alleged that the exam centre was allotted at Indira Priyadarshini Engineering

College in Guntur, and the management had allegedly created fake hall-tickets using the same Aadhaar number for multiple students.

Parents demanded strict action against the college management, stating that their children's future has been jeopardised.

Guntur RDO N Srinivasa Rao said 15 students were not allowed to write the NEET exam. The RDO and police officials are holding discussions with the college management till late in the night.

Land resurvey 2.0 will be over by March 2027: CM

Continued from P1

He also stated that 1.37 lakh acres of service inam lands are being removed from the prohibited 22A list, with more land to be freed in phases.

Naidu highlighted that corrections to land records can now be made at village and ward secretariats, while auto-mutation and simplified registration processes are being introduced. Farmers will receive pattadar passbooks at their doorstep following property transfers and concessional registration charges have been announced for inheritance cases, he added.

On the irrigation front, the Chief Minister assured that the Polavaram Project will be completed before the Godavari Pushkarams and dedi-

cated to the nation, ensuring water security for the Krishna delta. The diaphragm wall has been reconstructed with Central assistance, he added.

Reaffirming the state government's stance, Naidu said the Centre has legally designated Amaravati as the state capital, while criticising opposition demands for alternative proposals. He remarked that law will take its course in legal matters, including those concerning Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The Chief Minister directed officials to improve services in hostels, rice distribution, paddy procurement, and mid-day meal schemes. He said free sand is being provided despite revenue loss to benefit the public and urged citizens to avoid land

disputes and maintain harmony.

Naidu noted that global economic challenges, including conflicts in West Asia, are impacting markets, and the government is focusing on strengthening supply chains and boosting exports. Plans are also underway to develop Suryalanka Beach as a major tourist destination.

Naidu reiterated the government's commitment to welfare, including free bus travel for women under the "Stree Shakti" initiative and support for 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures. Ministers including Anagani Satya Prasad, K. Partha Sarathy, Gottipati Ravi Kumar, and MP T. Krishna Prasad were present at the event.

US ready for next conquest: Trump

Continued from P1

"All US ships, aircraft, and military personnel... will remain in place in, and around, Iran, until such time as the REAL AGREEMENT reached is fully complied with," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "If for any reason it is not...the 'Shootin' Starts', bigger, and better, and stronger than anyone has ever seen before." Trump reiterated that it was agreed that Iran will not develop nuclear weapons, and the Strait of Hormuz will be open and safe for commercial shipping. "In the meantime our great Military is Loading Up and Resting, looking forward, actually, to its next Conquest," Trump added. He ended the post, which was published near midnight, with a declaration: "AMERICA IS BACK!"

The statement came a day after Washington and Tehran agreed to a two-week ceasefire brokered by Pakistan, which halted six weeks of fighting and sparked a brief relief rally in global markets amid growing optimism that energy flows may resume in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran said safe passage through the strait would be possible but subject to coordination with its armed forces. But much remained unclear in the ceasefire agreement, with the US and Iran appearing far apart in demands. Tehran had rejected the 15-point proposal from Washington and reportedly presented a 10-point plan of its own to end the conflict, including an end to Israeli strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon and the lifting of all sanctions.

Modi, Mamata trade barbs at election rallies in Bengal

Continued from P1

He alleged that Mamata Banerjee's TMC has only inflicted 'nirmamta' (cruelty) on Bengal, while the BJP has developed Asansol despite obstacles posed by the ruling party. The PM also highlighted a downward trend in the state's economy and its contribution to national gross domestic product (GDP). He said, "Bengal's contribution to the national GDP has slid to mere five per cent from 12 per cent earlier." However, he said, a regime change would ensure that West Bengal scales new heights.

"Investment has taken flight from the once-thriving industrial belt of Asansol. Only the BJP's double-engine can rectify it," he added, noting that the Centre has allocated Rs 45,000 crore for the revival of the industries in

Asansol. In another rally in Haldia, PM Modi said that it is essential to remove the TMC's 'Niram sarkar' to usher 'Viksit Bengal'. He also announced "six Modi guarantees" for the people. The TMC supremo, meanwhile, accused the BJP of deleting names of more than 90 lakh people from the voter lists to grab power in the state, asserting that her party will win the upcoming Assembly polls.

Speaking at a public rally in North 24 Paraganas' Minakhan, Banerjee said that TMC would approach the court to ensure that all the deleted names are reinstated in the electoral rolls, referring to the special intensive revision exercise in the state. "You deleted names of over 90 lakh people to grab power in Bengal, but we will win," she said.

15 ships a day

TEHRAN

SHIPPING traffic at the Strait of Hormuz remained at a virtual standstill amid Iranian regulation, despite the ceasefire, on Thursday, with little movement. Several reports said Iran will allow no more than 15 vessels to pass per day, with Iran's deputy minister earlier saying that ships will need to obtain consent from the military. One oil product tanker and five separate dry bulk carriers reportedly sailed through the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours on Thursday, Reuters reported. Two Iranian-flagged tankers also sailed through Hormuz. Iran will allow no more than 15 vessels per day to pass through the Hormuz under the ceasefire agreement, Russia's TASS news agency reported, citing Iranian official sources.

US-Iran truce strains amid Lebanon strikes

Continued from P1

Following a massive wave of Israeli strikes that killed at least 254 people and injured over 1,100 across Lebanon, Tehran declared that it views the ongoing bombardment as a direct breach of the spirit of the ceasefire.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated that Washington must now choose between a comprehensive ceasefire or continued war by proxy, warning that the current status is unsustainable.

The instability has immediate consequences for global energy security. In response to what it terms an Israeli violation of the ceasefire, the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has maintained a closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital artery for global oil shipments.

Shipping executives remain in a state of high alert as they attempt to navigate the uncertainty, while oil prices have reacted sharply to the supply risk. Brent crude futures rose 2.1% to \$96.75 a barrel, and West Texas Intermediate surged 2.6% to \$96.89, reflecting market anxiety over the potential for long-term supply chain disruptions.

Despite the deteriorating situation, US and Iranian delegations are still scheduled to meet in Islamabad this weekend to finalize the terms of the truce. However, the diplomatic path forward is fraught with obstacles.

President Donald Trump has issued a stern warning, stating that US military assets will remain in place around Iran until a real, fully compliant agreement is established.

Trump seeks Europe's help on Hormuz

WASHINGTON: United States President Donald Trump has stepped up pressure on his European allies to commit military forces in the Strait of Hormuz, ahead of talks with Iran on Friday. This comes even as the White House is considering the withdrawal of US troops out of NATO countries. According to two diplomats, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has informed European leaders that the US President is expecting concrete commitments for Hormuz regarding the deployment of warships or other military capabilities from Europe in the next few days. This was followed by Trump's post on Truth Social, wherein he stated that NATO would not "understand anything" without pressure upon them.

Iran publishes chart showing sea mines in Hormuz

DUBAI: Semiofficial news agencies in Iran published a chart Thursday suggesting the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard put sea mines into the Strait of Hormuz during the war, in a message that may be intended to pressure the US as uncertainty hangs over a days-old two-week ceasefire and further negotiations are expected in Pakistan. The shaky ceasefire has been largely holding between the US, Israel and Iran, although Tehran and Washington have offered vastly different explanations of the initial terms. Israel insists the agreement does not apply to their war against Hezbollah militants in Lebanon and has escalated deadly strikes there, leading Iran to claim it is violating the deal. Meanwhile, Iran said it had

won agreement that it would control the Strait of Hormuz, charge tolls and enrich uranium - while Trump said the deal called for the strait to be reopened and Iran to hand over its uranium stockpile. The chart of the Strait of Hormuz was released by the ISNA news agency, as well as Tasnim, which is believed to be close to the Guard.

They showed a large circle marked "danger zone" in Farsi over the Traffic Separation Scheme, which was the route ships take through the strait, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20 per cent of all oil and natural gas traded once passed. The chart suggested ships travel further north through waters closer to Iran's mainland near Larak Island, a route that some ships were observed taking during the war.

"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 Adwaith 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, Sajeew, 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 Vattiyorkavu 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.

Bengal political row over Kabir video

KOLKATA

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 elections.

At a press meet, the Tri-

namool 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 threatened 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.

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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

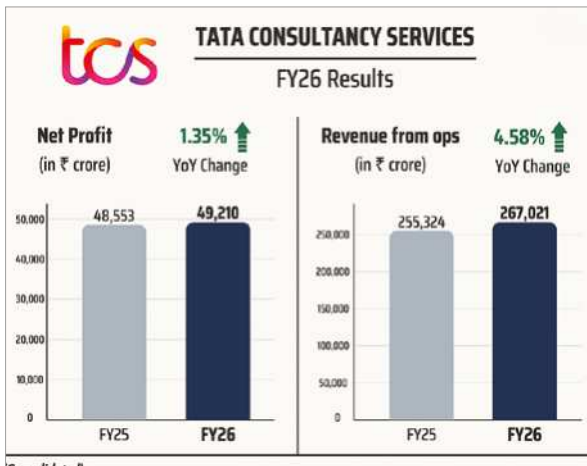
COUNTRY'S largest IT services company TCS on Thursday reported a net profit of Rs12,224 crore in the January-March period last year and Rs10,657 crore in the preceding December quarter.

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: Foreign 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



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.



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 Wanaparthi district, 30-year-old Computer Science graduate Peddhabudi Vanaja is redefining what success looks like. At a time when

A Computer Science graduate from Wanaparthi 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

Scholarship Name 1:	IDRBT Summer Internship Programme (ISIP) 2026
Description:	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.
Eligibility:	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.
Prizes & Rewards:	A monthly stipend of ₹14,000 with other benefits.
Last Date to Apply:	15-04-2026
Application mode:	Online applications only
Short Url:	www.b4s.in/hans/IDS12
QR Code:	https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/idrbt-summer-internship-programme-isip-20261775480352.png
Scholarship Name 2:	The Cadence/Invecas Scholarship program 2026-27
Description:	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.
Eligibility:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have successfully passed 12th class with a minimum overall score of 80%. Pursuing 12th can also apply on the basis of their previous record. Comes from a lower-income group. Currently reside and study in Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad & Hyderabad only. (Applications from outside these regions will not be considered.) STEM-related courses and females will be given preference. Selected students will receive financial support for key educational expenses.
Prizes & Rewards:	Selected students will receive financial support for key educational expenses.
Last Date to Apply:	10-05-2026
Application mode:	Online applications only
Short Url:	www.b4s.in/hans/TCSP6
QR Code:	https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/the-cadence-invecas-scholarship-program-2026-271775480209.png
Scholarship Name 3:	SBI Youth for India Fellowship
Description:	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.
Eligibility:	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.
Prizes & Rewards:	₹16,000 monthly stipend and other benefits.
Last Date to Apply:	30-04-2026
Application mode:	Online applications only
Short Url:	www.b4s.in/hans/SYFI5
QR Code:	https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/sbi-youth-for-india-fellowship1775480276.png
Scholarship Name 4:	Masters' Union: Scholarship Aptitude Test 2026
Description:	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.
Eligibility:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants must be currently enrolled in Class 12 (any recognised education boards) or have completed it in 2025. Must be aiming to pursue a full-time undergraduate programme in Business Management, Technology, Leadership, Data Science & AI, Design, Sustainability, Finance & Economics, Marketing or related fields. Assessment Requirement: All applicants must appear for the Masters' Union Scholarship Aptitude Test (MUSAT) or qualify for an approved alternate test.
programme:	Alternate Eligibility for Data Science & Artificial Intelligence
Note:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JEE percentile above 90% MUSAT score above 35/45 SAT score above 1500/1600
Prizes & Rewards:	check Masters' Union official website to ensure accuracy on eligibility
Last Date to Apply:	Scholarships offering 10% to 80% tuition fee waivers
Application mode:	13-05-2026
Short Url:	Online applications only
QR Code:	www.b4s.in/hans/MUSCASP1
	https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/masters-union-scholarship-aptitude-test-20261773114910.png
Scholarship Name 5:	Kiran Pratibha Scholarship 2026
Description:	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.
Eligibility:	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.
Prizes & Rewards:	Tuition fee and other benefits.
Last Date to Apply:	30-04-2026
Application mode:	Online applications only
Short Url:	www.b4s.in/hans/KRPS1
QR Code:	https://d1e9eg0t055l3.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/20261773726816.png

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,



- **Self-awareness first:** Early guidance helps students identify strengths and interests.
- **Beyond traditional careers:** Exposure to diverse fields expands career possibilities.
- **Skill development matters:** Communication, critical thinking, and adaptability are essential.
- **Informed decision-making:** Guidance reduces confusion and societal pressure.
- **Stronger workforce:** Aligned careers lead to innovation, productivity, and national growth

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.





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

NAURAL 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

THE 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

THE 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

THE 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

ACTOR 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

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 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

YOUNG 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.

