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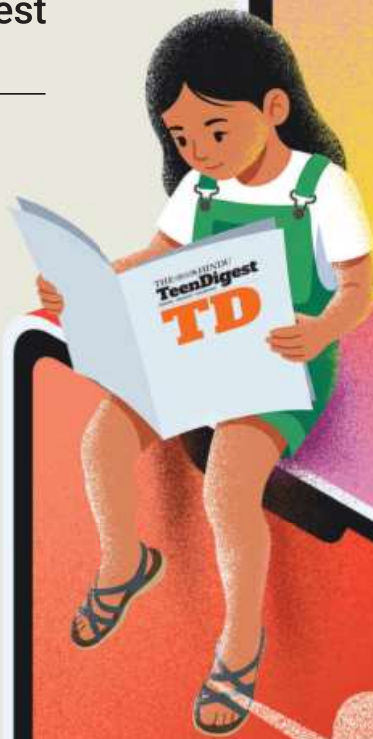
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# TD



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**UNIQUE DESIGNS**  
**Chettinad's paradox of fame**  
Questions remain on whether the revival of the aesthetic will help sustain it  
MAGAZINE » PAGE 1

How heat-action plans are turning into mandates  
SCIENCE » PAGE 11

Can Vantara solve Colombia's hippo issue?  
FAQ » PAGE 12

Ruturaj leads the way as CSK crushes MI  
SPORT » PAGE 15

**IN BRIEF**  
**Four policemen killed in Kanker IED blast: officer**  
RAIPUR  
Four members of the Chhattisgarh Police's District Reserve Guards were killed in an explosion while trying to dispose of a gunpowder dump during a search operation in Kanker district on Saturday, a police officer said. » Page 7

# SC rejects Trinamool claim of bias by Central govt. staff

Dismissing plea, it questions need for proportionate representation; Trinamool had said that EC was skewing playing field in favour of BJP by appointing more Central officers at counting centres

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Saturday called it a "fallacy" nursed by the Trinamool Congress that West Bengal Government services' employees owe allegiance to it and Central employees were loyal to or controlled by the party ruling the Centre.

They are employees of the government and are part of the Election Commission in the exercise of their electoral duties during the poll time, it said. The oral observations were made while disposing of a petition filed by the Trinamool, which alleged that the EC was deliberately skewing the playing field in favour of the rival Bharatiya Janata Party by appointing more Central of-



This is yet another fallacy, that is those belonging to State government services have a different allegiance... These are but employees of the government. Give them some credit

**JUSTICE P.S. NARASIMHA**  
Supreme Court judge

ficers, disregarding State employees, at counting centres across West Bengal.

**Questions party**  
Justice P.S. Narasimha, heading a Special Bench, questioned the Trinamool's perceived need to have a "proportionate representation" of officers drawn from both Centre and State services at counting centres on May 4. "This

is yet another fallacy, that is those belonging to State government services have a different allegiance... These are but employees of the government. Give them some credit," Justice Narasimha said.

Justice Joyimalya Bagchi, the associate judge on the Division Bench, said that once these officers were deployed for poll duties, they belonged to the EC. "All these persons, wheth-

er Central or State employees, are in the control of the EC in the discharge of electoral duties," Justice Bagchi said.

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA

The Election Commission on Saturday announced repolling for Falta Assembly seat in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on May 21.

EC announces repolling in all 285 stations of Falta in Bengal

Polling will be held in all 285 stations in the constituency. The votes will be counted on May 24. On May 4, election results will be declared for 293 of 294 Assembly seats in the State, barring Falta.

**Claims of malpractice**

There were allegations of electoral malpractices in Falta. The EC took note of multiple instances of companions casting votes on behalf of electors and no video footage available at certain polling booths.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 7  
**RELATED REPORTS ON**  
» PAGE 8

# U.S. not committed to pacts, 'renewed conflict likely': Iran

**Agence France-Presse Associated Press**  
TEHRAN

A senior Iranian military officer said on Saturday that renewed fighting with the U.S. was "likely", hours after President Donald Trump said he was not satisfied with an Iranian negotiating proposal. In a letter to U.S. Congressional leaders, Mr. Trump said hostilities with Iran "have terminated" as the ceasefire was holding.

Iran delivered the new draft to mediator Pakistan on Thursday evening, state media reported, without detailing its contents. The war, launched by the U.S. and Israel, has been on hold since April 8, with one failed round of peace talks having taken place in Pakistan since then.

Mohammad Jafar Asadi, a senior figure in the Iranian military's central command, said "a re-



U.S. warns shipping firms against paying Iran for safe passage through Strait. REUTERS

newed conflict between Iran and the U.S. is likely", in quotes published by Iran's Fars news agency. "Evidence has shown that the U.S. is not committed to any promises or agreements," he said.

The U.S. has warned shipping firms that they could face sanctions for making payments to Iran to safely pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 7

## Itinerant life



An elderly man from a nomadic community stands outside his tent on the outskirts of Srinagar on Saturday. IMRAN NISSAR

## INDIA bloc to strategise on women's reservation

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The INDIA bloc is likely to meet, once the results of the Assembly elections are declared on May 4, to discuss the way forward on women's reservation, which has been tied up with the delimitation exercise and expansion of the Lok Sabha. Though the Opposition managed to defeat the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, in the Lower House, its assessment is the government may bring it again in some other form.

**FULL STORY ON**  
» PAGE 8

## FIR against MP who left AAP sparks row

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHANDIGARH

Days after seven Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha MPs, six of them from Punjab, joined the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Punjab Police have allegedly filed two FIRs under non-bailable Sections against Sandeep Pathak, one of the MPs who made the switch.

The move drew sharp criticism from Opposition parties in the State, who termed it a settling of political scores.

**'A conspiracy'**  
The BJP on Saturday alleged that the FIRs were a "planned conspiracy" to distract people from Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's alleged



Sandeep Pathak

"drunken state" during the proceedings of the State Assembly on May 1. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla termed the FIRs, AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal's vendetta. Mr. Kejriwal was misusing the Punjab Police to settle political scores, he alleged.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 7

## Southern States told to use clean air funds

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal's Southern Zone Bench in Chennai has directed all five southern States and Union Territory Puducherry to ensure "strict and time-bound implementation" of their State Action Plans (SAP) under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

The judgment flags persistent particulate pollution across the region and warns that continued under-utilisation of clean air funds could attract environmental compensation.

These directions assume significance as they put the spotlight on air pollution governance in the southern States – an issue

**NGT flags persistent particulate pollution, says under-utilisation of the funds could attract compensation**

that largely dominates the northern regions, particularly Delhi-NCR.

The tribunal recorded that Karnataka had received ₹597.54 crore between 2019-20 and 2023-24, with Bengaluru alone receiving ₹54.1 crore but utilising only 13% by October 2024. A subsequent affidavit reported that 76% of total funds released up to 2025-26 had been utilised by September 2025.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 7

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Tuesday, May 5, 2026 | 5:00 pm onwards | Venue: Taj Connemara, Chennai  
SRM Institute of Science and Technology, in association with The Hindu, presents Future Career Conversations, an engaging dialogue where ideas, innovation, and insights come together to shape tomorrow's careers.  
Join thought leaders and experts as they explore the forces redefining the future of work, and gain the clarity to discover, decide, and define your own path.  
Session 1: The Rejigged Employee  
Panelists  
Prof. A Vinay Kumar, Pro Vice Chancellor, Science & Humanities, Management, SRM Institute of Science & Technology  
Mr Abhishek Paul, Culture Shepherd, Kissflow  
Mr Amardeep Devadason, Global Growth & Transformation Leader and Sr. Vice President, RRR Donnelley & William Lea  
Mr Bijumon Jacob, Head - India Operations & Human Resources, Ejada, Dubai, UAE  
Moderator: Mr Prince Frederick, Civic Affairs Editor, The Hindu  
Session 2: The Learning Entrepreneur  
Panelists  
Dr N Bhalaji, Additional Director, Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship - Medical Science & Law, SRM Institute of Science & Technology  
Mr Balaji Sampath, Founder - AhaGuru, Educationist & Scientist  
Mr Puru Gupta, Co-founder & CEO, True Elements | Founder, Protus Partners  
Moderator: Ms Sangeetha Kandavel, Senior Assistant Editor, The Hindu  
PG Aspirants, Working Executives To register, visit: [newsthive.srmfcc02.com](https://newsthive.srmfcc02.com) or scan the QR code  
ENTRY BY INVITE ONLY

## IN BRIEF



## L-G advises students to pursue excellence with responsibility

Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Saturday urged students of St. Stephen's College, his alma mater, to pursue excellence with competence, character and responsibility. He was addressing the Annual Dismissal Service for the graduating class of 2026. Recalling his student years, he said the institution fostered intellectual curiosity and humility, and highlighted its legacy of producing leaders across fields. Mr. Sandhu advised students to rely on integrity, independent thinking and patience while navigating an uncertain but opportunity-filled world. PTI

## Al-Falah chairman denied bail in money laundering case

A Delhi court on Saturday rejected the regular bail plea of Al-Falah University group chairman Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui in a money laundering case after hearing arguments from him and the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Additional Sessions Judge Sheetal Chaudhary Pradhan declined relief, with a detailed order awaited. The ED opposed bail, citing the gravity of allegations and the ongoing probe. Mr. Siddiqui, arrested in November 2025, is accused of generating illicit funds through student fees by misrepresenting institutional accreditation. He is in judicial custody and faces prosecution in chargesheets filed by the ED and the Delhi police. PTI

## Judicial officer found dead; probe launched

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi Judicial Services officer died allegedly by suicide in the Safdarjung area, police said on Saturday.

A family member told the police that Aman Kumar Sharma, 30, had been serving as Secretary of District Legal Services Authority at Karkardooma Courts since October 2025.

He was declared dead on arrival at Safdarjung Hospital, and the body has been sent for post-mortem examination.

A probe is under way to ascertain the circumstan-

ces leading to his death. "We are examining all possible angles," an officer said.

(Those in distress can contact Tele MANAS at 14416 to seek help.)

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबन्धक, युनिट-30  
कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज  
उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय)  
मकान सं.-02/43, आवास विकास, निकट  
एलओआईसी विडियल, शाहजहाँपुर  
E-mail: pmunit30spn@gmail.com  
पत्रांक: 748/E-Tender/138  
दिनांक: 30.04.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना  
उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) की ओर से आयोजित की जा रही Construction of Boundary Wall At Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Khutar Distt. Shahjahanpur अनुं लागत ₹ 27.26 लाख हेतु दिनांक 21.05.2026 की अपराह्न 17:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 30.04.2026 से दिनांक 21.05.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त श्रद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबन्धक, युनिट-30  
कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज  
उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय)  
मकान सं.-02/43, आवास विकास, निकट  
एलओआईसी विडियल, शाहजहाँपुर  
E-mail: pmunit30spn@gmail.com  
पत्रांक: 750/E-Tender/140  
दिनांक: 30.04.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना  
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**EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Tender Notice No. : 01/TRD/DNR/OT/26-27. The Divisional Railway Manager, E.C. Railway, Danapur invites sealed open tender on behalf of the President of India for the following works:  
Tender No. : TRD/DNR/OT/01/26-27.  
1. Name of work with its location : Jhajha - Kuchaman - Replacement of Rusted Cantilever Assembly with insulators between JAJ - KCA and Patna - Gaya Sections of Danapur Division. 2. Approx cost of the work (NIT value) : ₹2,54,56,137.80. 3. Earnest money to be deposited : ₹5,09,100.00. 4. Date & time for online submission of tender : Date & time for online submission of tender : 28.05.2026 before 12:00 hrs. 5. Website particulars, notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : Detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria & tender documents can be seen from the CRIS website : <http://www.reps.gov.in> & full details of notice can be seen on notice board of Sr. DEE (TRD)/E.C. Railway/Danapur. All corrigendum will be uploaded on website if required.  
Divinl. Railway Manager / ECR/Danapur PR/0166/DNR/TRD/T/26-27/40

**EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
E-Tenders are invited for execution of the following works by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), E.C. Railway, Dhanbad:-  
SI.No.: 1. E-Tender No.: 26-DHN-2026-27. Name of the work with its location & completion period : Balance P-Way work after yard remodeling of SMIY-SNDT under the jurisdiction of ADEN/2/DHN. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (In Rs.): 54,75,751.60.  
SI.No.: 2. E-Tender No.: 27-DHN-2026-27. Name of the work with its location & completion period : Construction of side drain under Sr. DEN E-1.972 Km in the section DHN-JMN-1.254 Km. (UP/DN/SL) NPJE-KTH - 0.718 Km (SL) under ADEN/2/DHN. 12 (Twelve) Months. Approx. cost of work (In Rs.): 2,28,50,977.10.  
SI.No.: 3. E-Tender No.: 28-DHN-2026-27. Name of the work with its location & completion period : Provision of Multi Section Digital Axle Counter (MSDAC) in water logging prone area of Dhanbad Yard under ADEN/2/DHN. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (In Rs.): 1,46,09,661.65.  
SI.No.: 4. E-Tender No.: 29-DHN-2026-27. Name of the work with its location & completion period : Balance work of SMIY and SNDT yard like curtain wall, retaining wall, buffers, central drain, boundary wall, toilet complex and other miscellaneous work in the section of ADEN/2/DHN. 12 (Twelve) Months. Approx. cost of work (In Rs.): 1,46,09,661.65.  
Earnest Money (In Rs.): Earnest Money is applicable as shown in <http://www.reps.gov.in> portal. Date & Time for closing and opening of tender : Date of closing of e-tender at 12:00 hours on 25.05.2026. Date of opening of e-tender from 12:30 hrs. on 25.05.2026. Website particulars : <http://www.reps.gov.in>  
No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.  
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering) East Central Railway/Dhanbad PR/0161/DHN/ENGG/T/26-27/56

**EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Tender for Auxiliary Motors of A.C Electric Locomotives  
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRS, East Central Railway, Gomoh on behalf of the President of India invites "Open" E-tender from the eligible and experienced agencies or contractors for E-Tender No. ELS\_401\_AM-OH\_25-26\_10. Particulars are as under:  
1. Name of the work with its location : Rehabilitation of WAP-7 & WAG-9 Type Auxiliary Motors of A.C Electric Locomotives, at Electric Loco Shed of ECR, in AOHI/OH inspection or latest. Location : Electric Loco Shed, Gomoh. 2. Approx. Cost of the work : Rs. 2,19,26,257.32 (Rupees Two crore nineteen lakh twenty six thousand two hundred fifty seven and paise thirty two only). 3. Earnest Money : Rs. 4,38,500.00 (Rupees Four lakh thirty eight thousand five hundred only). 4. Date & Time for submission of tender & closing of bid : From 08/05/2026 up to closing of tender at 11:30 hrs. on 22/05/2026. 5. Website particulars where tender document is available : GEM website [www.gem.gov.in](http://www.gem.gov.in). Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids online through this website only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen : Notice board of Electric Loco Shed, Gomoh.  
ADE/TRS/GMO East Central Railway/GMO PR/0159/ELS GOMO/DRM/TRS/T/26-27/44

**EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
Batch No.: 04/26 dated 30.04.2026  
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Materials Manager, East Central Railway invites e-tenders for supply of the following items:  
SI.No.: 1. Tender No.: 04254389A, Brief Description : Rubber Pad upper for primary spring. Quantity : 5652 Nos. Due Date : 18.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
SI.No.: 2. Tender No.: 11251038C, Brief Description : Supply of Fire Extinguisher Capacity 4 KG. ABC Type. Quantity : 1756 Nos. Due Date : 25.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
SI.No.: 3. Tender No.: 10260774, Brief Description : PU Lining (Top & Bottom) (Qty. per set-01 no. each). Quantity : 29139 Nos. Due Date : 21.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
SI.No.: 4. Tender No.: 04250343A, Brief Description : Air Spring Assembly (140 KN Capacity) for Mainline/Rajdhani Coaches for IC Type Bogies. Quantity : 135 Nos. Due Date : 25.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
SI.No.: 5. Tender No.: 07255057, Brief Description : Prestressed Concrete Sleepers for Diamond Xing 1 in 8.5 Double/Single slip. Quantity : 41 Set. Due Date : 25.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
SI.No.: 6. Tender No.: 04254784A, Brief Description : Over Hauling Kit for Brake Cylinder PBEC 254-160 FRTIL. Quantity : 150 Set. Due Date : 25.05.26. Due Time : 14:00  
Note : All the above-mentioned tenders are e-tenders and all tenderers are requested to submit their bids on-line through the IREPS website at [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in). All corrigendum to above-mentioned tenders shall also be published online in IREPS website only. For more details regarding the above-mentioned tenders and other supply tenders please visit IREPS website.  
Assistant Materials Manager (HQ) E.C. Railway, Hajipur PR/0165/HQ/STORE/T/26-27/52

**U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD.**  
E-Tender Notice  
Online e-Bids are invited for "Construction of 06 Nos. 33kV Bays at 400K GIS Substation Sec-148, Noida on Turnkey Basis," against Tender Specification No. ESD-8/232. E-tender uploaded on 02.05.2026 on <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Estimated cost of the work: Rs. 6,33,03,090.00 Only. EMD Cost: Rs. 6,33,031.00. Last date of tender 01.06.2026 at 12:00 Hrs. Total Quantity, tender specification and other terms and conditions is as per tender document available on the e-tender portal. Undersigned reserve the right to cancel the e-Bids without assigning any reason. Corrigendum, Addendum, Extension if any shall be uploaded only on the above website. Bidders are advised to visit the website regularly for updated information from time to time. **Superintending Engineer, Electy. 765/400KV SDC, 11<sup>th</sup> floor, Shakti Bhawan, Extn. Lucknow.**

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबन्धक, युनिट-30  
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E-mail: pmunit30spn@gmail.com  
पत्रांक: 749/E-Tender/139  
दिनांक: 30.04.2026  
ई-निविदा सूचना  
उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) की ओर से आयोजित की जा रही Construction of Boundary Wall At Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Banda Distt. Shahjahanpur अनुं लागत ₹ 56.35 लाख हेतु दिनांक 21.05.2026 की अपराह्न 17:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 30.04.2026 से दिनांक 21.05.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त श्रद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

## Home tutor steals from student's house; arrested

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A woman was arrested for allegedly stealing gold jewellery, a purse, perfumes

and clothes from a house in Paschim Puri, where she worked as a tutor for a Class 6 student. "The accused said she stole out of greed," the police said.



Workers across platforms said their phones frequently overheat during peak summer, disrupting navigation and work. FILE PHOTO

## Gig workers struggle to stay afloat amid soaring temperatures

Ashna Butani  
NEW DELHI

As peak summer sets in, gig workers across platforms in Delhi said they are caught in a cycle of falling sick or facing reduced earnings when they pause work during intense heatwave days.

Even as the Centre issued a heatwave advisory this week for organisations and States to adopt mitigation measures for workers and labourers, gig workers point to persistent challenges. A 20-year-old delivery executive, who took up the gig a month ago after losing a clerical position in a private office, said, "On a normal day, earnings go up to ₹1,000-1,200. But on extremely hot days, when we have to reduce the number of orders and keep pausing to cool down under shade, earnings drop to ₹200-300."

Another worker said, "We keep falling sick. Fever, parched throat, and body pain are common in peak summer. If we take breaks, we can't complete orders quickly, and then we lose incentives."

Workers across platforms said their phones frequently overheat in summer, disrupting navigation and work. Aarendar Singh, a bike rider working across three ride-hailing apps, said, "Phones hang 10-12 times a day. After about 20 minutes in the sun, they stop functioning. If we keep the phone in our pocket to cool it, we can't access navigation apps."

In April, the Delhi government announced plans to set up resting hubs and public centres for gig workers. However, Mr. Singh said workers are still waiting for these facilities to materialise.

An auto driver working with a ride-hailing app said the lack of resting spots and accessible drinking water remains a major concern. "There are no places to stop and rest. If we park on the roadside, the police issue challans. Some water coolers have been installed by the government, but they are too far apart," he said.

Like others, he said his earnings have dropped from around ₹900 a day in winter to ₹200-300 in summer.

A 33-year-old delivery partner attached to a home services platform said the app requires workers to arrive at customers' homes 10 minutes early. "But when we reach, many customers don't let us in, so we have to wait outside in the sun," she said, requesting anonymity.

Many also cited restrictions denying elevator access to delivery executives in several high-rises, forcing them to climb multiple floors. "In many gated societies, we are asked to walk from the gate to the exact location instead of using our vehicles in the heat. We are not even allowed to use lifts and have to climb 10-12 floors," said an agent.

## 'Not just a transit hub': CM pushes for making Delhi a tourism hotspot

At conference for industry stakeholders, govt. highlights city's global significance and potential to become a major attraction for international visitors; Delhi will be developed into a city that reflects the face of a changing India, says Tourism Minister

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday said her government is working to transform Delhi from a transit hub to a tourist destination.

Speaking at a conference for stakeholders in tourism development, she said Delhi has unique strengths that can attract visitors from across the world. The Chief Minister said the active participation of industry stakeholders, policymakers and domain experts had resulted in several concrete and actionable suggestions. "These inputs and feedback will be incorporated into upcoming policies and plans to give a new direction to Delhi's tourism sector and make it more effective," Ms. Gupta said.

Highlighting Delhi's global significance as the national capital, Ms. Gupta said the city has the potential to become a major attraction for international visitors.

"It is time we position Delhi not just as a stopover, but as a destination city where tourists stay longer



Tourists visiting the Humayun's Tomb, in New Delhi on Saturday. ANI

and keep coming back," the Chief Minister said.

**Rich legacy**  
Ms. Gupta pointed to iconic landmarks such as Parliament, Rashtrapati Bhavan, India Gate and the Prime Minister's Museum, along with the city's rich histori-

cal legacy reflected in monuments like the Red Fort and Qutub Minar. The CM also emphasised Delhi's diverse culture and cuisine, which together offer a comprehensive and distinctive tourism experience.

She said the government is focusing on developing

Delhi not only as a tourism hub but also as a centre for medical and educational excellence. "Our goal is to attract more visitors from across India and the world, encourage them to stay longer, and take back meaningful experiences," she said.

Ms. Gupta said the government is actively promoting large-scale concerts, film festivals and cultural events to boost city's global identity. She noted that initiatives such as the film policy and a single-window system are aimed at providing seamless, transparent and time-bound services to stakeholders.

Tourism Minister Kapil Mishra, who was also present at the conference, said the government is moving swiftly to position the Capital as a world-class tourism hub. "With support from the Centre, Delhi will be developed into a distinct global tourism destination that reflects the face of a changing India," he said, adding that suggestions from the stakeholders will be incorporated into future policies to take Delhi's tourism, culture and hospitality sectors to new heights.

## 'Act swiftly on public complaints'

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday heard grievances, complaints, and suggestions from residents of Shalimar Bagh Assembly constituency at a public hearing and directed officials to act swiftly on the complaints.

"A large number of people turned up to present their concerns directly before the Chief Minister. Taking note of each case with urgency and sensitivity, the Chief Minister directed officials from the concerned departments to initiate immediate action and ensure time-bound resolution," the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement.

Ms. Gupta also highlighted that several development works are being fast-tracked in the Shalimar Bagh constituency to strengthen basic infrastructure.

## MCD seals 19 food outlets for violating licence norms

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has sealed 19 eateries and meat shops in Hastals' JJ Colony in Uttam Nagar for operating without a valid Health Trade Licence, officials said on Saturday.

The establishments in Blocks A, B and C were sealed by the Public Health Department of the West Zone amid police presence.

During inspections on April 17 and 18, officials claimed to have found 30 food outlets functioning without required licences. All were challaned and issued show-cause notices. Of these, 11 owners voluntarily shut their establishments and submitted written confirmation, which was verified by the MCD.

The remaining 19 continued operations despite notices issued on April 28, directing them to shut business within two days.

An official said the drive was undertaken to ensure compliance with health and safety norms under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act. "The action was part of an ongoing anti-encroachment drive in West Zone," the official added.

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E-Tender Notice No. SG-654-01-Sig-2026-27. E-TENDER IS INVITED ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA FOR THE UNDER-MENTIONED WORK.  
SI.No.: 1. Name of the work: Replacement of defective S&T cable. Decayed/Worn-out Location Boxes, Overaged track relays and other equipments in the section of DSTE/DHN, DHN DIV. 2. Approx. cost of the work : ₹68,83,13,516.61. 3. Earnest Money : ₹13,66,300.00. 4. Date & Time for closing of Tender : 21.05.2026 at 12:30 Hrs.. 5. Any E-Tender which is sent by Post/Courier/FAX or self, Manual proposals although the letter is on firms letter pad or received in time will not be accepted. The above E-Tenders, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. <http://www.reps.gov.in>  
Note : Tenderers are requested to visit the website <http://www.reps.gov.in> atleast 10 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum/corrections etc. in response to this E-Tender.  
Sr. D. S. T. E.  
East Central Railway, Dhanbad PR/0158/DHN/S&T/T/26-27/32

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Tender Notice No. : 02/TRD/DNR/OT/26-27. The Divisional Railway Manager, E.C. Railway, Danapur invites sealed open tender on behalf of the President of India for the following works:  
Tender No. : TRD/DNR/OT/02/26-27.  
1. Name of work with its location : POH of 05 Nos. 21.6 MVA, 132/25 KV Power Transformer of JAJ/TSS (2 Nos.), KOO/TSS (1 No.), NLD/TSS (1 No.) & DNR/TSS (1 No.) for improving power supply over Danapur Division. 2. Approx cost of the work (NIT value) : ₹2,27,53,908.20. 3. Earnest money to be deposited : ₹4,55,100.00. 4. Date & time for online submission of tender : 28.05.2026 before 12:00 hrs. 5. Website particulars, notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : Detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria & tender documents can be seen from the CRIS website : <http://www.reps.gov.in> & full details of notice can be seen on notice board of Sr. DEE (TRD)/E.C. Railway/Danapur. All corrigendum will be uploaded on website if required.  
Divinl. Railway Manager / ECR/Danapur PR/0167/DNR/TRD/T/26-27/40

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## Convicted of murder, Karnataka Cong. MLA disqualified

**Press Trust of India**  
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Legislative Assembly on Saturday issued an official notification regarding the disqualification of Congress MLA Vinay Kulakarni following his conviction in the murder case of BJP leader Yogeshgouda Goudar.

The former Minister is currently in prison, serving life imprisonment in the case. "Consequent upon the conviction of Vinay Kulakarni, Member of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly representing the Dharwad constituency, by the Additional City Civil Sessions Judge, Bengaluru City, he stands disqualified from the membership of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly from the date of conviction, i.e., April 15, 2026," the notification read.

"He stands disqualified in terms of the provisions of Article 191(D)(e) of the Constitution of India, read with Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and such disqualification shall continue for a further period of six years after his release, unless the conviction is stayed by a competent court," it added.

## MP Rashid's father shifted to AIIMS Delhi

**Press Trust of India**  
SRINAGAR

The ailing father of Lok Sabha MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid was airlifted to New Delhi on Saturday for advanced medical treatment at AIIMS. "The father of Baramulla MP Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, has been shifted to AIIMS Delhi for advanced medical care," said Inam Un Nabi, chief spokesperson of the Rashid's Awami Itihaad Party.

Mr. Rashid, who has been lodged in Delhi's Tihar Jail since 2019, got a week's interim bail from the Delhi High Court on Tuesday to visit his father. He arrived in Srinagar on Wednesday.

## Correction

Nitish Kumar vacated the Bihar CM's residence after two decades, and not four decades as mentioned in the headline of an article, "Nitish Kumar vacates CM's residence after four decades", (States page, May 2, 2026). The error is regretted.

### Timings

DELHI		
SUNDAY, MAY. 03		
RISE	05:39	SET 18:58
RISE	20:42	SET 06:14
MONDAY, MAY. 04		
RISE	05:39	SET 18:58
RISE	21:38	SET 06:56
TUESDAY, MAY. 05		
RISE	05:38	SET 18:59
RISE	22:30	SET 07:44

Delhi Weather		
max	min	
Delhi City	39	26
Safdarjang	39	26
Palam	38	24

**Delhi Palam Today**  
38°C The weather will be slight hot and uneasy. Night will be pleasant. Spell of duststorm and thundershower with strong winds to occur.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
35°C The weather will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of dust storm with strong winds and light rain and thundershower to occur.

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# Mortal remains of siblings killed in Manipur bomb strike handed over to kin

Hundreds offer tributes to five-year-old boy and his six-month-old sister; bodies kept in morgue for 25 days after the family refused to accept the mortal remains demanding justice amid violent protests

**Press Trust of India**  
IMPHAL

The mortal remains of two children, who were killed in a bomb attack in Manipur's Bishnupur district in April, were handed over to their family members on Saturday, officials said.

The bodies of the five-year-old boy and his six-month-old sister were kept in the morgue for 25 days as the family members had refused to accept the mortal remains, demanding that the perpetrators be brought to book at the earliest.

On April 25, Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh had appealed to the family members of the children to accept the bodies. Mr. Singh had also said all efforts were under way to find the culprits.



Bereaved family members perform the last rites of the two children in Bishnupur district on Saturday. PTI

The two children were killed in a bomb attack at Tronglaobi in Bishnupur district on April 7. Their bodies were kept in the morgue at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences in Im-

phal. The incident had triggered widespread violent protests in the five valley districts of Manipur, and the case was subsequently handed over to the National Investigation Agency.

Hundreds of people lined up along the way to Tronglaobi to offer floral tributes, as the mortal remains were taken for the last rites in an open vehicle earlier in the day.

## Trapped under coal slurry, 4 killed

**Press Trust of India**  
DHANBAD

At least four workers were killed after getting trapped under coal slurry in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district on Saturday, a police official said.

The incident took place at Moonidih coal washery in the command area of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCLL).

"Bodies of all four workers were dug out of debris during a rescue operation," Putki police station in-

charge Waqar Hussain said. The incident took place when coal slurry was being loaded into trucks by workers during which a large chunk of slurry fell and trapped several workers underneath, officials told reporters.

## Woman details confrontation with Minister

**Chinmay Gaiikwad**  
MUMBAI

Teena Choudhry, the woman who confronted Maharashtra Minister Girish Mahajan over traffic congestion in the Worli area of Mumbai last month,

said on Saturday that she was ignored by police personnel for over an hour before the situation escalated. She added that the Minister was the only person in the convoy who tried to hear her out. In a purported video

that went viral on social media, Ms. Choudhry was seen lashing out at the Minister over the long traffic congestion allegedly due to a BJP rally on April 21. "I went to every police officer. I received no reaction, no response. Nobody

heard me," Ms. Choudhry said, adding, that on instructions of Mr. Mahajan, two buses were moved, and she was able to join the main road. Ms. Choudhry urged people not to turn the incident into a political attack.



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(First Phase of Census 2027)

Common queries on Self-Enumeration (SE) and their Answers (Part-1)

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- ❖ **Is Self-Enumeration mandatory?**  
No, it is an additional facility. If you do not do it, an enumerator will collect data during field visit
- ❖ **Can I do Self-Enumeration in any language?**  
This facility is available in Hindi, English and 14 Indian languages
- ❖ **Is internet required for Self-Enumeration?**  
Yes, internet is required to access the portal
- ❖ **Is my information safe?**  
Yes, all data is secure, encrypted and stored on government servers
- ❖ **What is SE ID and its use?**  
After submission of information, you will receive a unique 11 digit SE ID (Also via SMS/email) which must be shown to the enumerator during her/his visit to your house
- ❖ **What if SE ID is forgotten?**  
It can be retrieved using the registered mobile number on the portal
- ❖ **Will an enumerator visit after Self-Enumeration?**  
Yes, the enumerator will visit your home and confirm your details using the SE ID
- ❖ **Do I need to upload any documents?**  
No documents are required to be uploaded
- ❖ **Is help available on the portal?**  
Portal has user guide, flowcharts, tutorial videos, FAQs and tooltips

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**Land Ports Authority of India, MHA**  
**(Appointment of Member (Planning & Development) on deputation basis)**

LPAI has issued a vacancy circular dated 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2026 for filling up the post of Member (Planning & Development) with the last date of submission of application being 13-04-2026. Now the last date is being extended up to 23-05-2026. For more details, please visit the website of Ministry of Home Affairs at <http://mha.gov.in> and LPAI at <http://lpai.gov.in>

**CBC 19142/11/0001/2627**

## IN BRIEF



## Tribals, SCs preserved India's identity and soul: Bhagwat

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said that despite foreign invasions and hardships, tribal communities and Scheduled Castes (SCs) preserved the country's identity and soul. He was speaking at the Karmayogi awards ceremony in Mumbai, where Union Minister Nitin Gadkari was also present. Referring to global developments, Mr. Bhagwat said the present world is "stumbling forward" and struggling to maintain balance, and asserted that India could emerge as a stabilising force. PTI

## 13 hospitalised after drinking water in Rajasthan school

Thirteen students of a government school in Rajasthan were hospitalised as they fell ill after allegedly drinking water from the school tank on Saturday, officials said. The incident occurred at the Government Senior Secondary School in Meghwalon ki Basti, Sanawada, where students had gathered for an activity. After drinking water, students began complaining of itching and red rashes, they said. Additional District Collector Rajendra Singh said the children were brought with allergy-like symptoms and are under medical supervision. PTI

## HC directs T.N. to introduce lessons on Ambedkar in social science curriculum

The Hindu Bureau  
MADURAI



True tribute to B.R. Ambedkar lies not merely in statues and ceremonies, but in ensuring that every child knows why he matters to India, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has said while directing the State to take necessary policy steps to introduce appropriate lessons on the contributions of the leader in the social science curriculum in the State syllabus.

Justice L. Victoria Gowri

The tragedy of our times lies in the shrinking of such a towering national figure into the cramped confines of caste-based perception

MADURAI BENCH OF THE  
MADRAS HC

said: "In a country which takes pride in being the largest democracy in the world, it is deeply unfortunate that many young

## BJP manipulated exit polls to mislead voters: Gaurav

Assam Congress chief says there is a 'silent vote' and an 'undercurrent' in favour of Oppn.; leaders of the alliance parties meet in State capital to take stock of preparations for counting day, May 4

Press Trust of India  
GUWAHATI

Assam Congress chief Gaurav Gogoi on Saturday alleged that exit polls are being manipulated by the BJP to create confusion among voters.

Addressing a press conference after a meeting of Opposition alliance leaders here, Mr. Gogoi said the BJP may try to mislead people, but will not succeed. "Neither the Opposition parties nor the people of the State have fallen into the trap of exit polls, and this will be evident on the day of counting on May 4," he said.

Mr. Gogoi said there is a "silent vote" and an "undercurrent" in favour of the Opposition, which exit poll surveys have not captured. Many voters, especially women, have voted based on real issues like price rise and governance, he claimed.

Mr. Gogoi alleged that the BJP has been trying to create anomalies in the



Assam Congress president Gaurav Gogoi (second left) during a party observers' meeting in Guwahati on Saturday. PTI

strongrooms, but our candidates and alert public have gone to the administration on several occasions to prevent such misdeeds.

**Anti-incumbency factor** "All sections of society across the State want a change of government in the State. They have voted for this on April 9, and the results will be known on May 4," he added.

The Congress candidate from Jorhat said Opposition leaders met to discuss preparations for counting and to remain alert on

counting day.

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the exit polls are misleading and that the "party is confident about its survey, which indicates the Opposition will form the government after May 4".

**'Bid to derail counting'** The BJP is making efforts to derail the counting process, but "we are prepared to deal with the situation with legal rooms in both Delhi and Guwahati to deal with it".

"We are prepared to protect our candidates

and to ensure that the State machinery is not used for any mischief," he added.

He further alleged that the BJP had approached several Opposition candidates after the polls, questioning why it would do so if it were confident of victory.

"This proves that they are not confident, but the people of Assam are, and there is going to be a change of government in the State," he added. He also alleged that the exit polls were manipulated by the BJP.

The meeting was attended by leaders of the Congress, Rajgor Dal's Akhil Gogoi, Assam Jatiya Parishad's Lurinjyoti Gogoi, All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHL), CPI (M), CPI and CPI(ML), among others.

AICC general secretary Jitendra Singh, former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and the party's election observer Bandhu Turkey were also present at the meeting.

## Panel visits Rajasthan town to probe clash between BJP MLA and govt. officials

Mohammed Iqbal  
JAIPUR

A fact-finding committee, appointed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government, visited Sriganaganagar in Rajasthan on Saturday to probe into a clash between ruling party MLA Jaideep Bihani and some officials during a public hearing last week. Mr. Bihani has been accused of assaulting an Assistant Engineer.

Three persons, including Rajasthan Urban Infrastructure Development Project's (RUIDP) Assistant Engineer Jaganlal Bairwa, were arrested after the incident on April 30. Mr. Bihani alleged that the officials slapped him during a discussion on the drinking water issues. However, Mr. Bairwa and his two colleagues, who have since been released on bail, accused Mr. Bihani and his supporters of assaulting them and using casteist slurs. "The MLA slapped me without provocation and his supporters attacked us using kicks, punches and

pipes," Mr. Bairwa, who belongs to Scheduled Caste, said.

The public hearing was convened to review the ongoing development works and address disruptions in the city's water supply. Mr. Bihani alleged gross negligence in sewerage and road construction projects undertaken by RUIDP.

The committee, headed by Urban Development and Housing Secretary Ravi Jain, recorded the statements of both Mr. Bihani and Mr. Bairwa. Tension escalated when the committee brought the MLA and the assistant engineer face-to-face for a discussion. Mr. Jain told journalists that the committee would shortly submit a detailed report to Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma.

## Engineers protest

While Dalit groups in the State have demanded a fair and impartial investigation, government engineers in Sriganaganagar and the adjoining Hanumangarh districts on Saturday went on a mass leave in protest.

## EC takes up final phase of arrangements at 62 counting centres across Tamil Nadu

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI

Elaborate arrangements have been put in place by the Election Commission of India (EC) for the counting of votes for the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections on May 4 at 62 counting centres across the State. Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik on Saturday held a review meeting with EC officials on the final phase of arrangements for counting.

According to sources, the counting of votes will



**Tight security:** Police personnel stationed outside Thanthai Periyar Government Institute of Technology in Vellore, which will function as a counting centre on Monday. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

begin at 8 a.m. on May 4, starting with postal ballots. The postal ballots of service voters will be accepted till 8 a.m. on the

day of counting. The postal ballots will be counted at the ratio of one table for every 500 postal ballots. The counting of votes

polled in Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) will begin at 8.30 a.m. The final round of counting of votes polled in EVMs will commence only after the completion of counting of postal ballots.

Beyond the regular strength of Observers, Returning Officers (ROs), and Assistant Returning Officers (AROs), 1,135 additional AROs have been deployed across the State for counting. A total of 10,545 counting personnel have been drafted for counting duty.

## SPOTLIGHT

## Aaratrika Bhaumik

Nearly a year after unaccounted cash was allegedly recovered from his official residence in Delhi, Allahabad High Court judge Yashwant Varma wrote to President Droupadi Murmu on April 9, conveying his decision to step down from office.

"While I do not propose to burden your august office with the reasons that have constrained me to submit this missive, it is with deep anguish that I hereby tender my resignation," Varma said in his letter.

The decision brought to a close months of mounting scrutiny dating back to the night of March 14, 2025. Then a judge of the Delhi High Court, Varma found himself in the eye of the storm after firefighters responding to a blaze at his official residence allegedly discovered stacks of half-burnt currency notes in a storeroom.

In the following weeks, the Supreme Court Collegium, then headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna, repatriated him to his parent Allahabad High Court and divested him of judicial work as an in-house inquiry was set up.

A three-judge committee concluded that Varma and his family members

exercised "covert or active control" over the storeroom, and cash had been recovered from the premises. This, the panel said, "belied the trust" reposed in him as a constitutional court judge and warranted impeachment proceedings.

Acting on these findings and following Varma's refusal to resign, the then CJI wrote to the Prime Minister and the President on May 8, 2025, enclosing the report and recommending removal proceedings under Article 124(4) of the Constitution and the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968. While this recommendation set the stage for impeachment, Varma stepped down before a Lok Sabha-constituted inquiry committee could conclude its proceedings.

On February 13, 2026, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal informed the Lok Sabha that the office of the CJI had received 8,630 complaints against sitting judges between 2016 and 2025, a rise of over 51% from 729 in 2016 to 1,102 in 2025. No details were given on whether these complaints pertained to corruption, sexual misconduct, or other wrongdoing, nor which High Courts recorded the highest numbers or what action had been taken.

Prashant Bhushan, a Delhi-based advocate and convenor of the non-profit Campaign for Judicial Ac-

## Silence, the court is in session

The resignation of Allahabad High Court judge Yashwant Varma last month, amid parliamentary proceedings to remove him over allegations that burnt wads of unaccounted cash were found at his Delhi residence in 2025, has brought into focus how the judiciary holds itself to account



The Law Ministry said it has no mechanism to monitor complaints against judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts. FILE PHOTO

countability and Reforms, said there is opacity because "inquiry reports are not made public, and there is little disclosure on proceedings against judges or action taken." He added that judicial corruption is difficult to address "because of the extent to which it remains shielded from public scrutiny", pointing to "the fear of contempt of court" and "the near absence of any effective mechanism to hold errant judges to account".

Even impeachment, he noted, requires the support of at least 100 Lok Sabha or 50 Rajya Sabha members, "making it contingent on political will rather than the merits of the complaint".

**Activist asks for more** Delhi-based legal journalist and Right to Information (RTI) activist Saurav Das called the Minister's response "conspicuously incomplete" and filed an RTI request with the Supreme Court Registry. He sought year-wise data on the 8,630 complaints, including those pending, dis-

posed of, found to be mala fide or motivated, and those forwarded to High Courts. "Publishing figures without any clarity on how complaints were handled risks creating the impression that nothing was done. This can undermine trust in the judiciary," he said.

In a response seen by *The Hindu*, Supreme Court Registry CPIO S.K. Kamesh Nookala said "necessary action" had been taken, but the remaining information was "spread over numerous files", the collation of which would "disproportionately divert" resources. Exemptions

under Section 8 of the RTI Act were also invoked.

Das appealed and sought inspection of records under Section 2(i)(j) of the RTI Act. The appeal, however, was dismissed. "A one-line response stating only that 'necessary action was taken' is paternalistic and defeats the purpose of the RTI Act. I will now prefer an appeal before the Central Information Commission," he said.

Former Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court S. Muralidhar said Section 8 exemptions cannot justify withholding non-personal data. "There is no justifica-

tion for withholding data on the number of complaints and their status. Such information can be disclosed without revealing identities." In fact, Madan B. Lokur, former Supreme Court judge, said, "Numbers are not particularly important, since many complaints are frivolous or malicious, often filed by disgruntled litigants. What matters more is how many complaints were serious and how they were dealt with."

## In Parliament

An analysis by *The Hindu* showed that between January 2011 and March 2026, 48 parliamentary questions sought data on complaints against judges, but disclosures were made in only five instances.

In many responses, the Law Ministry said it "does not maintain records" and has "no mechanism to monitor complaints" against judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, stating that such matters are handled under the judiciary's in-house procedure. Complaints concerning the district jud-

iciary fall under the administrative control of the concerned High Courts.

Where data have been disclosed, responses indicate that complaints are routed through the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) and forwarded to the CJI or Chief Justices of High Courts. Responding to MPs S. Gnanathiraviam and Malook Nagar on April 1, 2022, then Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said 1,631 complaints were received through CPGRAMS between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2021, and forwarded accordingly.

Legal academic and author Prashant Reddy T. said, "Such sparse disclosures reflect a deep-rooted culture of opacity within the Indian judiciary, particularly in its administrative functioning."

## Consequences of a post

The transparency debate has also intersected with concerns over free speech. In February, a three-judge Bench led by CJI Surya Kant took *suo motu* cognisance and ordered the withdrawal of an NCERT Class 8 textbook that referenced "corruption in the judiciary". The court observed that the references reflected a "discernible underlying agenda" and *prima facie* constituted criminal contempt.

NCERT tendered an "unconditional and un-

qualified apology" and withdrew the textbook, but the court directed authorities to dissociate from those involved in preparing the chapter, including author Michel Danino, educationist Suparna Diwakar and legal researcher Alok Prasanna Kumar.

The order triggered debate among students and academics. Rishi A. Kumar, a 22-year-old law student, wrote in a blog post that "the more the judiciary tries to suppress discussion of its failures, the more distrust it generates". "Law school trains you to think critically and question public institutions as an essential feature of democracy," he said.

His university initially asked him to take down the post after receiving calls from members of the legal fraternity, but later expressed support for him. Kumar refused to comply, stating that the university did not "own" his "voice or conscience".

Abhay S. Oka, former Supreme Court judge, echoing the observations of English judge Lord Denning (1899-1999), said contempt powers should not be invoked to uphold the court's dignity. "The dignity of the institution must rest on surer foundations. However, where there is clear defiance of its orders, the court must act firmly," he added.

aaratrikabhaumik@  
thehindu.co.in

# Classifieds

LIFE MADE SIMPLE

THE HINDU

# Matrimonial

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

## BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

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### DOCTOR

ELITE MD doctor girl /26 yrs / Vellalar /Fair /good looking seeks pg doctor /well settled professional-caste OBC WhatsApp 9500163683

**Hindu Nadar, 32, 165cms, very Fair, Doctor, Cardiology Fellowship. Hailing from highly affluent family. Currently working as a Cardiologist. Instructor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. Lives in US. Seeking an upstanding, well qualified, Professional Groom, preferably a Doctor. Ct: +91 9791994449 vsajrs@gmail.com**

**BRIDE GROOM WANTED Tamil Muslim, well settled Industrialist family in Chennai. Seeks Medico MD / MS Groom for their daughter doing MD (derm) 27yrs / 158cm / Fair**  
Contact: Jabbarshahul64@gmail.com  
**98840 15371 96000 74295**

DKV, 29 years, Female Radiologist, Divorced, Chennai, prefer, IAS/ Doctor/Officers Contact: 9047119910

### ENGLISH

✓ Suitable Alliance for 28 years old Christian Bride, doing M.D., Tamil Parents, Hyderabad based (Father-ret'd, Sr. Executive, Private Service, Mother-Consultant Physician). Contact: WhatsApp- 79972 79991, email: poig6961@gmail.com

### IAS/ ALLIED SERVICES

Hindu, Tamil, gounder, 45 years, IPS, seeks Groom, Contact: Phone No: 9578822036.

### MALAYALAM

SYRIAN CHRISTIAN Pentecostal Elite Pst. @ Chennai Seeks for their Architect Girl 27y/175cm from Professionally Qldd Boy (HT-8) 979083483

HINDU NAIR girl (1/3/2002, 5:15 am, Ultram) Trivandrum, MBA Australia working in Logistics company. Seeking Alliances without or with horoscope. 9526364446.

### TAMIL

✓ TAMIL MUSLIM Sharjah settled bride (UK Bachelor's Degree) 24/ 155/50 seek Engineers/Doctors/Accountant grooms in UAE/GCC. Please send Photo/Biodata to email: allianceuae2@gmail.com

✓ MUSLIM GIRL, 39, engineer, slim, seeks educated, employed, unmarried Tamil Muslim groom. 944235779

TAMIL MUSLIM Girl, Singapore Citizen, 30 Yrs / 165 cm. Electrical Eng-NUS-Singapore, looking for suitable alliance. NRI or Overseas Educated Groom, Good Family, Willing to relocate to Singapore. Ct: 656007500

CHRISTIAN PENTECOSTAL Tamil 28/ 154cm, 40K - MNC Seeking Suitable Bridegroom. Ct: 95249 50931

PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN Nadar, 31 PG, Chennai seeks fair, well settled, Religious Christian boy. Ct: 9840345969

CHRISTIAN, DIVORCED, M.tech, 30cores, Looking for 2nd marriage groom in UK or for our daughter from any subcaste, IT/309900553

CHRISTIAN, MBA, 31, Looking for Govt and doctor professional in Rc,Rc nadar.Rc pillai.Rcsc groom in tamilnadu or pondicherry, 7356483111

CHRISTIAN NADAR Dec1996 165cm MBBS MD MRCS working in Apollo Hospital Chennai Seeks Doctor Groom MBBS MD MS. Contact: 944421884, 8122682017

DIVORCEE (NO-KIDS) 43Yrs/M.Sc., M.Phil., Ph.D Job: Asst. Prof. RC/SC (AD), Wanted Groom with Decent Profession / Job Caste No Bar 6382135986

SEEKING NEVER married Tamil / Telugu groom age (43-44) working in Chennai or US for Naidu bride-send details to yamini.hari@gmail.com /SWE contact +91 9543322082/044-31547506

HINDU SC Chennai, 31yrs, BE, ECE, WIPRO, Sr. Tech Leader, seeks Suitable Alliance. Contact: 9884798695

SUITABLE QUALIFIED Alliance Invited for a Fair and Slim 32year Doctor (Dentist) MDS Vanniakula Kshatriya Girl Working as Senior Lecturer in Chennai. Dhanusu Rasi Star Modam (Apadam) Ct: 9382167197 / 9962781009

GROOM WANTED SC (AD), 27yrs, B.Tech, MBA, Well Educated Family in Chennai Ph: 6369113665

GROOM WANTED CSI Nadar 25yrs, BE, MS Australia, SWE 1.5Lpa/m, educated family.984132947/9380791999

### TAMIL

GROOM WANTED Mudaliyar, 27yrs, MBA, Elite business family in Bangalore Ph: 6385293227

FASHION DESIGNER SaivaMudaliyar Anusham 33 Very Fair Proprietor NeedVeg IT/ Govt Employed Groom 956268349

HINDU Tamil, Sengundhar, Avittam, EEE (Dip) 23 Seeks SWE/Business below 26 groom from same sect having own house. Mob: 94435 10915.

GROOM WANTED Rich Naidu, 30yrs, Divorce, MBA, well settled back-ground in Chennai Ph: 9962791888

SCA, 29YEARS, B.Tech, MBA (BIM 2019-21)13 LPA seeks Tamil Suitable Groom, CNB. Ct: 9441677205

REDDY SPECIALIST Doctor (MSc) 165 Cm, 1990 born. Own practice in Chennai. Seeking never married groom, Caste No Bar. Ct: 8925640111

NAIDU 38, MSc, 156cm Good looking 24Lac PA well settled Seeks suitable Groom CNB. Ct: 8778514465/ 7200866346

Hindu SC Arundhadiyar 31 B.Sc (CS) 2nd marriage-have 5 yrs boy-expected chand habits Kind Gysr. 99942-84675.

GROOM WANTED Pillai, 34yrs, BE, working in Central Govt, Well Educated Family Ph: 6385293227

BANGALORE-BASED HINDU bride, 47 yrs, height 167cm, MBA, working in US for past 21 yrs, Divorced (no kids). Caste no bar. Contact: 8220765305

ATTRACTIVE, SOFT 30, 168cm, well-read UK-based architect. Open to relocating. Cultured, affluent Tamil/Telugu family. Seeks compatible groom. Caste no bar. Call/WA 93456 34365

SEEKING GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL for 44yrs unmarried Tamil SC Hindu Adi Dravida Female IT professional (20yrs exp) from Chennai holding Singapore PR. Contact +919790921761/+917200942776.

HINDU NADAR- Divorces Unconsummated Marriage - 35 JPMC (IT, Bangalore Sr. Associate 40L PA Own House. Seeks bly 38yrs. Call / WA : 9442126376

GROOM WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 27yrs, MBBS, MS, Elite business family in Chennai Ph: 6385293227

ARCOT VELLALA Mudaliyar girl 28/ Thiruvannam /fair/158/ M.Tech MSc (Digit Mktg -Singapore) highly paid seeks Professional groom of well educated & respected family Ct: 9841666230

HINDU, ADIDRAVIDAR, 29, Masters Law, Looking for govt staffs in higher designation for my daughter in same caste or equal caste, 813809235

VANNAN, 27, BE, 30laks, Looking for same caste groom from 27-32 in tamil or telugu in overall tamilnadu for our daughter. 8137001255

MUDALIAR, MS, Doctor, 40laks, Looking for 32-35 from Same or equal caste in MS, MD, ME for my daughter. 8138900312

PILLAI, 23, MSC, Looking for pillai and mudaliar groom in upper middle/rich and affluent in tamilnadu. 8138900412

✓ VANNIAR MD 31 Smart Good Looking Chennai Employed seeks well to do groom MD/MS 98404 71097

HINDU NADAR, - B.E. MBA - 30/ 158cm Software Engineer - Udangudi - Seeking Bridegroom Cell: 9626735777

BRIDEGROOM WANTED for a well-to-do hindu family's bride age 43, first marriage, degree-MSW, want, working for a well-settled, professionally qualified groom from same community. Ph: 9152236196

BE/30/155 Pooramam Fair good looking rich Mudaliyar with moral values seek suitable groom. 7975421774

✓ ALLIANCE INVITED for Hindu SC girl, 26 yrs, 169 cm, LL.M, 25LPA, Associate in Capital Markets at a top-tier law firm, Mumbai/Chennai. Looking for a well-settled, professionally qualified groom from same community. Ph: 9152236196

Alliance invited from a well settled and educated family for a 37y old independent, career-oriented woman. Height: 160 cm, highly qualified, currently working as international teacher in Dubai. Legally divorced, no children, seeking mature & responsible groom. Telugu / Tamil pref. Divorcees welcome. Contact: 94451 20943. Email: rajanisuganthi@gmail.com

GROOM WANTED SC (AD), 34yrs, ME, well educated family background in Chennai Ph: 9962791888

GROOM WANTED Mudaliyar, 26yrs, BE, Own Transports in Chennai, Affluent family Ph: 6385293227

MUDALIAR 25/165 Fair, MBBS MD, Neuro, Rela Hospital, 2000000 PA, Well-to-do, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

DEVAR 28 170cm M arch Australia seeks well Qualified Grooms in Australia Devar only Geetham 9884858014

KANNIYAR NAIDU 26 160cm BE Chennai seeks professionals India / Abroad Naidu Only Geetham 9884858014

### TAMIL

SC/AD, BPT, DOB 1977, Bride Seeks Suitable, Qualified, Employed Bride Groom. Ct: 9841708256

BRAHMIN-IYER, 28, MDS, Looking for a Professional groom in Maharashtra, Delhi, Hyderabad for our daughter, 8138900652

**VANNIYAR, BRIDE 32 / 157CM / MEENAM, REVATHI, IT PROFESSIONAL, B.E. MBA, 9L PA, EXPECTING GOOD-LOOKING BRIDEGROOM FROM BC/MBC PREFERABLE.**  
CONTACT **9500122750**

Tamil Yadava Girl , M.B.A 24 yrs / 160cm, from an affluent family, fair & good Looking Thiruvathirai star  
Seeks a Good Looking, well Educated and Settled Groom Age: 25 to 27 years  
contact : 9884262668

**WANTED BRIDEGROOM CSI Christian nadar girl, 22 years, M.A., Journalism and Mass Communication. Belongs to an industrialist family Seeks suitable boy of age group - 24 to 28 from the same community and religion such as industrialist / businessman PG doctor / engineer. Send profile with photograph to gunasinghc@gmail.com (or) Whatsapp to +91 98438 22236 +91 94426 17326**

**Bride Groom Wanted for DOCTOR**  
Bride, 34 yrs, 5'7", divorcee, doctor (MBBS, MD, DM), from an elite business family, Hindu Nadar, based in Tirunelveli, seeks a suitable groom from an affluent family (caste no bar)  
Kindly contact **9994851637/ 9790445335**

HINDU NADAR: Age 25 PGDM, very fair, Looking for Chennai Settled Business Family, WhatsApp: 9840907301

REARRIAGE 42YRS Divorcee +2, Mudaliyar Caste No Bar Ct: 7708700879, 9841817000

Wanted SCAD Professional Groom for only daughter 34/168 Me Phd WA: 6381757167

HINDU AID-DRAVIDA Upper Middle Class, Fair, Slim, 32/174cm, MD.MD Govt, Risabam Chennai. Seeks Groom with Good Looking & Salary below 37yrs Caste no bar. Ph:9840728782

HINDU SC/AD, 40/163cm fair, B.Tech (CSE), SWP, Moolam, Dhansu, never married, Chennai, seeks Professionally qualified, never married groom below 43yrs from India / Abroad. Caste No Bar. Call / WA: 8754566571

Viewaskarma 31 years Central Govt seeking groom from suitable Tamil / Telugu BC family only. Ct:98401 05941

Hindu, SC(AD) Chennai 36yrs, MBA working in MNC, 14L PA, Seek suitable alliance. Caste No Bar. Ct: 9841243319

✓ HINDU, SC(AD), 39yrs/154cm, B.E, MBA, Mesham/Ashwini, MSc, seeks suitable Groom, Ph:9840688543

### TELEGU

✓ HINDU, TELEGU Naidu, Never married, B.E, well settled independent I.T Professional, 45yrs. Seeking educated well settled never married groom from a respectable Hindu family. Ph:7845749515.

NAIDU 26/167 Fair, MBBS MD, GYN, Mehta Hospital, 1500000 PA, Well-to-do Fmly , CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

**హైదరాబాద్ కు వచ్చిన నాని**  
Hyderabad BC Caste 30Yrs. Height 5'10" B.Tech., Rich family ఉండవల్లి పల్లియ్యూరి రేణుకా సుబ్బయ్యల కుమార్తె (or) Bangalore. ఆంధ్ర ప్రదేశ్ కు వచ్చిన వారు కాదు. కిం సంపాదించకపోతూ  
**Tirupati: 7093722724**

Affluent upper middle-class Balija Naidu family seeks a suitable alliance for their daughter, 31 years, 5 feet, wheatish, BE, MS, MBA, presently working in USA. Groom should be well-educated, professionally accomplished, and from a good family background. Ct: 9047010018 / 9787943250

## BRIDES WANTED

### COMPUTER / INFO.TECH

YER, 2ND Marriage, 44, B.E, Job in Chennai MNC Company, Wanting any suitable Vegetarian bride, 7418006626, vijaydeep1947@gmail.com

### COSMOPOLITAN

SMART, SUCCESSFUL 29, 179cm, well-educated (IIT B.Tech/M.Tech) professional. Affluent S Indian business family. Seeks compatible bride. Language/caste no bar. Call/WA 9345634365

US-RETURNED MS (USA), 33/6ft, Sr. Manager, MNC, Chennai, mutually divorced. Seeking educated, professional, open-minded, family-oriented bride (28-34); CNB/divorcee welcome. 98430-45585

### DIVORCEE

48YRS. TOP mgmt. Pvt. Sector, Chennai. Good Salary, Viswakarma, Divorcee. No issues. CNB. Suitable bride. Ct: 95661 97522 / 73388 89725

FAMILIAR MUSICIAN LECTURER 33 Pillai Mudaliar VEG Iestotaller Hasham Music Family Expecting Music Interested Bride Caste No Bar 9384665632

REQUIRE CARING Girl without issues caste no bar for a Chennai based hindu boy 51 yrs divorcee without issues. Ct: 9841672014

SMART, SUCCESSFUL 38, 171cm, progressive US-based professional at global MNC. Seeks educated, compatible S Indian bride. Call/WA 93456 34365

### DOCTOR

CHRISTIAN NADAR, Feb 1998, 178cm, MBBS, MD, General Medicine, DM Nephrology (St Ramachandira Medical College, Chennai), Seeks MDS, MD Doctor Bride. Contact: 9500085244

HINDU - SC - AD - 33, Fair - MBBS, Seeks Doctor Bride - Same Community, Ct: -9444314459

HINDU YADAVA, 13/07.1995, 3.25 PM, 176 cm, seeks MBBS/MD bride. Contact: 9444674978 / 9942005782.

### GOVT / QUASI GOVT

Scientist, ISRO, Bangalore, 46 years, Tamil, Hindu, Sozhia Vellalar, Pillai, Remarriage(No Kids), Seek unmarried/Divorced & Issueless Tamil/ Kannada/ Malayalam Girl (Age between 36 to 41yrs only), caste NO Bar, 8th or 10th also ok. NO brokers. Call:9108175339

### HINDI

1985/175CM, 50 Lakhs PA, Never Married, Bangalore. WhatsApp: 96290 12248

### MALAYALAM

SUITABLE BRIDE CNB for Malayalam Inter caste groom 40/182 MNC Bosch 30 LPA Coimbatore TN, Innocent Divorcee/homely bride without kids also accepted. CT: 88076 59287 & 99524 85996.

PALAKKAD EZHIVA boy 30/158cm/Btech/HCL/Bangalore/WFH/Shudha Jathakam. Seeks suitable bride Ph 9495136088

✓ INTELLIGENT, SPIRITUALLY INCLINED GROOM, Well-settled, Hindu, 38, alumnus of IIT Madras (B.Tech & M.Tech), Director in AI Company (San Francisco, Bangalore, Trivandrum). UAE Golden Visa Holder. 168 cm, fair, good-looking, from a reputed family. Legally divorced (brief marriage under 1 year). Looking for a Wise, Charming, Intelligent, Hindu Girl. Contact Mother : 8075491499. (Not by bio)

NAIR ANIZHAM, 29yrs, BE, Data Science IIT-M, MNC IT Chennai Settled, 1.50 Lpm seeks alliance. 7338703769.

### NRI

VELLALA PILLAI Boy 37/172, Chathayam, Fair, B.E S/W Eng, Canada Origin: Trivandrum, seeks alliance. Caste no bar. 9994724482, 9994724483

### TAMIL

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar, 42, M.E., working in USA SWE, for a handsome divorced Groom Native - Nagercoil, seeks beautiful Bride educated, willing to go USA, 1st or 2nd Marriage. Ct: 09486472450, 09345648649

CHRISTIAN NADAR, Doctor, Divorcee 37yrs/178cm, MBBS, Dip in Cardiology better earning lives in Nagercoil seeks qualified/ Divorced Bride. 9003983230

MUDALIAR 42Y/180CM Wheatish, BSc.(Ebc) Credit Manager in Reputed Co. 8Ls PA, 1st/Late Marr 9395398624

HINDU-BE, SWE, 34yrs, 172cms, 33LPA, Ayilam - Kadagam settled in Bangalore, financially stable and educated. Looking for suitable Bride from educated family. Ct: 9845401461.

BRIDE WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 33yrs, BE, MBA 35 lakhs PA, well educated family in Chennai 9952619776

AUDITOR/46 Chennai/Seeks Any Vegetarian Hindu Girl. Contact : 9884398109

CHENNAI MUDLAR, PhD Teelor Divorced, 42yrs 170cm GM Chess Govt 24L Yr Income Simple Any Cast girl 9884171419

### TAMIL

ARYAVYSYA, 44/180, MNC, Mumbai, Property in Chennai, CNB. Contact: 9841551772

SCA, 32YEARS, M.E (PGSC7), MBA (SIOM 2020-22)118 LPA Seeks Tamil Suitable Bride, CNB. Ct: 9441677205

MUDALIAR (CNB): 32/ Handsome, MBBS, MS Gen.Surgery doing in USA, Elite Family, Only son, Seeks Bride India / Abroad - Whats app call only 9841718205 (Mother) / 8925019776

GAVARA NAIDU / born 2000/M.Arch. Architect & Valuer / Own Business / Well Settled / Native Kumbakonam Seeks Bride Ct: 9940787620.

HINDU NAIDU Gavara, 40yrs/178 cm, Aswini PG pv4.40000 pm first Marriage seeks unmarried Bride. Caste open for discussion. Ct: 8248869954

MUDALIYAR 44/176 cm 24 lakhs per annum, running own business seeks bride CNB. 9740098865 / 9444348233

DIVORCEE HINDU, 35yrs No issues, M.Tech, well settled Software Engineer, seeking bride with no issues. Caste no bar. 9841862535, 9941962421

BUSINESSMAN SETTLED Age 48, looking for a understanding companion or a life long relationship, interested persons specifically from 9344087191

MUKKULATHOR REMARRIAGE Rich 31 175cm BE Business Kochi Kerala seeks suitable Bride CNB Geetham 9884858014

SAIVALLAI 53 165cm MCA IT Engineer UK Seeks UK profiles / Willing to go UK CNB Geetham 9884858014

BRIDE WANTED Hindu Nadar 26yrs. B.Tech, SWE, 1.5 lpm, well educated family Ph: 9841329471, 9380791999 - 9445311859

VIGNESH MCA 37 Cluster Manager in Hinduja Finance. Seeks Sozhia Vellalar / Mudhalir. Contact: Ct:97905 96388

HINDU NADAR, - B.E - 29/180cm Data Engineer - Good Salary - Chennai - Seeking Bride Cell: 9602272399

PG Doctor, 47 years old, Vanniya Kula Kshatriya, never married, well settled/affluent, seeks unmarried bride. WhatsApp-9790775789.

SAIVA PILLAI (CNB), 29, Pooramam, BE, MS(USA), SWE, MNC seeks USA based bride. Ct: 9444551621.

✓ SEEKING GOODLOOKING BRIDE for manager in PSB, age 38, Rohini, Mudaliyar, caste: no bar. Contact : 9445311859

SOZHIA VELLALAR, 30, Trichy, D.M.E. Operation Theatre In-Charge at M N Orthopaedic Hospital, Chennai. Simple, responsible & family-oriented. Seeking a caring Hindu bride from a good family background. Ct: 9710143136 / 9361266684

AGAMUDIYAR 42 180cm MSc IT Consultant seeks Bride from OBC shunmugavalli@gmail.com Mob - 9445612997

MUDALIAR 29 BE, MBA 178cm smart 32Lacs PA, well settled family seeks Bride, CNB Ct:8778514465/ 7200866346

HINDU/OBC 38/179, B.Tech, Pvt. Service Sector 5.5Lpa. Seeks suitable Bride, Caste No Bar. Ct: 9944385814

NAIDU J. ARIVAZHAGAN BE-EEE, Ht Gft. Age 29, Own Business. Monthly Income Rs.5000. Seeking Suitable Bride. Maduravoyal, Chennai 96005 818

## IN BRIEF



## Man on treasure hunt in A.P. held with explosives

A man was arrested in Andhra Pradesh's Sri Sathya Sai district for allegedly digging at a forest location for hidden treasure and for possession of explosives. The accused hailed from Anakapalli district and had been frequenting Muchchalagutta in Chilamathur mandal. Police said he spent time digging at the site believing that treasure was buried there. Authorities seized drilling machines, 25 gelatin sticks, batteries, and other excavation tools from his possession.

## Online profiles promoting illegal betting taken down

The Hyderabad City Cyber Crime unit identified and facilitated the takedown of 184 social media profiles during April for allegedly promoting illegal online betting, gaming applications and fake investment schemes targeting users in India. Officials said continuous digital monitoring and intelligence-based tracking led to the detection of the profiles which were collectively running 801 paid advertisements.

## Prohibitory orders around NEET centres in Cyberabad

Cyberabad police in Telangana has imposed prohibitory orders around exam centres for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) (Undergraduate) 2026 being held today. The assembly of five or more persons within 200-metres of all NEET (UG) exam centres have been prohibited. The order will be in force from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## IUML's role crucial as UDF awaits Kerala poll verdict

If the coalition secures a mandate on May 4, the IUML is expected to play a decisive role in both government formation and the Chief Minister pick as multiple Congress leaders vie for the post

## NEWS ANALYSIS

Sam Paul A.  
KOZHIKODE

With just about a day left before the counting of votes in the Kerala Assembly elections, the role of the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has come into sharp focus within the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF).

Should the coalition secure a mandate on May 4, the IUML is expected to play a decisive role not only in government formation but also in shaping leadership choices,



Holding the key: IUML Kerala chief Panakkad Syed Sadikali Shihab Thangal shares a light moment with P.K. Kunhalikutty. FILE PHOTO

particularly the Chief Ministerial pick, at a time when multiple Congress leaders are vying for the post. League leaders have publicly flagged discomfort over Congress leaders engaging in visible jockeying for the top post.

Party national general secretary P.K. Kunhalikutty underscored that the decision rests with the Congress and would be guided by "people's sentiments."

At the same time, remarks by IUML State president Syed Sadikali Shihab

Thangal have drawn attention for their political undertones.

Responding to exit poll indications that Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan enjoys greater backing within the Congress, Mr. Thangal noted that the high command would take a call keeping in mind "the people's sentiment." While not an explicit endorsement, the formulation has been widely read as support for Mr. Satheesan.

Confident of securing around 20-22 seats, the IUML appears to be adopting a wait-and-watch approach while keeping its options open for post-poll negotiations.

## Kavitha defends criticism of KCR

The Hindu Bureau  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruthi president K. Kavitha defended her recent criticism of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president and her father K. Chandrashekar Rao, asserting that her remarks were aimed at his political leadership and policies, not at him as a father.

At 'Meet the Press' or-

ganised by Telangana State Union of Working Journalists in Hyderabad on Saturday, Ms. Kavitha said she would continue to question the failures of the BRS government while maintaining personal respect for Mr. Rao. "I have no problems with him as a father. But I have ideological differences with him and I will continue to criticise on policy matters," she said.

## Panel on laddu row finds lapses by TTD

Sambasiva Rao M.  
AMARAVATI

The one-man committee, which probed the controversy related to supply of adulterated ghee to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) for preparation of laddu prasadam, has submitted its report to the Andhra Pradesh government, identifying procedural and administrative

lapses.

According to sources at the Chief Minister's Office, the report said that administrative lapses in the TTD had led to the adulteration. It suggested reforms in the eligibility criteria for the TTD Board members and a reduction in the number of members by amending the A.P. Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions and Endowments Act, 1987.

## Rift widens within Haryana BJP over MP's comments on ex-CM

Ashok Kumar  
GURUGRAM

The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP's) internal rift in Haryana over its Rajya Sabha MP Rekha Sharma's remarks on former Chief Minister Bhajan Lal deepened on Sunday, with senior leader Kuldeep Bishnoi warning the party of consequences if she does not issue an immediate apology.

Breaking his silence a week after Ms. Sharma's comments at a Panchkula election rally, Mr. Bishnoi - Bhajan Lal's son who joined the BJP from Congress in 2022 - posted a video on X warning the party against "arrogance" and "disrespect to senior leaders".

"I contributed in two of the three wins of the BJP in Haryana Assembly elections since 2014," Mr. Bishnoi said in the over five-minute video. "Who knew the BJP? It was because of me and an alliance with my party that the BJP formed its government for the first time in Haryana. Also, I ensured that more than 7% dedicated vote of Bhajan Lal was transferred to the BJP in 2024."

## Issues warning

He added: "If you show disrespect to senior leaders, the people are not going to forget. Nor will we let them forget. I want to say in clear words to not compel me to take any such step that will ruin you completely." The former two-time Lok Sabha

Kuldeep Bishnoi, son of Bhajan Lal, posted a video on X warning the party against "arrogance" and "disrespect to senior leaders"

MP said that as a "disciplined soldier of the BJP" he was issuing a warning, or else he "would have already taken the step".

Mr. Bishnoi also objected to Haryana BJP president Mohan Lal Badoli's references to his father without salutations, demanding that the party must ensure that Bhajan Lal was addressed with respect.

At a campaign rally for the BJP's Panchkula mayoral candidate on April 24, Ms. Sharma had alleged that Bhajan Lal and his son, Congress MLA Chander Mohan, used to win elections through "badmashi" (hooliganism). "During their era, they maintained a complete grip on power through such tactics," she had said.

The comments triggered backlash from the Bhajan Lal family and the Bishnoi community. Mr. Mohan sent her a legal notice demanding a public apology for the "derogatory" comments. Facing criticism, she later clarified that she did not intend to target a specific individual but was referring to "misconduct and deceit" during the 1996 Kalka Assembly election.

**BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED**  
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor,  
BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 052

No.DGM-1/BSWML/PMC/Tend/01/2026-27 Date: 02.05.2026

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the Services mentioned in the table given below

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Project Cost (In Rs.)	EMD (Amount in Rs)	Contract Period
1	Appointment of PMC for the work of Providing Scientific closure at Landfill site of Bayyappanahalli Sy.No.80 & Bagaluru Sy.No. 271 and control of Fly Menace using spraying of enzymes and development of surrounding villages by creating required infrastructure in Byatarayanpura Constituency.	64,84,436/-	1,29,690/-	11 Months

1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries in kpp portal: **11.05.2026** before **5:30 pm**.  
2) Tender Pre Bid meeting: **12.05.2026** at **15:00 hrs** at above mentioned office.  
3) Last Date of Receipt of Tender **21.05.2026** before **4:00 pm**. 4) Opening of Technical Bid: **22.05.2026** after **4:30 pm**.

More details can be downloaded from website - <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Deputy General Manager-1  
BSWML, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/473/CCL/2026-27

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Advertisement No.PPSSM/Advt/2026-27/109 Dated: 22.04.2026

**ENGAGEMENT OF POST DOCTORAL FELLOWS (PDFs) - 2**

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For detailed guidelines, remuneration, eligibility criteria, and application procedure, please visit institution website: [www.ppsm.res.in](http://www.ppsm.res.in) and [www.sanskrit.nic.in](http://www.sanskrit.nic.in)

The last date for receipt of application is **20/05/2026** at **6:00 P.M.** The date of interview will be communicated to the candidates. Applicants may visit the PPSM website, time to time, for further information in this regard.

Chairperson, Management Committee

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Last date for receipt of application is **30th June, 2026**.

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**BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED**  
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor,  
BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 052

No.DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/02/2026-27 Date: 02.05.2026

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Only Through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the Services mentioned in the table given below

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Amount Put to Tender (Rs.in Lakhs)	EMD (Amount in Rs)	Contract Period
1	Providing Scientific Closure at landfill site of Bayyappanahalli Sy. No. 80 & Bagaluru Sy.No.271 and control of fly menace using spraying of enzymes and development of surrounding villages by creating required infrastructure in Byatarayanpura Constituency.	7605.14	Rs.1,00,000/- through e-payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance Rs.75,05,150/- by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized/Scheduled Bank	11 Months

1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries in kpp portal: **11.05.2026** before **5:30 pm**.  
2) Tender Pre Bid meeting: **12.05.2026** at **15:00 hrs** at above mentioned office.  
3) Last Date of Receipt of Tender **21.05.2026** before **4:00 pm**. 4) Opening of Technical Bid: **22.05.2026** after **4:30 pm**.

More details can be downloaded from website - <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Deputy General Manager-1  
BSWML, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/472/CCL/2026-27

**KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)  
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar,  
Bengaluru - 560009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: [www.kiadb.in](http://www.kiadb.in)

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-11/324/2026-27 Date: 02.05.2026

**SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tenders under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the the following works mentioned below:

**Name of the Works :** 1) Formation of asphalt road including construction of RCC Side drains, Deck slab and water supply pipeline at Road No. 1, 2 & 11 at Sub layout-8, Koorgalli Industrial Area, Mysuru Taluk, Mysuru District.  
2) Formation of Industrial Layout including construction of Roads, Construction of RCC Side Drains, RCC Cross Drainage Works, Retaining wall & HDPE Dual Water supply pipeline in Sector-1 for Sub Layout in KGF Industrial Area, Bangaradagani Village, KGF Taluk, Kolar District.  
3) Formation of Industrial Layout including construction of Roads, Construction of RCC Side Drains, RCC Cross Drainage Works, Retaining Wall & HDPE Dual Water Supply pipe line in Sector-2 for Sub layout in KGF Industrial Area, Bangaradagani Village, KGF Taluk, Kolar District.  
4) Formation of Industrial Layout including Construction of Roads, Construction of RCC Side Drains, RCC Cross Drainage works, Retaining wall & HDPE Dual Water supply pipe line in Sector-3 for sub layout in KGF Industrial Area, Bangaradagani Village, KGF Taluk, Kolar District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **18.05.2026** upto **4.00 pm**. Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>.

Sd/-  
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/475/Zen/2026-27

**THE HINDU**

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**Subject:- Extension of timeline for verification of defective online applications and Completion of verification thereof for the Pre-matric & Post Matric Scholarship for ST Students of J&K during the Academic Year 2025-26**

**NOTICE**

In continuation to Notice No. DTA/Sch/PMS/2025/1614-95, dated 09.03.2026, it is hereby notified for the information of all the concern that timeline for rectification of defective online applications (by ST students) and verification thereof on National Scholarship Portal (NSP) and Post Matric scholarships for ST students of Jammu and Kashmir for the Academic Year 2025-26 called for vide Notice(s) issued under endorsement No: DTA/PMG/2025-26/2742-2804 Dated: 14.08.2025 (post matric) read with corrigendum No: DTA/PMS/2025-26/427-88 dated: 18.08.2025 with respect to rectification of defective applications and verification thereof is extended as per detailed indicated in the table given below

S. No	Name of the Scheme	Defective Application Verification	Last Date for Institution Verification after extension	Last Date for State/District Nodal Officer Verification after Extension
1	Post-Matric Scholarship for ST Students for J&K	05 <sup>th</sup> of May 2026	05 <sup>th</sup> of May 2026	06 <sup>th</sup> of May 2026

This is last and final notice for rectification of defective online applications by the ST students. No further extension for rectification shall be granted. Sd/-  
No: DTA/Sch/PMS/2025/2714-94, Dated:- 30.04.2026 (Mohd Mumtaz Ali) JKAS, Director  
DIPK-968/26 Tribal Affairs J&K

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**Important Dates**

Last Date of Submission of filled application Form : **20<sup>th</sup> June 2026**  
(Online/Offline mode)  
Entrance Exam (IP CET): **27<sup>th</sup> June 2026**  
(Offline Mode at Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Bangalore Centre)

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Candidates can also visit the IIP website: [www.iip-in.com](http://www.iip-in.com) and submit the application form through online/offline mode PGDP

**Contact Details**

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Email: [onlinepgdp@iip-in.com](mailto:onlinepgdp@iip-in.com)

From Page One

SC rejects Trinamool claim of bias by staff

“The Trinamool is the main opponent to the BJP, which admittedly runs and controls the Central government. It is obvious and well known that the Central government employees would be directly under the control of the Centre and likely to be susceptible to the control of persons in the BJP. Such direct control of the BJP over them gives rise to an apparent risk of bias, influence, and partisan conduct during the process of counting of votes,” the Trinamool submitted.

He read out from the April 13 circular, which said that in view of the “apprehensions expressed from various quarters regarding possible irregularities during the process of counting of votes”. He asked the court about the source of the EC’s “so-called apprehensions” that the counting process would be marred by irregularities.

Mr. Sibal said the Trinamool was informed of the April 13 circular only on April 29.

The court disposed of the Trinamool petition, recording in its short order that the EC must follow the April 13 circular in “letter and spirit”.

EC announces repolling in 285 stations of Falta

The EC notification stated that during the polling on April 29, several complaints had been received from parties/candidates and media reports “alleging application of black adhesive tape/perfume on Ballot Unit buttons of EVMs in favour of or against particular parties, intimidation and obstruction of voters; and physical, unauthorised and illegal presence of political party cadres inside Polling Stations”. There was also a war of words between police observer Ajay Pal Sharma and Trinamool Congress candidate Jahangir Khan. The police officer was seen in a video telling the family members of the Trinamool candidate that he would face action if he threatened voters.

Renewed conflict with the U.S. likely, says Iran

Iran’s judiciary chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei said on Friday that his country had “never shied away from negotiations”, but would not accept an “imposition” of peace terms.

The White House has declined to provide details on the latest Iranian proposal, but news site Axios reported that U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff had submitted amendments to a previous one putting Tehran’s nuclear programme back on the negotiating table. The changes reportedly include demands that Iran not move enriched uranium from bombed sites or resume activity there during talks. News of the Iranian proposal briefly pushed oil prices down nearly 5%, though they remain about 50% above pre-war levels.

FIR against MP who left AAP sparks row

“This (the lodging of FIRs) is a calculated attempt to divert public attention from the controversy surrounding Chief Minister Mann’s alleged appearance in an inebriated condition during the Punjab Assembly session,” State BJP president Sunil Jakhar said, addressing a press conference here. He would meet the Punjab Governor soon and apprise him of the matter, Mr. Jakhar said.

During the Special Session, the House witnessed a sharp exchange of words between Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Congress MLAs.

On April 30, the Punjab Pollution Control Board raided a Trident Group unit in Dhaula, soon after the company’s chairman emeritus and Rajya Sabha MP Rajinder Gupta defected to the BJP.

“The real face of the AAP is exposed – a party that claims to stand for clean politics but thrives on selective morality and convenience,” the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, Congress’s Partap Singh Bajwa, said.

Southern States told to use clean air funds

However, the Bench flagged that more than 86% of utilised funds went to road dust control, with just 6.6% on vehicular emissions and 4.1% on biomass burning – describing this as “disproportionate expenditure” that must be “rationalised”.

“In the event of continued under-utilisation or ineffective deployment of funds, the tribunal may consider imposition of environmental compensation. The State of Karnataka and its Urban Local Bodies, particularly Bengaluru, shall ensure full and effective utilisation of funds allocated under NCAP and the Finance Commission within a time-bound manner,” the order noted.

The tribunal issued 13 directions, including sector-wise implementation roadmaps within six months, monthly review meetings in Karnataka chaired by the Chief Secretary, and the establishment of an “appropriate institutional arrangement” for airshed-level coordination among southern States. A compliance report is due in six months.

Gunpowder dump goes off, kills four policemen

Gunpowder hidden by Maoists exploded due to high temperatures and chemical reaction, say police; three die on the spot, one while treatment; incident happened during search operation

Shubhomoy Sikdar  
RAIPUR

Four members of the Chhattisgarh Police’s District Reserve Guards (DRG) were killed in an explosion while trying to dispose of a gunpowder dump during a search operation in the State’s Kanker district on Saturday, a senior police officer said.

The victims were in a forested area under the Chhotabethiya police station when sacks of gunpowder, found in an abandoned Maoist hideout, exploded.

“Prima facie, during the search operation to recover the material dumped earlier by the Maoists, computer, monitor, printer, etc. were recovered in the first dump. In another dump nearby, five sacks of firecracker powder weighing 15kg each, which were dumped earlier by the Maoists, were recovered. With the help of the bomb disposal squad, the team in-charge and other mem-



The victims were in a forested area when sacks of gunpowder, found in an abandoned hideout, exploded in Kanker. FILE PHOTO

bers were preparing to take them out of the dump and destroy them safely,” Kanker Superintendent of Police Nikhil Rakhecha said.

According to Mr. Rakhecha, the gunpowder exploded possibly due to high temperatures and a chemical reaction, resulting in severe burn injuries that killed the victims. He inspected the site and said a detailed ballistic and forensic examination was under way to ascertain the ex-

act cause of the blast.

P. Sundarraj, Inspector-General of Police (Bastar Range), called the incident “unfortunate” and “accidental”. He said that inspector Sukhram Vatti, and constables Krishna Komra and Sanjay Gadpale were seriously injured and died on the spot. Another constable, Parmanand Komra, died later during treatment. They were all from the DRG, a specialised anti-insurgency unit of the Chhattisgarh Police.

Centre launches emergency alert system for citizens

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

Mobile phones across the country went abuzz after Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the cell broadcast alert system on Saturday that will warn citizens about emergency and natural disasters in their area.

The Department of Telecom had already alerted citizens about the trial run of the service on April 29 to avoid panic, with an appeal to ignore any alerts they receive.

The test message read: “Extremely Severe Alert. India launched Cell Broadcast using indigenous technology, for instant disaster alerting service for its citizens. Alert citizens, safe nation. No action is required by the public upon receipt of this message. This is a test message- Government of India.”

The alert system was sent across the network of all telecom operators across the country, except in poll-bound States.

“Indigenous technology” Union Minister for Communications, Jyotiraditya



Women show their mobile phones after receiving an alert message on Saturday. PTI

Scindia, today launched the Cell Broadcast Alert System, developed indigenously by C-DOT in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), under the guidance of Home Minister Amit Shah,” an official statement said.

Through this system, critical information related to disasters, emergencies, and public safety will be transmitted directly and instantly to citizens’ mobile phones, the statement said. The system is based on the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) as recommended by the UN body International Telecommunication Union.

Join Free Telegram Channel <https://t.me/+pegW08Cwts0xMjcl>

Accused in ₹2,672-crore bank fraud case among two extradited from UAE

Devesh K. Pandey  
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has coordinated the return of two fugitives from the United Arab Emirates. One of them is wanted in an alleged ₹2,672-crore bank fraud case.

Kamlesh Parekh, now arrested by the CBI, was accused in a case against Kolkata-based Shree Ganesh Jewellery House (I) Ltd. He was brought from the UAE on May 1. As a promoter of the company, he was allegedly involved in cheating a consortium of 25 banks led by the State Bank of India.

“The accused, in conspiracy with other promoters and directors, facilitated diversion of bank funds through a network of overseas entities and business activities, including in the UAE,” said the agency.

He allegedly managed export-related operations and financial transactions of the company and its as-



Kamlesh Parekh

sociated entities abroad by using fraudulent practices.

The CBI registered the case in 2016. As the accused was absconding, an open-ended non-bailable warrant was issued against him in 2019. An Interpol Red Notice was issued in 2024.

The UAE authorities detained him based on the notice and he was extradited to India. He arrived at Delhi airport on May 1, after which the CBI took him into custody.

Haryana cheating case In the second case, the accused named Aalok Kumar

alias Yashpal Singh was wanted by the Haryana Police for his role in cheating, forgery, criminal conspiracy, and the use of forged papers to get passports.

“The accused was a key conspirator in a well-organised racket involved in procuring Indian passports on the basis of forged documents and false information,” said the CBI.

According to the agency, he played a key role in coordinating illegal activities and managing immigration of such individuals.

“Several individuals with criminal antecedents were facilitated by the accused in obtaining passports using fabricated identities and addresses,” the Central probe agency said.

At the request of the Haryana Police, the CBI got a Interpol Red Notice issued. Subsequently, he was geo-located and arrested by UAE authorities. He was taken into custody by Haryana Police on May 1.

Speculation rises on Cabinet expansion as Samrat goes to Delhi

Amarnath Tewary  
PATNA

Ahead of leaving for Delhi on Saturday evening, Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary met his predecessor and JD(U) president Nitish Kumar at his new official residence, fuelling speculation about the possible impending Cabinet expansion.

Mr. Choudhary’s Cabinet expansion is likely to take place on May 6, after the results of the four State Assembly elections are announced on May 4.

Mr. Choudhary is likely to meet senior BJP leaders in Delhi, including party president Nitin Nabin and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on Sunday.

Party insiders told *The Hindu* that the list of Ministers might get the final shape during the meeting with Mr. Shah and Mr. Nabin.

“In all likelihood, it’s all about the list to get final shape for his possible Cabinet expansion”, a senior JD (U) leader, preferring anonymity, told *The Hindu*.



Bihar CM Samrat Choudhary with JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar in Patna on Saturday. PTI

The NDA sources said some new and young faces, preferably women, are likely to be inducted into the Cabinet. However, no official confirmation on the expansion has come yet.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister, Vijay Kumar Choudhary, addressing presspersons in Patna, said, “Mr. Choudhary is carrying forward works and road maps laid down by Mr. Kumar and earlier, he had categorically asserted this to follow”.

Party sources had earlier told *The Hindu* that both the BJP and JD(U) have agreed to have 16 Ministers each in the Cabinet, along with four Ministers from three alliance parties.

Govt. eases FDI norms for firms with 10% Chinese stake

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

The decision to allow overseas companies with Chinese shareholding of up to 10% to invest in India under the automatic route has come into effect from May 1, as the Finance Ministry has notified the changes under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

In March, the Union Cabinet approved amendments in the press note 3 of 2020 of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

As per the amendments, foreign companies having a Chinese or Hong Kong shareholding of up to 10% will be eligible to invest in India in sectors where foreign direct investment (FDI) is permitted under the automatic route, subject to sectoral conditions.

However, these relaxed FDI rules will not apply to entities registered in China or Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India.

Court denies bail to woman accused in TCS case

The Hindu Bureau  
MUMBAI

A local court in Nashik on Saturday rejected the anticipatory bail application of Nida Khan, an accused in a case involving allegations of sexual exploitation and forced religious conversion at a TCS unit in Nashik.

The prosecution noted that her custodial probe was necessary in view of “the serious nature of offense registered against her.” Ms. Nida Khan is likely to appeal against the decision in the Bombay High Court.

Another court in Nashik granted four days’ police custody to four arrested accused in the case till May 5.

‘Decision-making stays with managers in organisations though AI adoption is rising’

The Hindu Bureau  
COIMBATORE

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is taking over a lot of activities that managers were doing in organisations earlier. But, taking decisions with empathy remains with humans, said speakers at a webinar on “The New-Age Manager: Leading in an AI-Driven, Uncertain World” held on Saturday.

The webinar is a part of “The Future Career Conversations” series, jointly organised by SRM Institute of Science & Technology and *The Hindu*.

The webinar was moderated by M. Soundariya Preetha, Deputy Editor at *The Hindu*.

Geetha Ramamurthi,



global GCC leader and former Managing Director of KBR Inc, pointed out that the role of people as managers has evolved and changed rapidly. AI can carry out or supplement some tasks that people do such as coding, report generation, analytics, and predictive maintenance. What AI does not have is emotional intelligence. It cannot do critical thinking and cannot empathise yet. “So, ultimate decision

should be taken by humans,” she said.

Role of managers has changed from being executors to becoming supervisors or partners with AI. There are organisations that have embedded AI agents as part of their workforce.

But, managers should be able to innovate using AI. Some roles are disappearing. But those are specific activities and new roles are emerging. Managers should be ready to reinvent their career every four to five years, she added.

Roch Ferreira, Global Vice-President and Head of Corporate Marketing, Virtusa Corporation, said current technologies that are

permeating organisations rapidly are robotics, AI, and genetic AI. At the corporates operating in the technology space, every employee has access to AI. So, access to AI is not an issue, he said.

Pointing out challenges, Mr. Ferreira said there should be a lot of unlearning of earlier concepts. Managers should look at how much AI they can use to automate mundane tasks that they were doing. With more time on hand then, they can progress as functional leaders, he added.

According to Prof. A. Vinay Kumar, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Science and Humanities, Management, SRM Institute of Science

and Technology, AI is here to continue as a technology tool. It is changing what managers should know, what they should be doing, and what they become. For instance, many managers used to do analysis of data to take right decisions. The analytical framework has now gone to AI. But, judgment is something that managers should do. “Radical empathy is key,” he noted.

A lot of complexities in changing situations will not be handled by AI. Thus, the redefined managerial skills should be built into managerial programmes.

The webinar is available at <https://newsth.live/THSRMAY>

# Over 86% turnout recorded as repoll held in 15 Bengal booths

Trinamool leader Kunal Ghosh says repolls lead to harassment of common people, while BJP's Suwendu Adhikari welcomes move; protests held in Falta amid allegations by BJP of malpractice; Central forces deployed to bring situation under control

**Shrabana Chatterjee**  
KOLKATA

A repoll held in 15 booths across two constituencies in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on Saturday was largely peaceful and incident-free under heavy security deployment.

Voters turned out in large numbers for the second time, with the booths in the Magrahat Paschim constituency recording a turnout of 86.11%, while the booths in Diamond Harbour saw a turnout of 87.6% as of 5 p.m., according to Election Commission data. This mirrors the strong voter participation seen during the original polling day, and is expected to increase, as the final polling figures are yet to be released.

Across two phases of polling, the State saw a turnout of almost 93%, the highest in any West Bengal Assembly election since Independence, according to the State's Chief Electoral Officer. Diamond Harbour had witnessed a 94.26% turnout, and Magrahat Paschim saw a turnout of 94.19% on the original polling day.



**Fresh mandate:** Voters stand in queue to cast their votes during repolling for the West Bengal Assembly election, at Magrahat Paschim in South 24 Parganas district on Saturday. ANI

The BJP's candidate in Magrahat Paschim, Gour Sundar Ghosh, faced protests and "Joy Bangla" slogans from Trinamool Congress workers while he was touring booths during the repolling.

Senior Trinamool leader and Belegata candidate Kunal Ghosh claimed that the repolls would harass the common people. "Polling was safe and sound in all places. In some places, the BJP knows they may have lost so they are crying foul," he said.

BJP MP Sukanta Majum-

dar, however, claimed that "malpractice" during voting was "Abhishek Banerjee's model of democracy." Two of the seats where malpractice was reported come under the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency, a strong bastion of Mr. Banerjee, the Trinamool's second-in-command.

Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari welcomed the decision to hold repolls, saying it should have been ordered for more booths, including the entire Falta constituency.

The poll panel had received 32 complaints of malpractices and harassment from Falta, followed by Diamond Harbour (29), Paschim Magrahat (13), and Budge Budge (3). The EC's special observer, Subrata Gupta, was sent to fact-check the allegations on the ground, and repolls were ordered based on his reports.

## Protests in Falta

Protests were reported from Falta on Saturday, and there was a heavy deployment of Central forces

in the area to keep the situation under control.

"We want protection and repolling here. Trinamool workers are threatening us; they are stopping BJP voters from voting," a protester in Falta told reporters.

During the original polling on April 29, a bizarre incident was reported from multiple booths in Falta, where electors complained that the button to vote for the BJP on the EVM machine was covered with tape, preventing them from pressing the button. The allegations were made by the BJP candidate from Falta, Debangshu Panda.

## Three held

The West Bengal Police on Saturday arrested three persons from Falta in connection with alleged post-poll intimidation of voters, an officer said, adding that an FIR had also been lodged against a panchayat pradhan and another person.

The arrested trio have been identified as Atibur Rahman, Habib Sheikh and Habib Molla, aides of the Trinamool candidate from Falta, Jahangir Khan, he said. (With PTI inputs)

# EC deploys more observers in Bengal; CM tells counting agents to remain vigilant

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA

The Election Commission on Saturday appointed 165 additional counting observers and 77 police observers for counting of votes in West Bengal on May 4.

"The Additional Counting Observers and Police Observers have been deployed to ensure that the counting proceedings are conducted in a secure, peaceful, intimidation-free and transparent environment," the commission said in a press release.

It said that entry into the counting centres would be strictly based on the QR code-based photo IDs issued through the ECINET by returning officers for counting personnel, candidates, and their agents.

The directions by the Commission assume significance as the past few days saw the Trinamool Congress leadership, including Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, raising allegations of possible irregularities at the counting centres. Ms. Banerjee on Thursday night stayed put at a counting centre for several hours where electronic voting machines (EVMs) and postal ballots of her constituency, Bhabanipur, are stored. State Chief Electro-



Police and security personnel stand guard outside a strongroom, ahead of the counting of votes, in Kolkata on Friday. PTI

Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal has clarified that there is no scope for any wrongdoing at the counting centres.

The Chief Minister on Saturday held a meeting with party candidates and counting agents, in which she assured them that the party would emerge victorious in the election and urged the counting agents to remain vigilant.

"Trinamool will win at least 200+ seats, if not more," the party chairperson said, urging the counting agents not to give importance to the "propaganda and campaign by the BJP and its allies". During the meeting, she also appointed former West Bengal Director-General of Police and Trinamool leader Rajeev Kumar as the counting observer of the Dum Dum-Barrackpore

organisational district. The Trinamool Congress hailed the Supreme Court directions on the commission's circular over the deployment of Union government personnel for vote counting in West Bengal.

The party in a press statement claimed that the top court's directions vindicated its stand.

"After hearing the parties, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed that Clause 1 of the communication dated 13.04.2026, relating to the appointment of Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants, must be read along with the salient feature contained in the second page of the said communication which provides for random selection of both State Government and Central Government employees," the Trinamool said.

# Rahul slams Gujarat BJP chief's remarks against Congress MP

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging that its "mask of Nari Vandana" had slipped following an "indecent remark" by its Gujarat unit president against Congress MP Geniben Thakor.

In a post on X, Mr. Gandhi said the controversy had exposed the BJP's "anti-women and Manuwadi mindset".

"The mask of 'Nari Vandana' is off. This is not just shameful - it reveals the real face of the BJP's Manuwadi, anti-women ideology," he said.

The remarks come in response to a statement by Gujarat BJP chief Jagdish Vishwakarma, who, addressing a gathering in Banaskantha, said the BJP had wrested control of the

district panchayat after three decades from the *pallu* of Ms. Thakor's sari.

Questioning the ruling party's commitment to women's empowerment, Mr. Gandhi asked whether such language reflected its idea of respecting women. "Is this the way the BJP worships women? Will they empower women? Will they grant them rights?" he said.

He further alleged that the party was unable to accept women in positions of authority. "They cannot tolerate women challenging the establishment - their distorted mindset is revealed in an instant," Mr. Gandhi added.

"On one hand, the BJP government insults women by making baseless allegations against them even in Parliament, and on the other hand, its leaders insult women by making vulgar remarks..." Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said.

# INDIA bloc likely to meet after May 4 to discuss delimitation, women's quota

**Sandeep Phukan**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) is likely to meet, once the results of the Assembly elections are declared on May 4, to discuss the way forward on the topic of women's reservation, which has been tied up with the delimitation exercise and expansion of the Lok Sabha.

Though the Opposition managed to defeat the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, in the Lower House, its assessment is that the government may bring it again in some other form. And therefore, the INDIA bloc could meet up by mid-May to discuss tackling the crucial issue of delimitation, which was tied to the women's quota law, in the Bill, sources told *The Hindu*. However, no official announcement has been made.

The government had



Though the Opposition defeated the Constitution Amendment Bill, its assessment is that the govt. may bring it back in some form. PTI

proposed to increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816 from its present strength of 543 after a delimitation exercise based on the 2011 Census, and offer 33% of the seats to women. Though the government had assured that each State and Union Territory will see a proportionate 50% increase in the number of seats, thereby not altering the current proportion of their representation in the total strength of the Lok Sabha,

it was not made part of the Bill.

"The government was hoping that Lok Sabha members from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu will not be there [during the parliamentary vote] and expected Opposition members from Uttar Pradesh to oppose and abstain. That didn't happen and we managed to marshal the numbers. But the Prime Minister [Narendra Modi] isn't someone who will abandon his plan so easily," a senior floor manager of an Opposition party said.

While the Congress has reiterated its demand that the government discuss its delimitation plans, it has also been pressing for an immediate roll-out of the women's quota on the current Lok Sabha strength.

## No discussion on polls

The leader said the INDIA bloc was unlikely to discuss the just-concluded Assembly elections as constituencies fought separately in Kerala and West Bengal.

The Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) fought a pitched battle against the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in Kerala. The Trinamool Congress, the Left, and the Congress have fought separately in West Bengal.

However, leaders said the role of the Election Commission (EC) in the elections, especially in West Bengal, was sure to figure in the discussions.

# Trinamool misusing judicial process out of desperation: BJP

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

After the Supreme Court on Saturday refused to interfere with a Calcutta High Court decision on the deployment of Central government officials for vote counting in West Bengal, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accused the Trinamool Congress of misusing the judicial process out of political desperation.

At a press conference, BJP MP and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said a violence-free election in the State had triggered anxiety within the Trinamool.

"The manner in which the Trinamool Congress attempted to approach the Supreme Court by fabricating issues out of baseless and absurd allegations is a reflection of their desperation and panic. In the past 10 years, the Trinamool has approached various levels of the judiciary over



Sudhanshu Trivedi

80 times, and was unsuccessful on every occasion," he said.

Stating that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee herself had rushed to the scene during the recent searches by the Enforcement Directorate on political consultancy firm I-PAC, he alleged that she did not even trust the State government employees, police, or her own personal staff... the attempt to seize power based on violence, coercion, fear, and terror, is today crumbling completely," he added.

# 2,792 MoUs inked at Vibrant Gujarat conference; 2.82 lakh jobs expected

**Abhinav Deshpande**  
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi on Saturday said investment proposals worth ₹3,53,306 crore were secured through 2,792 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) signed during the two-day Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for South Gujarat, with the projects expected to generate 2.82 lakh direct jobs.

Addressing the valedictory session, Mr. Sanghavi said the agreements were expected to be implemented over the next three years. He said the conference was part of efforts by



Union Minister J.P. Nadda, along with others, at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference, in Surat on Saturday. ANI

the State government to expand the Vibrant Gujarat initiative beyond Gandhinagar to different regions, under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. He said the regional

conferences aim to connect small and medium businesses with international markets. Representatives from about 20 countries, including Rwanda, the United States, Canada, Singa-

pore, and Japan, took part in the South Gujarat event.

Speaking at the same event, Union Minister J.P. Nadda said India should use global developments to strengthen domestic manufacturing, and reduce dependence on external supply chains. He said the country needed to expand industrial capacity, exports, and integration with global supply networks to meet the target of a developed India by 2047.

Mr. Nadda said policy changes since the launch of the Vibrant Gujarat initiative in 2003 had enabled a focus on investment facilitation and removal of administrative barriers.

# SC will hear pleas against verdict on Teachers' Eligibility Test on May 13

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has scheduled an open court hearing of petitions seeking a review of the top court judgment of September 1, 2025 requiring in-service teachers of Classes 1 to 8 in non-minority schools across the country to clear the Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) in two years or be "compulsorily retired".

A Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan scheduled the hearing of the review petitions for May 13. Currently, 45 petitions are part of this consolidated case. Some of the



The SC Bench will take up the review petitions on May 13.

first States to file review petitions in the case include Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Several interlocutory applications had also been filed in the case by various

stakeholders, including the Deseeya Adhyapaka Parishad (NTU Kerala), represented by advocate Tomy Chacko, which had urged the top court for an open court hearing to ensure that the grievances of thousands of teachers could be presented orally.

The Bench had taken up the case in chambers on April 28, but decided to hear oral arguments in open court. Review petitions are usually heard by circulation in the chambers of the judges. The same Bench which pronounced the original judgment decides the review petitions.

The case touches on the

livelihood of over 25 lakh teachers. The September 2025 judgment had reasoned that the Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009, required teachers to clear the TET. The Bench, however, had exempted teachers with less than five years to retirement from taking the TET.

Tamil Nadu, represented by senior advocate P. Wilson and advocate Sabarish Subramaniam, had argued that the judgment affected about four lakh teachers in the State alone. If implemented on the ground, the State would have to bear witness to "classrooms without teachers".

**IN BRIEF**



**Prasoon Joshi appointed Prasar Bharati Chairman**

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has appointed noted lyricist and writer Prasoon Joshi as the Chairman of Prasar Bharati. "Prasoonji is a rare creative spirit celebrated across the world in advertising, literature, art and cinema, yet his heart beats unmistakably for India. His words carry the fragrance of our soil, and his vision reflects the timeless essence of our culture," I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. Mr. Joshi had earlier served as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), Mumbai, since August 2017. In December 2025, then Prasar Bharati Board Chairman Navneet Kumar Sehgal had resigned from the position.

**Four-year-old girl raped, killed in Pune village; accused held**

A four-year-old girl was sexually assaulted and killed at Nasrapur village in Pune district of Maharashtra. The police have arrested a 65-year-old man, and residents observed a complete bandh in protest on Saturday after the body was found. The incident came to light on Friday after the girl went missing in the afternoon. The CCTV footage later showed the accused leading the girl by hand towards a cattle shed. The police said the child was assaulted inside the shed, after which the accused killed her by hitting her with a stone. The police have filed a case against him under charges of murder, rape, and under the provisions of the POCSO Act.

**Varsity in Gujarat introduces 'Modi Tattva' in sociology**

A first-of-its-kind module on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership philosophy has been added to the sociology syllabus of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat. The module, titled "Modi Tattva", forms part of a paper on the "Sociology of Patriotism", under the university's BA and MA programmes in sociology. Department head Virendra Singh, who confirmed the development to *The Hindu*, said Modi Tattva reflects the need to examine the Prime Minister's leadership within established sociological frameworks. It will be taught alongside content on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and other historical figures.

**Uttarakhand youth kills self alleging police harassment**

A 20-year-old youth was found hanging from a bridge, with his helmet on, in Satpuli of Pauri Garhwal district in Uttarakhand on Saturday. Before his alleged suicide, the victim posted a video on social media accusing local police of physical assault after they seized his motorcycle. The police identified the deceased as Pankaj Kumar, a resident of Retpur village, and informed his family. The incident came to light after a local resident alerted authorities through an emergency call. Officials learned that the man had recorded a video before the incident, alleging mistreatment by the police. (persons in distress can call Tele-MANAS helpline - 14416)

**SUDOKU**

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

**SC to examine plea against apnoea test for brain death**

Petitioner claims apnoea test may by itself induce brain death as it requires stopping or reducing cerebral blood flow; court asks AIIMS to form expert team, submit recommendations in 2 months

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has found *prima facie* a "ring of truth" in a doctor's plea that the apnoea test, alleged to be widely used in Kerala, is not a conclusive assessment of brain death.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta recorded the contention of S. Ganapathy, a medical professional, that the apnoea test may by itself induce brain death as it required stopping or reducing cerebral blood flow.

The court included in its order the petitioner's contention that the best possible procedure to conclusively assess the parameters of brainstem death would be to subject the patient to appropriate ancillary or supplemental tests, including electroen-

It is urged that, in terms of internationally accepted medical standards, including the guidelines of the WHO, the apnoea test ought to be resorted to only as a confirmatory test and not as the sole or primary basis for determining brain-stem death

**SUPREME COURT BENCH**



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cephalography (EEG), four-vessel cerebral angiography, radionuclide (radioisotope) angiography, or CT angiography. "It is urged that, in terms of internationally accepted medical standards, including the guidelines of the World Health Organization, the apnoea test ought to be resorted to only as a confirmatory test and not as the sole or primary basis for determining brain-stem

ible scientific material. The State, however, said it was not in a position to dispute the contention raised by the petitioner that the apnoea test was the most prevalent in Kerala.

The petitioner alleged that he had credible information indicating serious malpractices prevailing in Kerala in relation to organ transplantation procedures. According to the petitioner, patients admitted to various hospitals in critical condition were declared brain-dead even in cases where the clinical parameters prescribed under the law did not justify such a determination.

The court has directed the Head of the Department of Neurology, AIIMS, New Delhi, to constitute an expert team on the issue and submit recommendations in a sealed cover in two months.

**Jabalpur tragedy toll rises to 11 as bodies of 2 children found**

**Mehul Malpani**  
BHOPAL



11 bodies have been recovered and 28 rescued. ANI

Two more bodies were recovered from the Jabalpur's Bargi dam reservoir on Saturday, taking the toll in the cruise tragedy to 11, officials said.

According to officials, at least 200 personnel of the Indian Army, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Madhya Pradesh's State Disaster Emergency Response Force (SDERF), and local administration as well as local fishermen are involved in the search operation that has been going on for three days now, in an expanded area with the help of advanced equipment.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Jabalpur Collector Raghendra Singh said that, on Saturday evening, bodies of two children were found floating about 100 metres from the accident spot. The children have been identified as Viraj Soni, 5, a resident of Jabalpur, and

Tamilvandan Arya, 5, a resident of Tiruchi in Tamil Nadu. The two remaining victims are Tamilvandan's father Kamraj Arya, 39, and Mayuram, 7.

Mr. Singh denied that there was any restriction or warning for cruise operations from the meteorology department.

A high-level committee has been formed by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav to probe the incident and has been asked to submit its report within 15 days.

**A pioneer artist takes Swang, a folk art, from village gatherings to international audiences**

**Ashok Kumar**  
GURUGRAM

In the age of YouTube and Netflix, a folk theatre play has not just survived but thrived for 25 years. The remarkable achievement of Swang *Jaani Chor*, led by Satish Georgy Kashyap - popularly called the 'King of Swang' - has turned attention to a journey that began inside Hisar jail in 2001 and travelled from village *chaupals* (gatherings) to international festivals.

Swang, or Saang, is a centuries old dialogue-driven folk form from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

It blends music, poetry, farce, and dance, usually in open-air settings. Among its best-loved stories is *Jaani Chor*, the tale of a witty, Robin Hood-like thief who outsmarts the rich and corrupt.

Under Mr. Kashyap's direction, the classic has



Satish Georgy Kashyap, left, performing with a co-artist in a Swang, a folk play. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

been reimaged without losing its rustic spirit.

**Sustaining legacy**

Mr. Kashyap has brought together veteran folk artists and young performers, creating an intergenerational exchange on stage. Traditional live music, local dialects and expressive acting were retained, while pacing and staging were adapted for modern audiences. "The journey is not just about a play, but

about reclaiming and sustaining a cultural legacy," Mr. Kashyap said.

"From the walls of Hisar jail to international platforms, Swang *Jaani Chor* represents the voice of the people and the timeless relevance of folk traditions," he added.

**Gatherings to global**

Over two decades, Mr. Kashyap has not just taken Swang from open-air *chaupals* to structured auditori-

um stages but also collaborated with artists like Sandhya Sharma and Alpna Suhasini, bringing women into lead roles in a traditionally male-dominated art form.

He also helped introduce Saang into youth festivals and staged at the National School of Drama (NSD), Bharangam, Theatre Olympics, and international venues in Denmark, Sweden and Australia. The troupe has also performed for Sangeet Natak Akademi, SPIC MACAY, Prithvi Theatre and NZCC.

The journey began in 2001 with a full-length production in Hisar jail, where theatre doubled up as a tool for reform and connection with marginalised audiences.

From there, *Jaani Chor* moved to village *chaupals*, then to university stages, national festivals, and finally to global platforms. "For the first time in India, a folk theatre play has sur-

vived in the ever-changing time of YouTube or Netflix," organisers noted.

The story of *Jaani Chor* follows a gentleman thief who uses wit and disguise to challenge kings and authorities. Rich with humour, satire and social commentary, it delivers a moral victory of good over evil while keeping entertainment at its core. The recent production stayed rooted in linguistic authenticity, creating an immersive experience that scholars and community members praised for its creativity and cultural depth.

Mr. Kashyap, a qualified veterinary surgeon who left his job to pursue folk performance, later trained in commedia dell'arte in Copenhagen.

His work pays homage to pioneers like Pandit Lakhmi Chand, Dhanpat Singh, Pandit Mange Ram, Chander Badi, and Ali Baksh of Rewari.

**U.P. Congress chief Ajay Rai hospitalised**

**Mayank Kumar**  
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Rai, who was admitted to a private hospital in Lucknow on Saturday, said he would soon be back in public service full of energy.

"With the immense grace of Baba Vishwanath and the blessings of the prayers of all of you, I am feeling completely healthy now... I will soon be back in public service with full energy," Mr. Rai said on social media platform X.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi wished Mr. Rai a speedy recovery.

The hospital has issued a medical bulletin: "He was unconscious. Initial tests revealed hyponatremia. He is currently being treated under the supervision of critical care specialist Dr. Dilip and his team."

**Meena Muthiah, noted educationist and philanthropist, passes away**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Meena Muthiah, educationist, philanthropist, and prominent citizen of Chennai, passed away in Ooty on Saturday. She was 91.

Sources close to her said that she died in her sleep around 5 a.m. at her summer getaway in Ooty. Her mortal remains will be flown to Chennai on Saturday evening.

On Sunday, the funeral cortege will leave her house in Raja Annamalaiapuram around 9 a.m. Her last rites will be performed at the Mylapore crematorium between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

**Distinguished legacy**

A graduate of Madras University in 1954, Dr. Muthiah completed her Masters and, subsequently in 2002, her Ph.D from Annamalai University. Her doctoral thesis was on the Origin and Development of Tanjore Painting.

The Kumara Rajah Muthiah School of Traditional Arts and Crafts set



MEENA MUTHIAH (1934-2026)

up by her has trained over 300 students in the Tanjore style of art.

She was also the recipient of the Living Craft Treasure Award for 2016-17, presented by Poompuhar, Government of Tamil Nadu, for promoting Tanjore painting.

Dr. Muthiah was married to M.A.M. Muthiah Chettiar, industrialist. She played a big part in raising M.A.M.M. Annamalai Muthiah and Preetha Reddy, Vice-Chairperson,

Apollo Hospitals. She was the Secretary and Correspondent of a number of educational institutions, including Chettinad Vidyashram, Rani Meyyammai Girls' Higher Secondary School, and Kumararani Dr. Meena Muthiah College of Arts and Science.

**Women emancipation**

While her philanthropy portfolio ran across a wide range of causes, much of her work revolved around

emancipation of women through education. The flagship Chettinad School, which started in 1986, enrolls 9,000 students and includes a playpen, a wing for music, performing arts and painting, an academy for languages, an astronomy centre, and day time boarding for children.

Apart from the educational institutions, Dr. Muthiah was, at different times and in different capacities, associated with the Spastic Society of Tamil Nadu, Slum Relief Association, Madras Voluntary Blood Bureau, Bangalore Medical Trust Blood Bank, T.T. Ranganathan Clinical and Research Centre, Voluntary Health Services, Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board for two terms, Indian Cultural Centre, Victoria Technical Institute and its women's section, International Red Cross, University Women's Association, Tamil Nadu Women's Cricket Association, Women's Co-operative Stores, and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

**She shaped destinies, altered trajectories of countless people**

**TRIBUTE**

**Preetha Reddy**

Hailing from the illustrious Chettiar family, Meena Muthiah's life stands as an enduring example of service in its highest form. Innately altruistic, she championed numerous causes, most notably the establishment of educational institutions of global repute and medical facilities dedicated to the welfare of women and children.

Fondly known as 'Aunty', Dr. Muthiah shaped destinies and altered the trajectories of countless lives fortunate enough to come within her orbit. A passionate patron of culture, she was instrumental in the preservation and promotion of indigenous art forms, and founded institutions devoted to cultural craftsmanship, chiefly the Kumara Rajah School of Traditional Arts and Crafts.

A passionate connoisseur of theatre, she re-

mained an unwavering supporter of stage and screen, nurturing artistic expression with enduring zeal.

At the helm of several eminent institutions, she led with singular purpose: to give back to society in ways both meaningful and transformative. Deeply moved by the plight of the underprivileged, persons with disabilities, and the marginalised, she devoted her life to alleviating suffering and restoring dignity to those in need.

The recipient of numerous national and international honours, her contributions have been celebrated across distinguished platforms, earning her admiration far and wide.

As we mourn her tragic demise, we reflect upon a life richly lived in the service of others. May we forever draw quiet strength from the noble sweep of her endeavours.

(Dr. Preetha Reddy is the Vice-Chairperson of Apollo Hospitals)

## IN BRIEF



### 'SIA's Kannan, AI's Aggarwal in race for Air India CEO post'

Singapore Airlines (SIA) executive Vinod Kannan and Air India's (AI) commercial head Nipun Aggarwal are the two frontrunners to become the new CEO of AI, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. The development suggests the search for a new CEO to lead India's second-largest airline is nearing completion, after New Zealander Campbell Wilson said last month he had resigned as the airline faced persistent losses and regulatory scrutiny. The board of Tata Sons, the majority owner of the airline, is discussing both names, a source said. No final decision has been taken and it is possible another candidate may emerge as the favorite. A Tata Sons spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment. AI declined to comment. Mr. Aggarwal and Mr. Kannan did not respond to text messages for comment. SIA holds a roughly 25% stake in AI with the rest with Tata Sons. REUTERS



### Centre appoints Rohit Jain as RBI Deputy Governor

The government has appointed Rohit Jain as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a three-year term. Mr. Jain is replacing T. Rabi Sankar, whose extended tenure ended on Saturday. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment for a period of three years from the date of joining the post on or after May 3, sources said on Saturday. Mr. Jain is currently Executive Director at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). As per the RBI Act, 1934, RBI should have four deputy governors, two from within the ranks, a commercial banker and an economist to head the monetary policy department. The other three deputy governors are Swaminathan J, Poonam Gupta and S. C. Murmu. Mr. Sankar was first appointed Deputy Governor in 2021 for three years and given one-year extensions in 2024 and 2025. PTI

### Missing Link to support economic growth: CII

The Hindu Bureau  
MUMBAI

The Mumbai-Pune Expressway Missing Link, opened to public on Friday would reduce travel time and strengthen Maharashtra's industrial ecosystem said Deepak Garg, chairman, CII Maharashtra.

It is called the "Missing Link" because it represents the originally planned yet long-unbuilt, final section designed to bypass the 19 km Khandala Ghat section. Completed in 2026, this 13.3-km long project built at a cost of ₹6,700 crore offers a faster and safer route, reducing travel time by 25-30 minutes.

"Enhanced connectivity will improve logistics efficiency, reduce costs, and boost investor confidence, enabling businesses to scale operations more effectively," he said.

"Continued investment in infrastructure is essential for building a competitive business environment and sustaining economic growth in the State.

On what the project means for Pune's real estate Rohit Gupta, MD, Mantra Group said "By cutting travel time and making the Mumbai-Pune corridor smoother and safer, it strengthens Pune's appeal for both end-users and investors from Mumbai."

### 'Pharma MSMEs hit by inverted duty'

N. Ravi Kumar  
HYDERABAD

Pharmaceutical MSMEs are grappling with accumulated input tax credit (ITC) in the wake of GST 2.0 reforms coming to hugely aggravate the issue of inverted duty structure.

While benefiting consumers, the reforms have also brought disproportionate financial stress to MSME manufacturers. The structural imbalance may lead to reduced manufacturing capacity, supply disruptions, higher imports and employment instability, the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) said.

Highlighting challenges such enterprises face, the pharma exporters body said post GST 2.0, the Goods and Services Tax on finished formulations have been reduced to 5%. In the case of certain lifesaving drugs, there is no GST.

#### 18% for inputs

Inputs or raw materials such as active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), excipients and packaging materials, however, continue to attract 18% GST. This has led to widening of the inversion gap from the earlier 6% (18% vs. 12%) to 13% now (18% vs 5%). Consequently, it is leading to substantial accumulation of ITC by the units, Pharmexcil director general Raja

# Mazagon Dock breathes new life into CDPLC

Acquisition, signalling India's global shipbuilding push, is seen as strategically, commercially significant for both countries; expands Colombo Dockyard's access to global markets, India clients

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit  
MUMBAI

In India's first international shipyard acquisition, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) last month acquired a 51% stake in Sri Lanka's Colombo Dockyard PLC (CDPLC) for ₹250 crore, boosting India's maritime presence in the Indian Ocean Region. The move is seen as both strategically and commercially significant for both countries.

"This acquisition holds long-term significance for bilateral ties. CDPLC is a strong company with sound business practices. The move is mutually beneficial and has generated goodwill in Sri Lanka. We see significant synergies," said Captain Jagmohan, CMD, MDL.

MDL, a defence public sector undertaking, has a market capitalisation of more than ₹1.1 lakh crore. It recently reported consolidated revenue of ₹13,006.31 crore, reflecting a 14% year-on-year growth.

The acquisition initially triggered concerns in Sri Lanka about control over strategic assets and that CDPLC will be used for India's defence manufacturing. These apprehensions have since eased, with the deal contributing to a turnaround in CDPLC's financial position.

#### How it happened

By January 2025, CDPLC was in a tough situation after its long-time majority shareholder, Japan's Onomichi Dockyard Company Ltd. decided to exit. Expression of Interest was issued, attracting multiple bidders with MDL emerging as the successful one.

On June 27, 2025, MDL's board approved an investment of ₹452 crore and



New horizon: SCI's Swarna Pushp undergoing repairs at the Colombo Dockyard. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Join Free Whatsapp Channel <https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029Van2VRb6RGJOKH6oBd0F> authorised a tripartite agreement with CDPLC and Onomichi. The proposal was scrutinised by the Indian Ministry of Defence and received in-principle approval from the Defence Minister followed by clearance from the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management.

MDL later completed the acquisition with a total outlay of about \$53 million (₹452 crore). On April 11, 2026, the firm told shareholders the deal was done effective 7 April 2026. Captain Jagmohan assumed charge as non-executive chairman of CDPLC.

#### \$40 mn infusion

Soon after, the acquisition infused \$40 million into the dockyard.

The acquisition expanded CDPLC's access to global markets, Indian clients, and new contracts. It secured its largest-ever shipbuilding order - two advanced cable-laying and repair vessels for France's Orange Marine, valued at about \$150 million. It also signed an MoU with the Dredging Corporation of India for vessel repairs.

MDL clarified the opera-

tions at Colombo Dockyard will stay commercial, addressing concerns about defence-related activities. For India, the deal offers both commercial gains and a strategic foothold in Sri Lanka's largest shipyard.

#### New opportunities

With a presence at Colombo Port, MDL plans to expand ship repair operations, a high-margin segment with strong employment potential via ancillary industries.

The firm also sees opportunities in Sri Lanka's Dockyard General Engineering Services (Pvt.) Ltd., which provides engineering and infrastructure services across marine, petrochemical and power sectors. "Employment will rise as ancillary industries grow. There is also strong potential in large storage tank construction," Captain Jagmohan said.

MDL may explore opportunities at Trincomalee Port - one of the world's largest natural harbours - and at Hambantota Port, a key deepwater hub on major shipping routes that was leased to a Chinese joint venture in 2017 for 99

years due to Sri Lanka's debt repayment issues.

For Sri Lanka, the acquisition comes at a critical time. CDPLC faced years of financial strain due to multiple global disruptions and was burdened by heavy debt. The exit of Onomichi left it seeking a strategic investor with about 10,000 livelihoods at stake. "For us, this means access to the Indian market, skill development for our workforce, expanded R&D capabilities, and improved access to credit," said Thimira Godakumbura, MD and CEO, CDPLC.

With fresh capital infusion and new orders, the CDPLC expects revenue to rise 20% this financial year.

Mr. Godakumbura also highlighted the potential for skill development via collaboration with India's maritime ecosystem and premier institutions.

Initial concerns about defence-related activities have subsided, he added. "Over the next three years, we are focused on profitability and growth. This partnership can become a flagship investment and a model for future collaborations," he said.

# LPG tanker, linked to India, crosses Strait of Hormuz

Debayan Tewari  
CHENNAI

India-linked LPG super-tanker Sarv Shakti has sailed out of the Strait of Hormuz, marine traffic data showed on Saturday.

The Marshall Islands-flagged very large gas carrier (VLGC), with an Indian crew aboard, is carrying around 45,000 tonne of LPG, according to reports.

According to [marinetraffic.com](https://www.marinetraffic.com), the ship has crossed the narrow waterway and is heading towards the Gulf of Oman.

The vessel, which had been in the Persian Gulf ever since the West Asia war broke out, had set sail from Ghantoot in the UAE on March 3, showed [marinetraffic.com](https://www.marinetraffic.com).

The VLGC crossed the chokepoint between Iran and Oman's Musandam Peninsula, becoming the first India-linked LPG tanker to cross the Strait of Hormuz after the U.S. enforced a blockade of the strait on April 13 as talks between U.S. and Iran fell through.

#### AIS alert

While sailing, Sarv Shakti broadcast 'India/Indian crew' on the automatic identification system (AIS), a common practice among



Route taken by Sarv Shakti while crossing Strait of Hormuz.

vessels transiting the waters in the region amid the war. The ship hugged the Iranian coastline, its course showing that it had followed the route approved by Iran last month.

A map released by Iran had marked a portion of the strait near the Oman coast as 'hazard zone', indicating that it may have been mined.

#### Vital for energy supply

Sarv Shakti is among the several ships critical for supply of India's energy needs that were marked by the government for evacuation when the war started on February 28.

Reports said the Indian Oil Corporation was the ship's charterer, although IOC is yet to confirm.

# Kotak bank Q4 PAT rises 13% to ₹4,027 cr,

The Hindu Bureau  
MUMBAI

Kotak Mahindra Bank reported a 13% year-on-year (YoY) growth in standalone net profit for the fourth quarter ended March 31 to ₹4,027 crore.

The board recommended dividend of ₹0.65 per equity share having face value of ₹1. For the FY26

net profit at ₹14,008 crore, grew 2% (excluding gain on ZKGI divestment).

Net interest income rose 8% to ₹7,876 crore while net interest margin was lower at 4.67% (4.97%). Q4 provisions slid to ₹516 crore, down 43%. As at March 31, GNPA was 1.20% and NNPA 0.25% (GNPA was 1.42% and NNPA 0.31% as at March 31, 2025).

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान मोहाली  
(शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH MOHALI  
(Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

Advt. No. NF (03)/Regular/2026 Dated: 03.05.2026

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For further detail please visit Institute website at [www.iisermohali.ac.in](http://www.iisermohali.ac.in).

Last date for submission of online application form is 15.06.2026 up to 5:00 p.m.

Corrigendum/Addendum (if any) will be published on the Institute website only.

REGISTRAR, IISER Mohali

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No:BNCC-Z2/EE/HBL/PR/02/2026-27 Date: 02-05-2026

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION**

(Through GOK KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> only) Tenders on Item Rate basis are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Commissioner, BNCC for the works mentioned below from the registered Railways/MES or any State Government Organizations. (Standard Tender Document KW-3)

Sl. No.	Name of the work / Category
1.	Annual maintenance of SWD in Hebbal Constituency for the year 2026-27, Ward No.61. Est. Cost: ₹.100.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.2,00,000/- (₹.1,00 lakh through e-payment (NEFT) balance ₹.1,00,000/- through BG/FDR, should be submit before opening of Technical bid) (Others)

**Calendar of Events :** (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP portal GOK from 04-05-2026. (2) Last Date for uploading the filled proposals is 16-05-2026 upto 4:00 pm (3) Date of opening of Tender is 18-05-2026 after 11:00 am

Sd/- Executive Engineer  
Hebbal Division, Zone-2

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Advt. No.02/2026

Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS), invites applications for the following positions for various Projects under Intra Mural Research (IMR) and other Contractual positions:

Sl.No	Name of Position	Number of Posts	Place of posting
1	Research Associate (Siddha)	05	CCRS, HQ., Chennai / Peripheral Institutes / Units.
2	Research Associate (Machine Learning/ Data Science)	01	CCRS, HQ., Chennai.
3	SRF(Publication)	01	SCRI, Chennai.
4	SRF(Tamil)	01	CCRS, HQ., Chennai.
5	SRF(Hindi)	01	SCRI, Chennai.
6	JRF (Pharmacovigilance)	01	SCRU, New Delhi.
7	JRF (Botany)	01	CCRS, HQ., Chennai.
8	Consultant (Admin)	02	SCRU, New Delhi & SCRU, Goa.

Last date of submission of application is 22.05.2026. Separate applications shall be submitted for each position and to be superscribed on the envelope containing the application. The date of Personal Interview will be notified only to the eligible candidates through the Council's website and email. Further details regarding eligibility, educational qualifications, age, experience, remuneration, tenure of contract and other terms and conditions etc. be followed in the Council's website: [www.ccrs.ayush.gov.in](http://www.ccrs.ayush.gov.in)

Date: 03.05.2026

Director General, CCRS.

# SCIENCE

## As calculations catch up, muon anomaly nearly vanishes

Vasudevan Mukunth

The particle physics rulebook, called the Standard Model, predicts the properties of most subatomic particles with such precision that those few properties found to differ in experiments have frustrated physicists. This is why they're keenly looking for cracks in the Model — parts where it can be updated — that could cover the anomalous findings as well. One such crack is the  $g-2$

anomaly. A muon is a subatomic particle that behaves like a spinning magnet, so when placed in a magnetic field, it wobbles. A figure,  $g$ , denotes the strength of this wobble. The model says it should be just above 2 but many experiments have found a higher value.

However, a new study published by an international team in *Nature* suggests the Model might be fine. Reasoning that previous calculations were

just less accurate, the team published an updated set according to which the Model's prediction is roughly 0.000015% from the value measured in experiments.

The team focused on the hadronic vacuum polarisation, a number associated with the muon and extremely difficult to calculate. It accounts for feeble, short-lived particle effects that subtly alter the muon's motion. "It is challenging to calculate because it is in an energy regime where

the strong nuclear force becomes too strong for usual computational techniques to hold water," IISc Centre for High Energy Physics assistant professor Nirmal Raj said.

The team combined lattice QCD, a technique that uses powerful supercomputers to simulate how particles interact on a grid, with data from particle colliders to reach 0.48% precision, finding the Model's prediction and experimental data nearly matched.

This said, the researchers acknowledged that their new value for one part of the calculation, called the intermediate window, differs from previous estimates by 4.3 standard deviations. That is, they replaced the conflict between theory and experiment with a conflict between two ways to calculate the Model's own prediction. Now, the scientific community awaits more data from experiments like the MUonE collaboration

at CERN and J-PARC in Japan. "This result gives significant weight to the notion that there had been no discrepancy with the Standard Model after all," Dr. Raj said. He added that since the 2001 measurement of  $g$  at Brookhaven National Laboratory in the U.S. — a benchmark against which the Model's predictions have been compared — "we only had to wait for two-and-a-half decades for lattice QCD to come of age".

## SNAPSHOTS



### Electric method can identify coffee strength and roast

The industry's current tools can measure coffee strength but can't separate roast colours. Researchers used cyclic voltammetry to pass a current through brewed coffee and found the electrical response revealed the strength. They also found the roast colour was related to how much caffeine stuck to the electrode and blocked the current. The team used the method to spot a bad batch of coffee a roaster had rejected while extant tools couldn't detect the flaw.



### ART ensures survival doesn't depend on genetic lottery

Before antiretroviral therapy (ART) became available, HLA-B alleles (gene variants) helped people live longer and reduced risk of mothers passing HIV to infants. However, disease-susceptible alleles led to faster illness. A study in South Africa has shown that without medical intervention, this natural selection would have doubled the frequency of protective genes by 38% over 45 years. ART has however radically slowed this genetic shift, ensuring survival no longer depends on a person's specific HLA-B genes.



### Dust storms 'boost' rainfall by helping clouds form

Dust storms are being found to play a role in the earth's water cycle. A study has reported that weekly rainfall totals after a dust storm can be 9.6 mm higher than during dust-free periods, as dust particles act like ice nuclei and help form clouds and boost downpours. The study also found dust in the air enhanced the odds of heavy rainfall. The findings reveal dust storms are a powerful driver of global precipitation patterns.

# How States are turning heat-action plans into mandates

While States have drafted climate action plans, implementation often faces institutional hurdles and a lack of clear ownership; experts suggest embedding environmental goals within departmental budgets and development schemes

Mahima Jain

Textile shops and jewellery showrooms blast cold air onto the street in T. Nagar, Chennai, where the summer temperature often hits 35 °C.

These ACs also contribute to urban heat-islands, making the area one of the most vulnerable spots exhibiting significantly higher temperatures than other areas in Chennai, Deena Hari Krishna, project manager, Auroville Consulting, a U.N.-backed centre advising on policies and sustainable practices, said.

To mitigate heat, buildings here may require passive cooling and ventilation using mechanical fans that suck out hot air; operational advisories to set AC temperatures at 24-26 °C; and introducing energy efficient cooling systems. However, mitigating heat in T. Nagar may look completely different from other localities, he said.

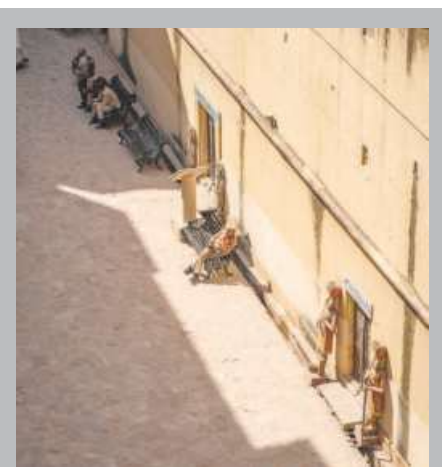
Heat mitigation is integrated in Chennai's Third Master Plan, led by Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, and supported by C40 Cities and Community Jameel. It aims to build climate resilience and improve adaptive capacity to manage flood risks and heat islands by focussing on vulnerable spots based on surface temperature and building density, Mr. Krishna said.

Such localised planning for climate action is just emerging in India, experts pointed out. While all Indian States and Union Territories have drafted or finalised their climate action

## State v. climate

Localised planning for climate action is just emerging in India

- India is moving away from generic climate planning and towards localised strategies that address specific regional vulnerabilities
- But implementation often falters as States face institutional barriers, poor plan quality or a lack of leadership
- Proactive States are now embedding environmental goals into executive processes to ensure climate action remains a priority
- New data portals can bridge the gap between raw information and policy, helping officials monitor national climate progress
- Sustainable success involves viewing adaptation as good development by weaving resilience into every new infrastructure project
- Local task forces use responsibility matrices to coordinate departments and access funding for critical cooling interventions



In the hot seat: A policeman rests on a bench under the Jaipur sun. JOHAN MOUCHET

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plans, there are several obstacles to implementation, including inadequate leadership, institutional barriers or the quality of the plans, according to Oxford Policy Management.

Nambi Appadurai, director of the Climate Resilience Practice at World Resources Institute-India said that while early SAPCCs were often hurriedly conducted with a top-down approach, the second versions are more effective.

Chandra Bhushan, founder-CEO of iFOREST, said integrating climate goals into State executive and legislative processes, such as requiring environment departments to present annual progress reports to their respective Assemblies, has been a useful way to drive on-ground action.

Mr. Appadurai said, "Most climate plans lack clear ownership. But there

are exceptions." For instance, Odisha has cracked climate budgets, allowing them to track exactly where money is spent. Kerala has started to excel at disaster management. Madhya Pradesh has established a robust knowledge platform for climate activities. Tamil Nadu is at the forefront of climate action in India due to significant government buy-in, multi-sectoral efforts, and proactive investment, Mr. Appadurai said. In 2024, it established the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company (TNGCC), a nodal agency for all climate action. Mr. Appadurai is on its governing council.

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) has collaborated with cities across India to integrate scientific tools to help cities measure the implementation of HAPs.

Vishwas Chitale, fellow

and lead, Climate Resilience at CEEW, gave the example of Thane's heat task force committee, which uses a 'responsibility matrix' designed to strengthen inter-departmental coordination focusing on preparedness, response, and long-term mitigation.

Srinivas Krishnaswamy, CEO of New Delhi-based environment nonprofit Vasudha Foundation, said data portals can help close the gap between raw data and actionable policy. For example, the portal of the Union government's Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme provides State-wide progress on power infrastructure upgrades and tracks losses, allowing governments at all levels to monitor compliance and adjust funding priorities.

The PM Surya Ghar portal tracks rooftop solar adoption across States.

Vasudha Foundation and NITI Aayog developed the 'India Climate and Energy Dashboard' to integrate data from various ministries and departments into a holistic picture of the national-level trajectory. Mr. Krishnaswamy said it has logged more than 6 lakh users since 2023, including from government ministries, academics, and industry.

Governments can include a climate lens in all their development and infrastructure plans, Mr. Bhushan said. "Good adaptation is good development through a climate lens," Mr. Appadurai added.

In Maharashtra's Ratnagiri, the administration and iFOREST launched a district development-cum-climate action plan in February. Instead of a separate climate document, it integrated climate resilience directly into the three-year development plan, Mr. Bhushan said.

Drafting it brought together senior officials from the district administration, line departments, and representatives from the State environment department, plus technical experts and local stakeholders.

Mr. Chitale said with the 16th Finance Commission recommending making heatwaves a nationally notified disaster, a significant amount of finance will become available for cities to strengthen their heat resilience.

(Mahima Jain is a resident fellow at the Climate Change Media Hub, Asian College of Journalism, Chennai)

# The ingredients of India's biopharma ambitions



SPEAKING OF SCIENCE

D. Balasubramanian

The COVID-19 pandemic was a watershed moment for our country. While the pharmaceutical sector was robust, it lacked the capacity to produce specialised molecular components at scale. At the start of 2020, nearly all of the 20-plus reagents and enzymes required for making the vaccine kits were imported. Supplies were also vulnerable as the countries where these came from struggled with their own outbreaks.

The pandemic brought to light bottlenecks in the supply chains that support research, development, and manufacturing in the biotechnology and health sectors. Vast arrays of specialty reagents are re-

quired to drive innovation in new therapeutics and to make accurate diagnostic kits.

One example is nucleotides and their analogs. Nucleotides are the building blocks of DNA and RNA. Clever chemical modifications of these compounds give us nucleotide analogs. When used in PCR kits, the analogs have greater sensitivity in the diagnosis of diseases such as tuberculosis and dengue.

Some analogs are used as therapeutics. The antiviral drug remdesivir can stop the virus from proliferating. During the pandemic, modest evidence suggested that it could reduce the time to recovery from a severe COVID-19 infection. Other exotic nucleotide analogs have been used to silence genes — as in the case of the enzyme responsible for overproducing oxalate, which ends up forming kidney stones.



The pandemic brought to light bottlenecks in the supply chains that support research, development, and manufacturing. UNSPLASH

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News headlines focus mainly on breakthroughs in curing diseases. The infrastructure needed to enable that research gets little attention except in times of crisis. Thanks to the lessons learnt during the pandemic, the industry that makes specialty biochemical reagents and laboratory products is now in a phase of high growth. But the going is not easy for the innovation-driven small and medium Indian companies

Indeed, many small companies start off as distributors of imported products. The Hyderabad-based company Biochem Desk, headed by researcher-turned-entrepreneur Shradha Goenka, started off two decades ago as a distributor and now manufactures high-purity cus-

tom nucleotides and provides deep technical support required to use these exotic chemicals at R&D institutions. Similarly, other small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) like Mylab Discovery Solutions in Pune and Chennai-based MagGenome Technologies chip away at India's 80% import dependence for high-end laboratory supplies.

But there are many regulatory hurdles that Indian startups in this space face. Maintaining high-level regulatory compliance can affect SMEs more than large multinationals. Inverted duty structures mean that they import their starting material and equipment at a much higher tax rate while selling their finished kits at lower tax slabs.

Government programmes such as the Biopharma SHAKTI initiative and the BioE3 Policy, that promote biotech startups,

will create a growing demand for reagents, molecular biology kits, and cell and tissue culture products. There are now around 11,000 biotech startups in the biotech clusters of Bengaluru, Lucknow, and the National Capital Region, in Hyderabad's Genome Valley, and in other places.

There are many incentives offered by regulators to the makers of a final product such as a vaccine — but not for the companies that produce ingredients that go into making the vaccine.

Intensifying the creation of the ingredients that go into the making of successful biotechnological products would go a long way towards attaining a self-reliant India. (This article was coauthored by Sushil Chandani)

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Intensifying the creation of the ingredients that go into the making of successful biotechnological products would go a long way towards attaining a self-reliant India. (This article was coauthored by Sushil Chandani)



## Question Corner

### Quick reflex

Why does a loud vehicle passing nearby make the heart pound?

The pounding is a neurological reflex as well as due to a physical effect. When we are startled by a sound, the reflex can be activated within 150 ms, which is faster than acting due to conscious thought. This is because the sound travels from the cochlea through the brainstem to the amygdala, which treats the noise as a potential threat before it has been identified.

The amygdala alerts the hypothalamus, which activates the sympathetic nervous system, which triggers the adrenal glands to release adrenaline into

the blood. Epinephrine binds to receptors in cardiac muscle and increases the rate and force of contractions. Second, large single-cylinder engines like on the Royal Enfield Bullet also produce significant energy in the infrasound and low-frequency range (15-50 Hz), just around the hearing threshold. The thoracic and abdominal cavities resonate around 50-60 Hz and 4-8 Hz respectively. So the body can experience a somatic sensation that can reinforce the threat signal coming from the audible sound.

Readers may send their questions / answers to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in)

## Can Vantara solve Colombia's hippo problem?

Why are the hippos scheduled to be culled? Can Vantara house 80 hippos? Can wild animals be relocated to India?

Jacob Koshy

### The story so far:

Vantara, the 3,500-acre wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre in Jamnagar, Gujarat, owned by Anant Ambani, son of Reliance chairman Mukesh Ambani, has offered to take in 80 hippos scheduled for euthanasia.

### Where did Colombia's hippos come from?

The animals descend from four hippos – three females and one male – imported in 1981 by Colombian drug lord, Pablo Escobar, to his private menagerie at Hacienda Nápoles in Antioquia. After Escobar was killed in 1993, the estate was abandoned and the hippos were judged too dangerous and logistically complex to recapture. They escaped into the Magdalena River basin and have been reproducing since. There are roughly 170 today.

### How did the Colombian government arrive at the decision to cull?

Colombia declared Hippopotamus amphibius an invasive alien species in March 2022. A sterilisation programme began in October 2021, but was deemed labour-intensive, expensive, and ineffective unless a high proportion of dominant males were castrated, since they can mate with multiple females. A 2023 paper by Amanda Subalusky at the University of Florida, Suresh Sethi at Alaska Pacific University, and Elizabeth Anderson at Florida International

The peer-reviewed consensus is that culling, sterilisation, or translocation are not sufficient on their own, and that the window for combined intervention is narrowing each year

University, has influenced Colombia's measures. In the journal *Scientific Reports*, they modelled the hippo demography and argued that

rapid population growth and high management costs had created a "narrow window" for control. They said even if some hippos could be shipped out, some culling was unavoidable.

### What does the peer-reviewed literature say about why these hippos must be controlled?

Jonathan Shurin, a community ecologist at the University of California, San Diego, and colleagues published in *Ecology* in 2020 that lakes containing hippos in Colombia showed altered ecosystem metabolism, elevated nutrient loading from terrestrial grazing transferred to water via waste and phytoplankton communities increasingly dominated by cyanobacteria.

### Why is moving hippos so difficult?

A study in the South African journal, *Koedoe*, in 1989 documented chemical immobilisation of 37 hippos where 12 of them died within an hour of darting. Hippos are difficult to tranquilise because they have thick skin, are usually in or near water (where a sedated animal can drown), and are dangerous to approach. Capture myopathy – the malignant outcome of stress during capture, reviewed in *Conservation Physiology* – accounts for the highest number of deaths in wildlife translocations globally. An adult male hippo weighs up to 3,000 kg; per-animal costs would run to tens of thousands of dollars before receiving-facility costs.

### Could Vantara physically house 80 hippos?

The Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre at Vantara spans about 650 acres. The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) specifies a minimum of 929 square metres of enclosure per adult hippo. Eighty hippos at the GFAS minimum would require around 18 acres – easily within the available footprint. The harder constraints, however, are that wild hippos form pods of 10 to 30 around dominant males, meaning 80 unrelated animals cannot be housed as one herd; at least 4-8 separate pool complexes with visual and physical separation would be needed. The Jamnagar climate is also hotter and drier than the Magdalena floodplain, requiring engineered freshwater inputs year-round.

### What does CITES say about transferring wild animals to India?

CITES – the multilateral treaty that regulates international trade in endangered species – sent a Secretariat team to inspect Vantara last year, prompted by allegations of discrepancies in animal imports from Congo, Mexico, and elsewhere. In a document published in October, the Secretariat found that India had not exercised "due diligence" in issuing several import permits and recommended that India issue no further permits for endangered wildlife imports until it implemented procedural reforms and properly identified the provenance of imported animals. The recommendation was reversed in November after India, the U.S., Japan and Brazil argued the measure was "premature."

### Would moving 80 hippos solve the problem?

No. The peer-reviewed consensus is that no single intervention – sterilisation, translocation, or culling – is sufficient on its own, and that the window for combined intervention is narrowing each year.

## Why did the UAE quit OPEC and OPEC+?

What explains the years of simmering competition between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi? How will the UAE's decision impact oil prices? How has its decision to leave impacted OPEC and OPEC+? Will this move benefit India and if so, how?

M. Kalyanaraman

### The story so far:

In May 1, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) officially exited the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+. While OPEC is a permanent intergovernmental organisation founded in 1960 to coordinate the petroleum policies of its member countries and stabilise global oil markets, OPEC+ is a broader alliance formed in 2016 that includes the core OPEC members along with 10 additional major oil-producing nations, most notably Russia. The UAE's decision dealt a heavy blow to the oil exporting groups and their de facto leader, Saudi Arabia, at a time when the Iran war has caused a historic energy shock and unsettled the global economy.

### Why did the UAE leave OPEC and OPEC+?

Differences between the UAE and OPEC, in particular Saudi Arabia, have been simmering for a while. Saudi Arabia deferred recognition of the UAE after the latter became independent from the U.K. in the 1970s, until some disputed territory it claimed was ceded.

The political structure and society of the two countries are different. While Saudi Arabia, though a monarchy, acts slowly and builds through consensus within the large extended royal family, the UAE has historically sought to be nimbler and quicker-acting.

However, the UAE has so far formally banded with Saudi Arabia, especially in energy production, because of a large and powerful Iran seen as a common adversary.

OPEC allocates quotas for oil production to control global oil prices. Saudi Arabia plays a key role in fixing these quotas and functions as a swing producer. Currently, it has a quota of

India can leverage enhanced flows from Fujairah port at reduced rates if the UAE's increased production drives down global oil prices

around 10 million barrels a day but has spare capacity of another 2 million. Saudi Arabia can ramp up or ramp down production quickly to counteract any volatility in oil prices. The UAE has a quota of some 3.5 million barrels but has a capacity of 4.85 million. By 2027, its capacity is expected to increase to 5 million.

A cautious Saudi Arabia seeks to even out and prolong fossil fuel use partly by curtailing production and benefiting from it; for instance, it has actively worked against efforts to decarbonise global shipping and to retain the use of crude oil-based shipping fuel.

The UAE recognises the inevitability of energy transition, involving the use of renewables and green fuels. It seeks to quickly boost oil profits and funnel them into its economy. The UAE has a much more diversified economy and is seeking to expand it even further.

In foreign policy, too, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have been at loggerheads. In Yemen, the two, which cooperated against the Iran-backed Houthis, fought a proxy battle recently through the groups they were supporting. In Yemen, Saudi Arabia supports the country's internationally recognised government and works with the Islamist group, Al-Islah, while the UAE is backing a separatist force, the Southern Transitional Council. In Sudan, the two are again on opposing sides. The UAE has been active in seeking leverage in Libya, now an emerging alternative to the Persian Gulf for oil and gas.

In 2021, the differences came to a head with the UAE raising major objections to OPEC decisions. But a consensus was reached and the UAE was given a bigger slice of the oil pie to convince it to stay in the group.

In the aftermath of the war on Iran, the UAE, which has in recent times become more assertive in its economic, political, and foreign policy goals, has announced its decision to quit OPEC. While it is unclear whether the UAE expects the crisis to reduce in intensity, its OPEC announcement did not have much impact on oil prices, given that oil transport has stalled across the Strait of Hormuz.

### How will the UAE act next?

The UAE will review its relationships with nations and reset them as per its priorities. Emirati officials have said some of the Arab states did not do much by way of support even as the UAE bore the brunt of Iranian attacks, which were more than what even Israel faced.

When normalcy returns, even if only in stages, there will be an immediate demand for more oil and the UAE can take advantage of that.



The logo of OPEC outside its headquarters in Vienna, Austria. REUTERS

## What did the U.S. Supreme Court change in Louisiana?

Why did Louisiana redraw districts, creating a new Black-majority district? How did Louisiana's situation bring two legal problems into direct collision? What did the Court decide about the Voting Rights Act? What are the implications and concerns?

Varghese K. George

### The story so far:

In April 29, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Louisiana's second majority-Black congressional district as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander. This rewrites the legal standard for when States must create districts where racial minorities form a majority of voters.

### What happened in Louisiana?

Louisiana has six Congressional seats. The boundaries of these were redrawn after the 2020 census. The map was challenged on the grounds that it "packed" Black voters into a single district while "cracking" the remaining Black population across five majority-white districts – both leading to a dilution of their votes. A federal district court held that the Voting Rights Act (VRA) required a second majority-Black district and ordered Louisiana to draw one. The State redrew the districts, creating a new Black-majority district, but designed a 400-kilometre meandering corridor to keep the districts of U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson and Majority Leader Steve Scalise undisturbed. A separate group challenged the map as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

### What was the question before the Supreme Court?

Louisiana's situation brought two legal problems into direct collision. The lower courts had found

The dissent argues that the ruling guts the Voting Rights Act's protections against vote dilution – leaving minority communities formally able to vote but practically unable to elect candidates of their choice

that the original map likely violated the VRA by failing to include a second majority-Black district. But the remedial map Louisiana drew – explicitly race-driven in its design – was struck down as violating the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The State approached the Supreme Court. The Court used the case to address a question it had deferred for over 30 years: can compliance with Section 2 of the VRA constitute a "compelling governmental interest" – the legal threshold that must be met before a State may intentionally use race in drawing district lines? The answer would determine whether Louisiana had a constitutional justification for drawing the new, second, Black-majority district. The Court then interpreted Section 2 of the VRA and its implications for legislative maps.

### What did the majority decide on Section 2 of the VRA?

The majority ruled that compliance with Section 2 can provide a compelling interest – and then reinterpreted Section 2 so narrowly that meeting the requirements for the creation of majority-minority districts will, in most cases, be close to impossible.

This is how the Court went about it. Section 2 bars electoral arrangements that give minority voters "less opportunity than other members of the electorate to elect representatives of their choice." The majority reads this baseline as: whatever opportunity results from the State's own permissible, race-neutral criteria. As the opinion states: "the 'opportunity' of these 'members of the electorate' to contribute their votes to a winning cause is whatever opportunity results from the application of the State's combination of permissible criteria. That is what a randomly selected individual voter and group of voters can expect regarding their opportunity to elect their preferred candidate. And under Section 2, a minority voter is entitled to nothing less and nothing more."

On this reading, if a State has used race-neutral factors – traditional district criteria, incumbency protection, partisan goals – Section 2 has nothing to say, even if the resulting map leaves minority voters permanently unable to elect candidates they prefer. Section 2 imposes liability only, the majority holds, when "the

The country seeks to increase its production by 1 million barrels through this year in stages. U.S. President Donald Trump has welcomed the UAE's move to leave the cartel as he believes it could help lower oil prices.

As the war began, the UAE and Saudi Arabia sought to use alternatives to restore some 4.5 million barrels out of the 15 million that had stopped flowing across the strait. While Saudi Arabia used its East-West Pipeline to send oil to the Red Sea port of Yanbu, the UAE sent its oil to Fujairah port downstream of the strait. Fujairah, though hit hard by attacks, saw near capacity utilisation of 1.8 million barrels being sent out per day as the war progressed. It will continue to be a key exit point for greater UAE oil flows.

### What will happen to OPEC?

So far, there is no panic. Russia, the other major oil producer which is part of OPEC+, is in sync with Saudi Arabia on oil production goals. Neither wants booms and busts inevitable in a freer market and wants to manage the market.

In the past, Angola and Qatar left the cartel but it must be said that both nations were smaller players. The UAE, on the other hand, was OPEC's third-largest producer. But cranking up production may ruffle feathers among its neighbours that the UAE may not want. Kazakhstan, Algeria, and Russia have all reaffirmed their commitment to OPEC+.

### Will India benefit?

India likely enjoys the greatest comfort with the UAE among Arab nations. As Trucial States, the sheikhdoms reported to the British in India and the rupee was recognised there.

Since Independence, the UAE has been a big employer of the Indian diaspora. While the Emirati population is only a little over 10% of the total UAE population, Indians constitute almost half of non-Emiratis who prosper in the country.

The UAE has recently strengthened its security relations with India as well. India can leverage enhanced flows from Fujairah port at reduced rates if the UAE's increased production drives down global oil prices. Indian refineries are well adapted to processing UAE crude and can pursue flexible, long-term contracts.

V. R. Krishnaswamy, who has served in the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company for nearly 45 years including as a top executive, points out that the Indian rupee continues to be in demand in the UAE. The UAE has put in place a state-of-the-art system for payments in other currencies, particularly in Yuan. So far, across the world, oil payments are typically paid in the U.S. dollar, reinforcing the perception that the dollar's strength comes in-part from its role as the petro-dollar. "Not just the yuan, the UAE may accept payments in other currencies such as the rupee, as well," he adds, recalling India paying Russia and the Soviet Union in rubles.

evidence supports a strong inference that the State intentionally drew its districts to afford minority voters less opportunity because of their race." Where the State can point to any race-neutral justification, that inference does not arise. The effects of a map on minority voting power are not, by themselves, a Section 2 violation. In 1982, the U.S. Congress had amended the VRA to establish an impact standard rather than an intent standard in determining the quality of the electoral process – regardless of intent, if the effect was fewer opportunities for a group, it required remediation. The Supreme Court's judgment effectively reinstates the pre-1982 standard.

### Earlier criteria versus new criteria: how does the situation change?

The judgment, while not entirely barring race-conscious districting, raises the bar for doing so. It updates the existing criteria under which race-determined districts may be drawn. Those who challenge a congressional map must now establish that race is the sole factor determining their disadvantage, controlled for all other factors including partisanship – which, incidentally, is not justiciable in federal courts. Plaintiffs must provide analysis controlling for party affiliation, isolating racial bloc voting that cannot be explained by partisan alignment. With regard to the "totality of circumstances" inquiry that Section 2 requires, the majority held that it must focus on "present-day intentional racial discrimination regarding voting." The existing criteria had allowed a much wider range of factors to be considered. The principle the majority reiterates is "equal opportunity," not "equal outcomes." No proportional representation is promised or required. The Act itself says so explicitly, the majority opinion pointed out: Section 2(b) contains what the opinion calls "a robust disclaimer against proportionality."

### What are the concerns?

The dissent argues that the ruling guts the VRA's protections against vote dilution – leaving minority communities formally able to vote but practically unable to elect candidates of their choice. The verdict also exposes a paradox in the law: the Constitution bars the State from treating voters as interchangeable representatives of their racial group, yet it also requires that racial minorities not be systematically deprived of electoral influence. Navigating this tension has long been central to U.S. voting rights law.



A view of the U.S. Supreme Court. AP

# PROFILES

## Cracks in the oil crown

### OPEC

The cartel, already grappling with changes in the global energy landscape, geopolitical tensions, and declining influence, faces a litmus test with the exit of the UAE, one of its top oil producers with capacity to influence the market

Smriti Sudesh

**O**n April 29, the UAE announced it would leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), ending nearly six decades of membership. The decision, effective May 1, removes one of the group's largest producers.

OPEC traces its origins to September 1960, when representatives from Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela gathered in Baghdad. At the time, the global oil industry was controlled largely by a consortium of Western companies known as the Seven Sisters. Producing countries had a limited say over how much oil was extracted, or at what price it was sold and revenues depended on decisions made elsewhere.

The founding members sought to change this. OPEC was conceived as a platform for coordination among producers. Here, producers could exert greater control over supply and pricing, and secure a larger share of the value of their resources. In its early years, however, OPEC's influence was modest. The global oil system was still shaped by multinational firms, and non-OPEC production remained significant. The organisation existed, but it did not yet define the market.

That changed in the 1970s. During the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Yom Kippur War, Arab OPEC members imposed production cuts and an embargo on the U.S. and the Netherlands. Oil prices quadrupled. The episode demonstrated OPEC's ability to use oil as a geopolitical tool and established the group as a major force in the global economy.

A second shock followed in 1979 with the Iranian Revolution. For a period, OPEC controlled around 75% of global oil exports and accumulated significant petrodollars that funded infrastructure and reshaped international finance.

By the 1980s, OPEC introduced formal production quotas, with Saudi Arabia often acting as the swing producer. In 1986, after a period of market flooding, prices collapsed. The following decades brought repeated cycles of cuts, recoveries, and new



REUTERS

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pressures from the Gulf War and Asian financial crisis to China's demand surge in the 2000s. The U.S. shale revolution, which accelerated in the 2010s, represented a structural change. Starting around 2012, American producers, using hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, began unlocking vast reserves of tight oil in Texas, North Dakota and elsewhere. Shale production was faster, more flexible, and highly responsive to price. When prices rose, output followed within months.

#### Uneasy coordination

In 2014, OPEC made its most decisive attempt to tackle the challenge. Rather than cut output to defend prices, it kept pumping, hoping to push prices low enough to force higher-cost shale producers out of the market. Prices duly fell below \$30 a barrel. In 2016, the group formed the broader OPEC+ alliance with Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and other non-OPEC producers to coordinate output more effectively. Even then, the combined group accounted for roughly 40% of global supply, which was far from the dominance of earlier decades. What followed was a period of

uneasy coordination. The first major test came in 2020. As the COVID-19 pandemic led to the collapse of global demand, oil consumption fell at a pace not seen before. OPEC+ responded with unprecedented production cuts, removing millions of barrels per day from the market. In the years that followed, the alliance settled into a pattern of tailored corrections. Output was gradually restored as demand recovered, but disagreements persisted. Some members, facing fiscal strain, pushed for higher production. Others, led by Saudi Arabia, prioritised price stability.

By late 2025, prices had dipped below \$60 a barrel as the group began unwinding production cuts. Saudi Arabia and Russia were pushing to restore output, while others wanted to hold the cuts in place. The internal arguments that had always plagued the group – between those who needed high prices to balance their budgets and those who wanted to maximise market share – were intensifying. Then came the war.

On February 28, the U.S. and Israel launched attacks on Iran and assassinated Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Iran retaliated with missile

and drone attacks across the Persian Gulf and blockaded the Strait of Hormuz. Global oil supply plummeted by more than 10 million barrels a day in March alone. The crisis exposed OPEC's deepest structural contradiction. Iran, one of its founding members, attacked other members in the region in response to the U.S.-Israeli strikes.

For the UAE, the crisis sharpened an existing tension. A member since 1967, it has spent years expanding its production capacity, with the aim of reaching close to 5 million barrels per day. Under recent OPEC+ agreements, however, its output was capped lower, around 3.2 - 3.4 million bpd. But by leaving, the UAE gains flexibility to increase production once shipping routes stabilise and to pursue bilateral arrangements. The move also exposes the UAE's growing differences with Saudi Arabia, the cartel's de facto leader, on issues ranging from quotas to regional policy.

The UAE is not the first country to leave OPEC. Qatar departed in 2019, redirecting its energy identity toward liquefied natural gas. Ecuador, Gabon, Angola, and Indonesia have all come and gone at various points. But the

UAE's departure is different in scale. It was OPEC's third-largest producer. It was one of only two members, Saudi Arabia being the other, with the ability to rapidly increase or decrease output to stabilise markets. Without the UAE, OPEC's capacity to respond to supply shocks is materially diminished.

OPEC's ability to move prices depends heavily on whether its remaining members, many of them economically fragile, politically unstable, or at war with each other, can maintain unity. It also depends on whether Russia continues to coordinate through the OPEC+ framework. And it depends on whether the shale producers, the renewables build-out, and the broader energy transition continue to erode the structural centrality of Gulf oil.

#### Long-term benefits

For large importers such as India, which depends on imports for nearly 90% of its roughly 5.8 million barrels per day consumption, the change could bring longer-term benefits. Analysts say greater UAE production outside quotas may support additional supply, enable direct bilateral deals, and reduce freight costs due to proximity. This could help moderate import bills and support energy security efforts amid ongoing global uncertainty.

In the short term, however, the Strait of Hormuz disruptions continue to dominate price movements. Any additional supply from the UAE will only fully materialise once safer shipping conditions return. Until then, the exit's primary effect is symbolic rather than immediate.

OPEC now retains substantial reserves and influence through its core members, particularly Saudi Arabia. The organisation now operates in a more complex environment. Renewables continue to gain ground, energy efficiency improvements persist, and major consumers are actively diversifying sources. At the same time, geopolitical risks add layers of uncertainty.

For 65 years, OPEC held the world over a barrel. The barrel is now cracked, and the oil is running in directions no cartel can follow.

### THE GIST

OPEC was conceived as a platform where producers could exert greater control over supply and pricing, and secure a larger share of the value of their resources

During the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Yom Kippur War, Arab OPEC members imposed production cuts and an embargo on the U.S. and the Netherlands, establishing the group as a major force in the global economy

In 2016, the group formed the broader OPEC+ alliance with Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and other non-OPEC producers to coordinate output more effectively

## The prodigy who walked away

### Raghav Chadha

The Rajya Sabha MP, who was one of the close confidants of Kejriwal, now says the 'toxic work culture' of AAP forced him to quit the party and join the BJP

Sobhana K. Nair

**R**aghav Chadha, 37, rarely misses an opportunity to underline two facts about himself: that he is the youngest member of the Rajya Sabha and that he comes from a non-political family. The two distinctions, he believes, set him apart from most of his parliamentary colleagues.

Born in November 1988 in Delhi, Raghav Chadha studied at Modern School, Barakhamba Road, one of the capital's premier private schools. He trained as a chartered accountant, clearing the examination at the age of 22. After a brief stint in the corporate sector, he joined a wave of aspirational young professionals who, through the India Against Corruption movement, saw a pathway into politics – bypassing the traditional routes of student activism or family legacy.

An AAP archive photograph, showing a younger Mr. Chadha with a narrower face from the period when he was a member of the party's national executive handling litigation affairs, carries a line that reads: "He believes he did not choose politics; politics chose him."

Senior Supreme Court lawyer Rahul Mehra, a family friend of more than six decades, helped ease



ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

him into public life. When the India Against Corruption movement was at its height, Mr. Chadha called Mr. Mehra to say he wanted to contribute, even if it meant sparing just two days a week. "There was no politics at that time," Mr. Mehra says emphatically. "We were all excited about contributing to national-building." Mr. Mehra, however, declined to comment on Mr. Chadha's recent switch to the BJP.

#### Kejriwal's man

Mr. Chadha was part of the original team that drafted the Delhi Lokpal Bill in 2012. By the time Arvind Kejriwal first became Chief Minister in December 2013, Mr. Chadha was counted among the party chief's close confidants. A former AAP leader recalls him as someone who rarely contradicted Mr. Kejriwal in meetings. "He was Arvind's mouthpiece. He was sharp enough to grasp what Arvind wanted and delivered it. For Arvind, he

was like a son," the leader said. Mr. Chadha sat in all meetings. Even when people wanted to meet Mr. Kejriwal alone, he would often wave away objections, saying, "It's only Raghav".

In 2015, at the age of 26, following the AAP's landslide victory in Delhi, winning 67 of the 70 seats, Mr. Chadha was appointed national treasurer. By 2017, however, he was removed from the post during an organisational reshuffle. The reshuffle coincided with allegations by then-sacked Minister Kapil Mishra of "hawala dealings" in the AAP during Mr. Chadha's tenure. The party said Mr. Chadha had "willingly relinquished" the post.

In his 14-year association with the AAP, Mr. Chadha contested three elections: the 2019 Lok Sabha election from South Delhi, which he lost to the BJP; the February 2020 Delhi Assembly election from Rajendra Nagar, which he won; and his 2022 nomination to the Ra-

ja Sabha, making him the youngest member of the House. He married Bollywood actor Parineeti Chopra in September 2023, in a lavish ceremony at The Leela Palace in Udaipur.

He has long been an admirer of the late BJP leader Arun Jaitley. In private conversations, he would praise Jaitley's soft yet firm style of speaking. In an interview with YouTuber Samdisha Bhatia where he described the BJP as a party of "goons" and "lumpen elements", Mr. Chadha, nevertheless, spoke warmly of the personal equation he shared with Jaitley.

Mr. Chadha, along with six other Rajya Sabha MPs from the AAP, switched to the BJP on April 24. A few days later, in a video message, he said the "toxic work culture" of the AAP, which is in the hands of "corrupt and compromised people", forced him to quit. He didn't have many friends in the AAP, which made it far easier for his former colleagues to launch a no-holds-barred attack against him.

In public, however, Mr. Chadha holds the image of a charming, easygoing and cheerful politician. He has built a following well beyond politics. Now the challenge is to sustain that appeal as he navigates the organisational machinery of a party which he opposed until last week.

## The phantom that flies

### Fibre-optic drones

The small first-person view attack machines have emerged as a disruptive force in the Russia-Ukraine war and parts of the West Asia conflict

Murali N. Krishnaswamy

**L**ow-cost, hard to track, harder to stop and capable of overwhelming swarms, the fibre-optic-guided drones are proving to be a disruptive force in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and parts of the West Asia war.

According to Rahul Bedi, a Delhi-based journalist reporting on military and security matters, fibre-optic drones represent an inflection point in modern warfare – cheap expendable systems that are no longer constrained by electronic jamming or battlefield visibility. "In Ukraine and in southern Lebanon, they have redefined the front line, enabling persistent low-altitude strikes in heavily contested zones. The result is a battlefield where control is increasingly determined not by scale or sophistication of conventional weapon systems alone, but by adapting these phantom-like drones to dominate the environment."

To Manmohan Bahadur, retired Air Vice Marshal and a former Additional Director General of the Centre for Air Power Studies, fibre-optic drones are the classic result of the cycle of counter-measures and counter-counter measures in warfare. "The net result is that modern and



AP

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ed by a physical fibre optic cable, has forced personnel manning Israel's defence and jamming systems to blink, marking a shift in battlefield tactics. The Russia-Ukraine war has been significantly shaped by drone warfare, with drones accounting for up to 80% of casualties in some engagements. However, the vulnerability of drones that use wireless radio frequency (RF) communications led to further innovation, most notably, the use of drones guided by fibre optic cables. These drones – or what are called single-use fibre optic drones – have become increasingly common. As the first mover in deploying this technology, Russia gained a combat advantage. Its effectiveness prompted Ukraine to adopt it, and fibre-optic drones are now estimated to account for about 10% of Ukraine's drone production.

In the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, Hezbollah's lethal use of first-person view (FPV) attack drones, guid-

#### Real-time control

At the core of the operations is a thin fibre-optic line or spool, extending up to even 50 km in some instances. As a direct connection it has two benefits – first, real-time control and second, replacing the earlier grainy drone-generated visuals with high-resolution video transmission and spectacular battlefield imagery right up to the moment of attack.

The fibre controls the signals, telemetry, and also high-bandwidth video which are transmitted using light signals. Though the enemy could be unleashing electronic countermeasures, the operator does not even flinch, getting only a consistent and responsive connection.

But what may seem flawless has its challenges

too such as the weight of the attached fibre canister and military payload – which in turn could affect drone battery life – and the loss of communication in case the fibre is destroyed or damaged during flight by even strong winds. There are reports of soldiers snipping the fibre, but as a counter, fibre manufacturers are adding protective coating with an infusion of Kevlar, though this results in a larger fibre diameter.

Israeli forces are reported to be using physical defences, which include protective nets and even metal cages on military equipment to block drones, a point Mr. Bahadur highlights.

"At present, the countermeasures to these drones are rudimentary. There is no doubt that a countermeasure would be developed for this technology too, but the impact is the psychological effect on ground troops who, at present, can only try and shoot them down, if they are able to see and engage these small sized drones in time," he says.

More research in early detection of these unmanned aerial vehicles using infra red or acoustic sensors, apart from among other methods such as disabling of the fibre optic lines using lasers, would be key, he adds.

## WASHINGTON

## Trump says U.S. Navy acting like 'pirates' during Iran blockade



U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that the U.S. Navy was acting "like pirates" as he described an operation seizing a ship amid the tit-for-tat American blockade of Iranian ports. "We... land on top of it and we took over the ship. We took over the cargo, took over the oil. It's a very profitable business," Mr. Trump said. AFP

## LONDON

## Starmer urges tougher action against Gaza protests in U.K.



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer warned on Saturday that tougher action was needed against people chanting certain phrases at pro-Palestinian protests, as concerns grew over the safety after the stabbings of two Jewish men. He said that repeated marches have had a "cumulative effect" in rising anti-Semitic incidents. AP

## BEIRUT

## Narges Mohammadi hospitalised after a health crisis while in prison



Iran's imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi has been urgently transferred from prison to a hospital in northwestern Iran after a "catastrophic deterioration" of her health, her foundation said on Friday. It said Ms. Mohammadi had two episodes of loss of consciousness and a severe cardiac crisis. AP

## WASHINGTON

## Spirit Airlines prepares to cease operations after rescue deal stalls



Bankrupt discount carrier Spirit Airlines is preparing to cease operations, after failing to align certain bondholders and the U.S. government on a bailout plan, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday. Spirit Airlines announced on Saturday that it has gone out of business after 34 years. REUTERS

## U.S. to withdraw 5,000 troops from Germany, fulfilling Trump's threat

German Chancellor Merz had said the U.S. was being 'humiliated' by Iran and it lacked a strategy in the ongoing war; the U.S. has 36,000 service members deployed in the country; NATO says it is 'working with Washington to understand details'

Associated Press  
WASHINGTON

The United States will withdraw about 5,000 troops from Germany in the next six to 12 months, the Pentagon said on Friday, fulfilling President Donald Trump's threat as he clashes with the German leader over the U.S. war with Iran. Mr. Trump had threatened to withdraw some troops from the NATO ally earlier this week after Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the U.S. was being "humiliated" by the Iranian leadership and criticised Washington's lack of strategy in the war. Pentagon spokesperson



Force posture: An AH-64 Apache attack helicopter stands in front of a Galaxy C-5 transport plane at the U.S. Air Base in Ramstein. AFP

Sean Parnell said in a statement that the "decision follows a thorough review of the Department's force posture in Europe and is in recognition of theatre requirements and conditions on the ground".

Germany hosts several U.S. military facilities, including the headquarters of its European and Africa commands, Ramstein Air Base and a medical centre

in Landstuhl, where casualties from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were treated. U.S. nuclear missiles are also stationed in the country. The number of troops leaving Germany would be 14% of the 36,000 American service members stationed there.

## 'Foreseeable' move

German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius called it "foreseeable" that the U.S. would withdraw troops from Europe and Germany, while he sought to stress mutual benefit from the U.S. military presence on the European continent. "The presence of Amer-

ican soldiers in Europe, and especially in Germany, is in our interest and in the interest of the U.S.," Mr. Pistorius told the German news agency *dpa*, while adding that European allies needed to adjust their defence postures – and were doing so.

NATO said it was "working with the U.S. to understand the details of their decision on force posture in Germany".

"This adjustment underscores the need for Europe to continue to invest more in defence and take on a greater share of the responsibility for our shared security," NATO spokesperson Allison Hart wrote on X.

## U.S. approves \$8.6 bn arms sales to Israel, Gulf allies

Reuters  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has bypassed congressional review to approve military sales totalling over \$8.6 billion to West Asian allies Israel, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The State Department announcements on Friday came as the U.S. and Israel's war against Iran marked nine weeks since its start and more than three weeks since a fragile ceasefire came into effect. The State Department said U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio determined that an emergency existed that required immediate sales to those countries and waived the congressional review requirements for the sales.



A Patriot missile battery is seen near Prince Sultan air base.

The announcements included approving military sales to Qatar of Patriot air and missile defence replenishment services costing \$4.01 billion and of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems (APKWS) costing \$992.4 million.

They also included approval of the sale to Kuwait of an integrated battle command system costing \$2.5 billion and to Israel of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems costing

\$992.4 million. The State Department approved a sale to the UAE of APKWS for \$147.6 million.

The U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on February 28. Iran responded with its own strikes on Israel and Gulf states that host U.S. bases. U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran and Israeli attacks in Lebanon have killed thousands and displaced millions.

Over the years, Washington has faced scrutiny for military ties with Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar over those countries' human rights track records that rights advocates say involve restrictions on and reported abuses of minorities, journalists, voices of dissent, the LGBT community and labourers. Those nations have denied supporting or engaging in domestic rights abuses.

## Israeli air strikes on southern Lebanon kill 7 amid ceasefire

Associated Press  
BEIRUT

Israeli air strikes on southern Lebanon kill at least seven persons and injured others on Saturday as hostilities continue between Israel and Hezbollah despite a ceasefire.

The Israeli air strikes on southern Lebanon Saturday came as Israel's military issued a new warning for residents of nine southern villages to evacuate.

Israel's military and Lebanon's Hezbollah have

kept up their attacks despite a ceasefire in place since April 17.

Lebanon's state-run *National News Agency* reported an air strike on a car in the village of Kfar Dajal that killed 2 persons, while another hit a home in the village of Lwaizeh killing three. *NNA* also reported a strike on the village of Shoukin that killed two persons.

Israeli air force said that it carried out about 50 air strikes over the past 24 hours.

## U.S. sanctions are 'collective punishment,' says Cuban Minister during May 1 rallies

Agence France-Presse  
HAVANA

Cuba said on Friday that U.S. President Donald Trump's fresh sanctions on the island amounted to "collective punishment," as an enormous May 1 procession outside the American embassy in Havana vowed to "defend the homeland".

Mr. Trump has mused about taking over Cuba, which lies 145 km from Florida and has been under a nearly continuous U.S. trade embargo since Fidel Castro led a communist re-



United voices: People march while holding a giant Cuban national flag during a May Day rally in Havana, Cuba, on Friday. REUTERS

volution in 1959.

Late Friday, he told an audience in Florida that the U.S. would be "taking over" the Caribbean island

"almost immediately".

In an executive order on Friday, the U.S. leader said he would impose sanctions on people involved in

sweeping sections of the Cuban economy, which is steered by the government.

The latest sanctions constitute "collective punishment" of the nation's people, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez said.

"We firmly reject the recent unilateral coercive measures adopted by the #UnitedStates government," he posted on X in English. "These actions demonstrate an intention to impose, once again, collective punishment on the Cuban people."

## Fighting reaches outskirts of Ukraine's Kostiantynivka city

Reuters  
KYIV

Russian troops are inching towards the city of Kostiantynivka in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, trying to establish a foothold close to a heavily defended area, Ukraine's top army official said on Saturday.

Kostiantynivka, along with other cities, forms a so-called fortress belt in the country's east – an area well fortified by the Ukrainian military.

"We are repelling the

Russian occupiers' persistent attempts to gain a foothold in the outskirts of Kostiantynivka using infiltration tactics. Counter-sabotage measures are going on in the city," Oleksandr Syrskyi, Ukraine's army chief, said on Telegram.

A Ukrainian battlefield mapping project shows Russian troops control an area around only one kilometre from the city's southern outskirts.

The small city of Pokrovsk was the most significant gain in the past year.

## Sport

## Kuldeep shatters pole vault National record, wins gold

ATHLETICS

Sports Bureau

In his first indoor competition, Kuldeep Kumar outsmarted title favourite Dev Meena to rewrite the men's pole vault National record in the inaugural Indian Indoor Open combined events and pole vault meet at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Saturday.

The 21-year-old cleared 5.41m in his first attempt to go past Dev's National mark of 5.40m set last year. Kuldeep also improved the National indoor record of 5.30m set by G. Reegan, who took the silver with 5.25m, in March. Dev, who had equalled his National record of 5.40m in March



Vaulting to glory: Kuldeep cleared 5.41m in his first attempt to go past Dev's National mark of 5.40m set last year. BISWARANJAN ROUT

in Taiwan, claimed the bronze with 5.20m.

In heptathlon, N. Thowfeeq led with 2,943 points after completing 60m, long jump, shot put and high jump events on day one.

## The results: Pole vault:

**Men: Elite:** 1. Kuldeep Kumar (MP) 5.41m (NR, old 5.40m, Dev Meena, 2025), 2. G. Reegan (TN) 5.25m, 3. Dev Meena (MP) 5.20m.  
**U-20:** 1. S. Kavinrāja (TN) 4.90m, 2. R. Vishal (TN) 4.70m, 3. Saurabh Yadav (UP) 4.20m.

## Railways women clinch team title

GYMNASTICS

Sports Bureau  
BHUBANESWAR

Railways claimed the women's team title in the National artistic gymnastics at the Kalinga Stadium on Saturday. Maharashtra's Anoushka Patil and Pahal Shah secured all-around senior and junior crowns respectively.

## The results:

**Women: Senior: Individual: All-around:** 1. Anoushka Patil (Mah) 45.200, 2. Eshita Rewale (Mah) 44.833, 3. Protistha Samanta (RSPB) 44.400; **Team:** 1. Railways (Bidisha Gayen, Karishma, Pranati Nayak, Protistha Samanta, Ritu Das, Swastika Ganguly) 130.899, 2. West Bengal (Ashmi Debnath, Diya Biswas, Jinia Debnath,



Anoushka. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Oendila Golui, Sabana Khatun, Soumili Karar) 124, 3. Maharashtra (Anoushka Patil, Eshita Rewale, Riddhi Hattekar, Sara Rawool, Siddhi Hattekar) 123.166.  
**Junior: Individual: All-around:** 1. Pahal Shah (Mah) 41.366, 2. Paromita Bera (WB) 41.167, 3. Shreya Ghosh (WB) 40.667.

## Rieko tipped for the Ranquelino Cup

RACING

BENGALURU: Rieko appeals most in the Ranquelino Cup (1,400m), the main event of the races to be held here on Sunday (May 3). False rails width about 7 mts from (1,600m to the winning post) will be in position. The jockey for Versace in the first race will be declared later.

**1. ROYAL COMMAND PLATE (DIV. II), 1,400m, rated 00 to 25, 3:00 p.m.:** 1. Blue Storm (3) Pavan 61.5, 2. Anchorage (4) Md. Ashraf 60.5, 3. Versace (2) (JWDL) 60.5, 4. Anzac Parade (8) Rayan 59.5, 5. Ransomware (9) Kiran Rai 59.5, 6. LG's Script (6) Rozario 58.5, 7. Shock And Awe (1) R.N. Darshan 58, 8. Wakizashi (7) A.R. Pradeep 54 and 9. My Visionary (5) Jagadeesh 51.  
**1. LG'S SCRIPT, 2. BLUE STORM, 3. SHOCK AND AWE**

**2. BELMONT PARK PLATE (DIV. II), 1,200m, rated 20 to 45, 3:30:** 1. Mutual Trust (7) Asirvatham 61.5, 2. Night Raider (6) Arvind Kumar 58.5, 3. Peridot (3) P. Sidharaju 53, 4. Mnemosyne (9) Akshay Kumar 52.5, 5. Rightly Noble (4) J.H. Arul 52.5, 6. Tiger Bay (5) S. Shareef 52.5, 7. Allegro Dance (-) 51, 8. Honeyput (8) Arshad Alam 51 and 9. Power Pilot (1) Suhas K 51.  
**1. NIGHT RAIDER, 2. MNEMOSYNE,**

3. MUTUAL TRUST

**3. ROYAL COMMAND PLATE (DIV. I), 1,400m, rated 00 to 25, 4:00:** 1. Fils De France (4) Antony 62.5, 2. Larson (3) Arshad Alam 61.5, 3. Big Sauce (2) Pavan 61, 4. Ice Queen (1) B. Paswan 61, 5. Kazing (5) Akshay Kumar 61, 6. Stefan (8) S. Sachin 61, 7. Supreme Success (9) R.N. Darshan 61, 8. Legendary Impact (7) Suhas K 59 and 9. Breeze Bluster (6) R. Vaibhav 58.  
**1. FILS DE FRANCE, 2. KAZING 3. BIG SAUCE**

**4. BELMONT PARK PLATE (DIV. I), 1,200m, rated 20 to 45, 4:30:** 1. Sapporo (3) Pavan 62, 2. Splendid Dream (1) Shreyas 62, 3. Gloriousness (4) Prabhakaran 61.5, 4. Noble Cause (8) Rozario 60.5, 5. Ilija (9) Antony 55.5, 6. Jade Mountain (5) P. Trevor 54, 7. Lockheed (2) Kiran Rai 53.5, 8. Double Your Money (7) A. Ramu 52.5 and 9. Inicio (6) S. Sachin 52.5.  
**1. JADE MOUNTAIN, 2. SAPPORO, 3. SPLENDID DREAM**

**5. RANQUELINO CUP (1,400m), rated 60 to 85, 5:00:** 1. Don Carlos (8) Akshay Kumar 61.5, 2. Rieko (2) P. Trevor 58, 3. Crosswater (1) Aleemuddin 57.5, 4. Inspire (7) Antony 57.5, 5. Power Of Beauty (6) Rozario 57.5, 6. Dum It Again (3) Jagadeesh 55, 7. Monterio (4) J.H. Rahul 52 and 8. Prokofiev (5) Neeraj 50.5.  
**1. RIEKO, 2. PROKOFIEV, 3. POWER OF BEAUTY**

**6. WELCOME PLATE (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only (Terms), 5:30:** 1. Bulletproof (2) P. Trevor 56, 2. Knightsbridge (9) Akshay Kumar 56, 3. Panache (8) J.H. Arul 56, 4. Whistling Glory (6) J. Chinoy 56, 5. Bellucci (3) Arvind Kumar 54.5, 6. Breathtaking (1) Neeraj 54.5, 7. Estelle (11) Antony 54.5, 8. Monstera (5) Rozario 54.5, 9. Osaka (4) Suraj Narredu 54.5, 10. Pearl Star (10) K. Mukesh Kumar 54.5 and 11. Sprezzatura (7) Rayan 54.5.  
**1. BULLETPROOF, 2. BREATHTAKING, 3. BELLUCCI**

**7. SQUANDERER PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 6:00:** 1. Royal Deccan (4) Aleemuddin 62, 2. Money Bags (8) P. Trevor 60, 3. Aquamatic (12) Salman Khan 58.5, 4. Invincible (6) Kiran Rai 58, 5. Defence Counsel (9) Rayan 56.5, 6. Pole Star (10) K. Mukesh Kumar 56.5, 7. Small Dreams (1) Md. Ashraf 56, 8. Ziva (7) Suhas K 55.5, 9. Agera (2) Rozario 54, 10. Flight Of Fancy (11) Antony 53.5, 11. Lauterbrunnen (5) J.H. Arul 53.5 and 12. See The Light (3) Suraj Narredu 53.5.  
**1. FLIGHT OF FANCY, 2. SEE THE LIGHT, 3. MONEY BAGS**  
Day best: BULLETPROOF  
Double: RIEKO – FLIGHT OF FANCY  
FANCY  
Jkt: 3, 4, 5 & 6; 7; Mini Jkt: 4, 5, 6 & 7; Tr: 0, 2, 3 & 4; (1) 5, 6 & 7.

**DELIGHTED**

**Good to see Kartik's temperament and skill on show, says Fleming**



B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Kartik Sharma is a really fine player. He was expensive at the auction because other teams saw that (his ability) as well. It was good to see the temperament and skill on show. He will keep getting better and better. We are really pleased and proud of what he did today (Saturday) — CSK head coach Stephen Fleming.

**NOT GIVING UP**

**I am going to fight and I am sure the boys will as well: MI coach**



B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

It's too early for me to say (whether the MI think-tank will rest regulars like Jasprit Bumrah for the rest of IPL 2026). There's a lot more cricket to be played. I don't think we are mathematically out of the tournament. I am going to fight and I am sure the boys will as well — MI head coach Mahela Jayawardene.

**WORKING A TREAT**

**Plan was to get the Royals openers out as early as possible: Ashutosh**



SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Delhi Capitals batter Ashutosh Sharma praised pacers Mitchell Starc and Kyle Jamieson for providing a dream start against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on Friday. "The openers (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Yashviji Jaiswal) had been doing really well for Royals," Ashutosh said. "Our plan was to get them out quickly."

**HIGH PRAISE**

**Don't think I've ever been so fearful of a 15-year-old kid: Jamieson**



SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

DC pacer Kyle Jamieson spoke about his animated celebration after yorking RR opener Vaibhav Sooryavanshi during the IPL game in Jaipur on Friday. "I don't think I've ever been so fearful of a 15-year-old kid. We had obviously done a bit of planning, and it was just nice that it paid off," said the Kiwi.

# Clinical CSK completes double over MI

Kamboj and Noor excel as the hosts restrict the visitors to 159 for seven; Rituraj and Kartik take them home; the Mumbai outfit stares at an early exit

**IPL-19**

**S. Dipak Ragav**  
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings started IPL 2026 with huge question marks around its bowling unit. But after the first three matches, it has been the bowlers who have stepped up consistently, and they did so again in a vital league game against Mumbai Indians here on Saturday.

**Setting it up**  
Anshul Kamboj (three for 32) and Noor Ahmad (two for 26) headlined Super Kings' fine bowling performance, which set up a comfortable eight-wicket win for the Men in Yellow.

The bowlers' efforts helped restrict Hardik Pandya's men to just 159 for seven before Rituraj Gaikwad (67 n.o., 48b, 5x4, 2x6) led from the front, slamming his second consecutive unbeaten half-century to guide his side to its fourth win of the season.

Despite losing Sanju Samson early, Rituraj showed he meant business when he took 16 runs off Trent Boult in the third over.

The stylish batter punched regally down the ground, pulled a short delivery through mid-wicket before closing the over with a flicked six over square-leg.

**Perfect partner**

Kartik Sharma (54 n.o., 40b, 4x4, 3x6), one of CSK's costliest buys at the auction, played the second fiddle to perfection, stitching an unbroken 98-run stand for the third wicket as the hosts cantered home with 11 balls to spare.

Earlier, Ryan Rickelton (37, 24b, 5x6) got MI off to a fine start, getting to 57 for one in the PowerPlay after opting to bat first.

However, once the field



The orchestrators: Noor kept it tight besides scalping two while Rituraj led from the front in the chase. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM



**SCOREBOARD**

**MUMBAI INDIANS**  
Will Jacks c Ramakrishna b Kamboj 1 (5b), Ryan Rickelton c Urvil b Noor 37 (24b, 5x6), Naman Dhir c sub (Sarfraz) b Overton 57 (37b, 4x4, 3x6), Suryakumar Yadav c Brevis b Ramakrishna 21 (12b, 3x4, 1x6), Tilak Varma c Rituraj b Noor 5 (8b), Hardik Pandya c Brevis b Kamboj 18 (23b, 2x4), Robin Minz b Kamboj 5 (3b, 1x4), Krish Bhagat (not out) 3 (6b), Trent Boult (not out) 7 (2b, 1x6); Extras (b-2, lb-2, w-1): 5; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 159.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-1 (Jacks, 1.2 overs), 2-59 (Rickelton, 6.4), 3-99 (Suryakumar, 10.4), 4-109 (Tilak, 12.5), 5-134 (Naman, 16.5), 6-139 (Minz, 17.2), 7-151 (Hardik, 19.3).

**SUPER KINGS BOWLING**  
Mukesh 3-0-25-0, Kamboj 4-0-32-3, Prashant 2-0-25-0, Noor 4-0-26-2, Ramakrishna 3-0-24-1, Overton 4-0-23-1.

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS**  
Sanju Samson c Rickelton b Bumrah 11 (9b, 2x4), Rituraj Gaikwad (not out) 67 (48b, 5x4, 2x6), Urvil Patel b Ghazanfar 24 (12b, 2x4, 2x6), Kartik Sharma (Impact Player for Mukesh) (not out) 54 (40b, 4x4, 3x6); Extras (w-4); Total (for two wkts. in 18.1 overs): 160.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-13 (Samson, 1.6), 2-62 (Urvil, 5.4).

**MUMBAI INDIANS BOWLING**  
Boult 3.1-0-37-0, Bumrah 3-0-20-1, Krish 2-0-22-0, Ghazanfar 4-0-40-1, Raghu (Impact Player for Minz) 4-0-24-0, Hardik 2-0-17-0.

**Toss:** MI; **PoM:** Rituraj. Super Kings won by eight wickets with 11 balls to spare.

**Points table**

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Punjab Kings	8	6	1	1	13	1.043
Royal Challengers	9	6	3	0	12	1.420
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	6	3	0	12	0.832
Rajasthan Royals	10	6	4	0	12	0.510
Gujarat Titans	9	5	4	0	10	-0.192
Chennai Super Kings	9	4	5	0	8	0.005
Delhi Capitals	9	4	5	0	8	-0.895
Kolkata Knight Riders	8	2	5	1	5	-0.751
Mumbai Indians	9	2	7	0	4	-0.803
Lucknow Super Giants	8	2	6	0	4	-1.106

**Next assignment**

**MI:** May 4 vs. LSG Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.  
**CSK:** May 5 vs. DC Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

back and generating considerable bounce at a rapid pace in excess of 140 kph consistently to deny MI the final flourish.

The win ensured CSK did the double over its arch-rival and kept its playoff hopes alive, while for Mumbai, it could well be the end of the campaign.

**Impact Index**

- This is CSK's biggest win (by wickets) against MI in the IPL
- MI has lost three consecutive games against CSK in Chennai for the first time
- Kartik Sharma (20y 6d) is the second-youngest CSK batter to make an IPL fifty after Ayush Mhatre (17y 291d)
- CSK has won six of the last seven encounters against MI
- CSK has achieved the league double over MI for the third time after 2014 and '23
- As a skipper, Rituraj has not lost to Mumbai Indians (4-0)

Compiled by ANIRUDH VELAMURI

spread out, the CSK bowlers completely got on top of the visitors, stymieing their progress with Noor accounting for Rickelton and Tilak Varma. Only Naman Dhir stood tall for MI, scoring a fighting half-century 57 (37b, 4x4, 3x6), but lacked support from the other end. The rest of the Mumbai

batters were unable to settle on a pitch that progressively slowed down, scoring just 63 runs between overs seven and 15. In the back end, Jamie Overton bowled with a huge heart, bending his

# Indian team has the calibre to lift T20 WC, says Harmanpreet

**Amol Karhadkar**  
MUMBAI

India may have fallen well short in the 2024 edition, but Harmanpreet Kaur is leaving little room for doubt about her team's ambitions ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England, starting June 12.

Following a historic ODI World Cup triumph at home, Harmanpreet did not hesitate in backing her side as one of the frontrunners.

"The team that we have finalised has the calibre to become champion. No pressure or extra burden or over-confidence since T20 cricket is all about doing well on that particular day," she said minutes after the squad announcement on Saturday.

The selection meeting, chaired by Amita Sharma and attended by head coach Amol Muzumdar, reflected a preference for balance.

**Radha gets the nod**

All-rounder Radha Yadav was picked ahead of Sneha Rana, while injuries forced changes to the pace reserves.

Amanjot Kaur's back injury and Kashvee Gautam's knee issue meant rookie

Nandani Sharma was drafted in as a back-up seamer.

"Amanjot was replaced by Kashvee. She also got injured (in the series against South Africa), so she has been replaced by Nandani. It's difficult to replace Amanjot. We still have high hopes," Amita said.

India is grouped with Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Netherlands — a challenging pool that will test its depth and renewed belief.

**The squads: For the three-match T20I series in England and World Cup:**

Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-capt.), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Bharti Fulmali, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wk), Sree Charani, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Nandani Sharma, Renuka Singh Thakur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Shreyanka Patil, Radha Yadav.

**For the one-off Test at Lord's (July 10-13):**

Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-capt.), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Pratika Rawal, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wk), Sree Charani, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Nandani Sharma, Harleen Deol, Renuka Thakur, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare, Sneha Rana.

**India's World Cup schedule (group stage):**

**June 14:** vs. Pakistan (Birmingham); **June 17:** Netherlands (Leeds); **June 21:** South Africa (Manchester); **June 25:** Bangladesh (Manchester); **June 28:** Australia (Lord's).

# Arsenal routs Fulham to pull six clear of City

**EURO LEAGUES**

**Agence France-Presse**  
LONDON

Viktor Gyokeres and Bukayo Saka starred in Arsenal's 3-0 win against Fulham on Saturday as the Premier League leader moved a step closer to its first title in 22 years.

Mikel Arteta's Arsenal demolished a woeful Fulham with a three-goal first half blitz at the Emirates Stadium. The Gunners' second successive league victory lifted them six points clear of second-placed Manchester City.

Pep Guardiola's men have two games in hand, with the first of those at Everton on Monday.

In LaLiga, Atletico Madrid rested most of its starters but got goals from two debutants as it won 2-0 at Valencia on Saturday.



Gyokeres. REUTERS

**The results: Premier League:** Arsenal 3 (Gyokeres 9, 45+4, Saka 40) bt Fulham 0; Brentford 3 (Mavropanos 15-og, Thiago 54-pen, Damsgaard 82) bt West Ham 0; Newcastle 3 (Osula 12, Burn 24, Barnes 90+5) bt Brighton 1 (Hishelwood 61). **LaLiga:** Villarreal 5 (Mikautadze 38, 68, Moleiro 62, Buchanan 87, Pepe 90) bt Levante 1 (Espil 51); Valencia 0 lost to Atletico Madrid 2 (Luque 74, Cubo 82). **Bundesliga:** Bayern Munich 3 (Goretzka 44, 57, Olise 90+10) drew with Heidenheim 3 (Zivizvadze 22, 76, Dinkci 31); Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Schick 25, 76, 90, Tella 45) bt RB Leipzig 1 (Baumgartner 80).

# Popov siblings to the fore as France blows away India's challenge

**Press Trust of India**  
HORSENS (DENMARK)

The Popov brothers — Christo and Toma Junior — came up with impressive performances to help France overpower India 3-0 in the semifinals of the Thomas Cup here on Saturday.

Christo and Alex Lanier posted contrasting victories before Toma Junior won the third match to send France into the final of the premier team event for the first time-ever.

**Smooth start**

After Christo had it easy against Ayush Shetty in the opening match, World No. 10 Lanier got the better of



Three musketeers: Christo, Lanier and Toma Junior were in dominant form. GETTY IMAGES

K. Srikanth in straight games to give France a 2-0 cushion. After Ayush suffered a heavy loss to world No. 4 Christo in the opening sin-

gles, all eyes were on Srikanth to restore parity, but the former world No. 1 went down fighting 16-21, 18-21. Ayush, drafted into the

opening singles with Lakshya Sen nursing a swollen right elbow, lost 11-21, 9-21 in 39 minutes. In the third match of the tie, Christo's elder sibling

Toma Junior held off the challenge of H.S. Prannoy 21-19, 21-16 to spark on-court celebrations from his teammates and the coaching staff.

France will take on China, a 3-0 winner against Denmark, for the title.

**Injury woes for Lakshya**

A swollen right elbow ruled Lakshya out of the semifinal clash. The 24-year-old Lakshya had saved two match-points to script a win over World No. 6 Chou Tien Chen in a marathon clash lasting against Taiwan in the quarterfinals on Friday. However, the Commonwealth Games champion hurt his elbow while diving

for a shot during an intense rally.

India was assured of a medal after reaching the semifinals.

The country had won the title in 2022, besides claiming bronze medals in 1952, 1955 and 1979.

**Second reverse**

Ayush, who had been on a rampaging run in this tournament, suffered his second loss to Christo, having also gone down in their only previous meeting at the Hylo Open in 2024.

**The results: Semifinal: France bt India 3-0** (Christo Popov bt Ayush 21-11, 21-9; Lanier bt Srikanth 21-16, 21-18; Toma Junior bt Prannoy 21-19, 21-16).

# KKR may need near-flawless display to stop in-form SRH

After a poor start, Rahane's men have bounced back with two successive wins; the Hyderabad side, powered by its explosive batters, is on a five-match winning streak

IPL-19

Anirudh Velamuri  
HYDERABAD

A red-hot Sunrisers Hyderabad will look to strengthen its playoff chances when it faces a resurgent Kolkata Knight Riders in a Sunday afternoon clash at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here.

SRH enters the contest after stitching a five-match winning streak powered - unsurprisingly - by its explosive batters.

The Hyderabad side has made chasing down daunting targets with ease a habit, with Mumbai Indians and Rajasthan Royals at the receiving end in recent weeks.

While Abhishek Sharma and Heinrich Klaasen have justifiably grabbed the headlines, the return to form of Travis Head bolsters an already formidable line-up. With the likes of Nitish Kumar adding depth, SRH has slowly found its footing as one of the complete batting units in the competition.

Sunrisers' bowling is also beginning to hold its own, despite conditions heavily favouring batters. The return of skipper Pat



**Intriguing battle:** Southee and Vettori will match wits when Knight Riders and Sunrisers cross swords while Rinku, who has put Kolkata back on the rails, will be eager to fire again. NAGARA GOPAL



Cummins brings in big-tournament experience and control, while the support cast has chipped in effectively.

KKR, meanwhile, arrives with renewed momentum. After a difficult start (five defeats, including a 65-run thrashing by SRH, and a washout), the Kolkata team has steadied itself to an extent with

back-to-back wins.

Captain Ajinkya Rahane has been under the microscope, with his dwindling returns, especially in the last few games, compounding KKR's problems.

Matheesha Pathirana's availability has boosted a depleted pace attack. The below-par performances of spin twins Varun Chakravarthy and Sunil Narine,

however, have been a concern. How the experienced duo handles SRH's high-octane batting could well determine the outcome of the contest.

Despite a statistical head-to-head advantage (20 wins in 31 games), KKR needs to be near flawless if it has to leave the Sunrisers' backyard with two points in hand.



**Key personnel:** While PBKS needs its bowlers like Arshdeep to fire, GT will once again bank on Gill to provide the batting impetus.

VIJAY SONEJI



## GT will look to build on two successive wins as it faces table-topper PBKS

Abhishek Saini  
AHMEDABAD

A resurgent Gujarat Titans will be keen on extending its winning run and solidifying its Playoffs bid when it hosts Punjab Kings at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Sunday.

Two consecutive wins have nudged GT to the brink of the top four, and in toppling defending champion Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Thursday, it got the tailwind it needed before facing the table-topper.

Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj have disrupted teams consistently in the early overs. Rabada is the most successful bowler in the PowerPlay this year with 10 wickets.

Siraj has six wickets but

### Today's matches

	VS	
Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.		
<b>HEAD-TO-HEAD</b>		
Played: 31		
SRH 11		KKR 20
<b>PREVIOUS MEETING</b>		
SRH won by 65 runs, 2026		

	VS	
Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.		
<b>HEAD-TO-HEAD</b>		
Played: 7		
GT 3		PBKS 4
<b>PREVIOUS MEETING</b>		
PBKS won by three wickets, 2026		

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 &amp; JIHOTSTAR

his economy of 6.95 is the second-best by any bowler (min. 60 balls bowled) in this phase.

"Rabada is clicking so well up front, Siraj has found his rhythm. So, when you have these two bowlers bowling six overs for you up front, the PowerPlay is hardly going for runs. That's why we are

able to restrict other teams to 160-170," said Aashish Kapoor, GT's spin-bowling coach.

### Daunting task

Two wickets for 19 runs in the last match would instill enough confidence in Rashid Khan to take on the daunting task of tying down Shreyas Iyer.

GT's batting, still unable to find a fix for its long-standing middle-order snag, does not look as well-rounded as its bowling.

Last season, the top three of Shubman Gill, B. Sai Sudharsan, and Jos Butler contributed more than 70% of the side's runs.

This year too, their combined haul is nearly 68%.

PBKS' only concern has been its bowling lapses.

It concedes at 10.86 during the field restrictions and has just nine wickets in this phase, both among the bottom four in the league.

Conceding totals in excess of 220, like its last two games, is unlikely on Pitch No. 5, and PBKS would hope to put on a better show before its bowling lapses snowball into a bigger crisis.

## IN BRIEF



### Former F1 driver, Paralympic champion Zanardi dies at 59

Former Formula One driver Alex Zanardi, who lost both legs in a racing crash and went on to win Paralympic gold medals, has died at the age of 59, his family said on Saturday. Zanardi, from Bologna, made his F1 debut in 1991 and later achieved success in the CART series in the USA, winning back-to-back championships in 1997 and 1998. In September 2001, he was involved in a high-speed crash during a CART race in Germany that led to the amputation of both legs. Zanardi then turned to para-cycling. He won four golds and two silver at 2012 London and 2016 Rio Games.

### India-A women's squads for tour of England announced

The BCCI women's selection committee has picked the India-A squads for the T20 and ODI series against England-A. The tour will have three T20Is beginning on June 20, followed by as many one-day matches from July 1.

**The squads: T20s:** Anushka Sharma (Capt.), Vrinda Dinesh (Vice-capt.), G. Kamalini (wk), Uma Chetry, Vaishnavi Sharma, Prema Rawat, Purvaja Verlekar, Jintimani Kalita, Saima Thakor, Simran Bahadur, Shweta Sehrawat, Deeya Yadav, Minnu Mani, Shabnam Shakil, Tanuja Kanwar. **One-dayers:** Harleen Deol (Capt.), Pratika Rawal (Vice-capt.), Priya Punia, Tanisha Singh, G. Kamalini (wk), Uma Chetry (wk), Tejal Hasabnis, Niki Prasad, Prema Rawat, Tanuja Kanwar, Vaishnavi Sharma, Shabnam Shakil, Sayali Satghare, Jintimani Kalita, Saima Thakor.

### Dhamne makes his maiden ATP Challenger final

Manas Dhamne stormed into his maiden ATP Challenger final with a 6-4, 6-3 win over France's Antoine Ghisbano in Shymkent on Saturday.

### Australia beats India in U-17 Women's Asian Cup

India lost 0-2 to Australia in its opening group match of the AFC U-17 Women's Asian Cup football tournament at Suzhou on Saturday.

**The result:** India 0 lost to Australia 2 (Theodora Mouithys 25, Abhista Basnett 59-og).

## The PBKS bowling attack will bounce back, says Ferguson

S. Shrivathsan

Punjab Kings may be riding the crest of a wave in the ongoing IPL season, but the table-topper has shown that it is still very much a project in progress.

The bowling needs urgent addressing, for it has leaked runs at an alarming rate. In seven completed matches, PBKS has conceded 200 or more on five occasions and a 190-plus total once, numbers that could cause worry in the camp.

While high-scoring games have become the norm - courtesy pitches tailor-made for willow-wielders - the execution of the Kings bowlers has attracted unwanted attention. But pace firebrand Lockie Ferguson backed the group to come back stronger.

"We have to take the good with the bad at times



**Breathing fire:** Ferguson is capable of inflicting damage in the middle overs. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and roll with the punches. Sometimes it will work out and sometimes it will not. I am sure the boys will bounce back, and we look forward to that challenge," Ferguson said during a vir-

tual interaction ahead of the fixture against Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on Sunday.

"In the IPL, we know how small margins can look a lot bigger on TV. We

know the skillsets we have in this bowling attack, led by Arshdeep [Singh] and Yuzi (Yuzvendra Chahal). We are trying to make little adjustments, tighten up areas, and double down on our planning."

The PBKS bowlers have scalped only 36 thus far, so wicket-taking is another sector that requires refinement.

"There is no doubt that we are always trying to execute better. You go through phases of not having success and you also go through phases of having success. We are trying to get into that phase of having success," said the New Zealand international.

"The boys are working extremely hard, and you cannot fault any of the work that is being done behind the scenes," added the 34-year-old Ferguson. Will the toil result in triumph?

## BFI tweaks assessment framework for selections

Sports Bureau  
KOLKATA

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has reworked its assessment framework, switching from round robin to knockout format in sparring bouts, to select boxers for important events.

While waiting for the Sports Authority of India's approval to induct 40 finalists of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Cup in the National camp, the BFI said the assessment would be done in two phases in the run-up to the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, World Cup Stage-2 and other international events. Strength and conditioning tests will be held on May 6 and 7, followed by sparring bouts from

May 11 to 15. Final standings across weight categories will be decided after sparring.

The evaluation, to be done by a panel of evaluators, will carry 200 marks, combining both technical and non-technical parameters including attendance, weight management, health management, international potential and strength and conditioning.

The framework will also consider recent performances, including results from the COAS Cup.

The top-four in Olympic weights and top-two in non-Olympic weights will be part of the National camp. There were complaints from some boxers after the first assessment held earlier this year for the Asian championships.

## SC Delhi rues missed chances in goalless draw against Punjab

ISL

Vivek Krishnan  
NEW DELHI

The support for Sporting Club Delhi and Punjab FC, though sparse in number, seemed to be evenly split in Saturday's Indian Super League encounter at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, a venue that operates as the home base for both teams. The equation on the field of play was similar, with little to separate the two outfits at the end of a goalless draw.

Neither side showed the finesse required in the final third to grab a victory. SC Delhi should be a little more disappointed with the result given that it had the better opportunities.



**Wasteful:** Sporting Club and Punjab FC players were guilty of missing chances. ISL

Punjab came closest to scoring in the 15th minute. When Manglenthang Kipgen took a left-footed shot from outside the 18-yard box and drew a save from Delhi's Nora Fernandes in goal, the rebound fell kind-

ly to Nsungusi Effiong, who failed to score.

**The result:** Sporting Club Delhi 0 drew with Punjab FC 0. **At Guwahati:** NorthEast United FC 3 (Jithin 45+2, Andy 63-pen, Parthib 90) bt Inter Kashi 2 (Llamas 71, Asif Khan 82).

## Joy for Norris in Miami as McLaren ends Mercedes' run

Agence France-Presse  
MIAMI

World champion Lando Norris beamed in the Florida sunshine on Friday after steering his upgraded McLaren to pole position for Saturday's sprint race at the Miami Grand Prix.

The 26-year-old Briton made the most of the extensive upgrades on his car to outpace Mercedes' Italian teenager Kimi Antonelli and end Mercedes' early season domination.

McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri was a close third ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, four-time Max Verstappen of Red Bull and early season leader George Russell of Mercedes.



**Hands and nets:** Traditional fishermen haul in nets along the coast in Visakhapatnam, continuing age-old practices even as mechanised fishing remains suspended to protect marine breeding. K. R. DEEPAK



**Scarce catch:** Fish prices have surged during the 61-day annual ban, as limited nearshore catch by country boats struggles to meet demand after mechanised vessels were taken off the waters from April 15. N. RAJESH



**Waiting tides:** Traditional catamarans line the Bay of Bengal coast, venturing out in the absence of trawlers, as small-scale fishermen continue to rely on nearshore waters during the ban. K.R. DEEPAK



**Shallow hopes:** Off Kasimedu fishing harbour in Chennai, small-boat fishermen continue to fish in shallow waters, sustaining livelihoods despite restrictions on larger fishing vessels. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

# Ban season, but the catch holds

Even as the annual fishing ban remains in force, some fishermen are sustaining livelihoods within permitted limits; using small fish as bait, they are landing high-value catch and earning during the ban

**L**ast year, India's long coastline yielded an estimated 3.57 million tonnes of marine fish, brought ashore by lakhs of fishermen, a 3% increase from 3.47 million tonnes in 2024.

But this fishing is not done mindlessly. Every year, fishermen wait for 61 days to protect fish during peak spawning season, allowing fish populations to breed. Along the East Coast, from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu, fishing is suspended from April 15 to June 16, while the West Coast observes the ban from June 1 to July 31. This uniform ban was implemented based on the recommendation of experts, in consultation with coastal States and Union Territories.

During this period, fishermen spend their days watching the sea, chatting about fish and the winds, repairing boats, and removing molluscs from hulls. In some States, non-mechanised crafts are allowed to fish close to shore; in others, such as Andhra Pradesh, all fishing activity is banned. Fish from other coasts are usually transported to regions under the ban.

Even as the annual ban remains in force along the Visakhapatnam coast, a small section of

fishermen has found ways to sustain their livelihoods within the permitted limits.

The ban restricts deep-sea fishing by mechanised and motorised boats. In the coastal city of Visakhapatnam, it is a crucial conservation measure, but one that leaves thousands of fishing families without regular income for weeks. Some, however, are making the most of the limited relaxation that allows them to venture only a short distance into the sea.

Near the Dolphin Nose area, fishermen begin their day by sourcing small fish from boats operating close to shore. These are used as bait as they cautiously move further inside the water, staying within the officially permitted range.

This technique has yielded surprising results for the fishermen for the past few days. Fishermen report catching high-value species such as 'Kommu Konam' and a few others, with each fish fetching up to ₹25,000 in the market. For many, what is typically a difficult period has become an opportunity to earn a decent income.

**Idle fleet:** Mechanised boats lie idle along the shore at Jalaripeta Fishing Colony. K.R. DEEPAK





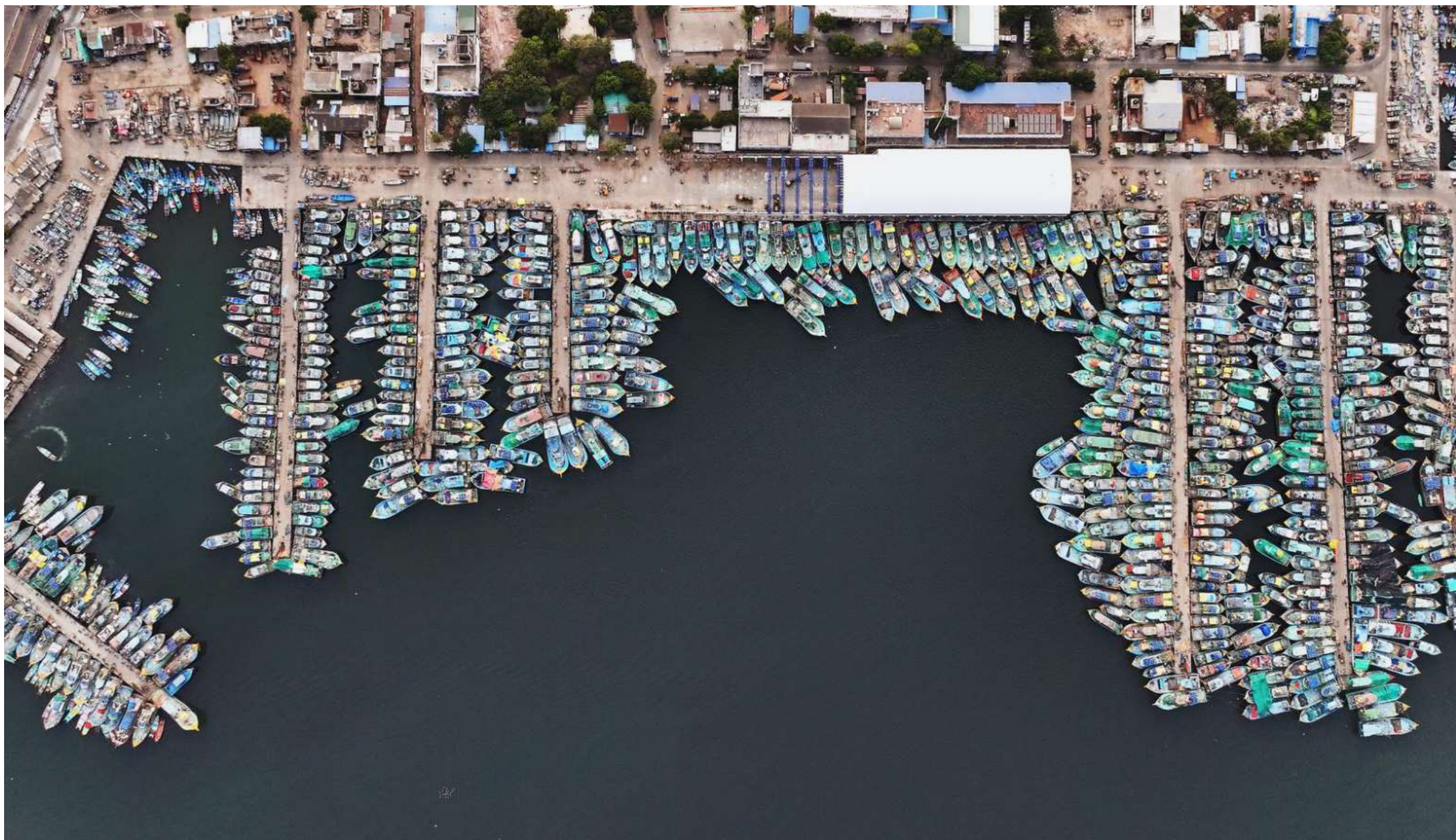
**Rare haul:** An unusually large tuna catch by catamaran fishermen is kept submerged at the harbour jetty in Visakhapatnam ahead of auction. The fish fetch ₹15,000-₹20,000 per piece amid high demand. K. R. DEEPAK



**Rising rates:** With supply limited to small-scale catches, fish markets are witnessing sharp price rises during the ban period. N. RAJESH



**Small break:** At Kasimedu, technicians repair and service mechanised boats, as fishermen use the break for maintenance and upgrades. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM



**At anchor:** Rows of mechanised boats remain moored at Kasimedu harbour in Chennai, marking a pause in deep-sea fishing activity. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM



**Mending time:** In Pamban, fishermen carry out repair work on their mechanised boats. L. BALACHANDAR