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ENGLISH DAILY

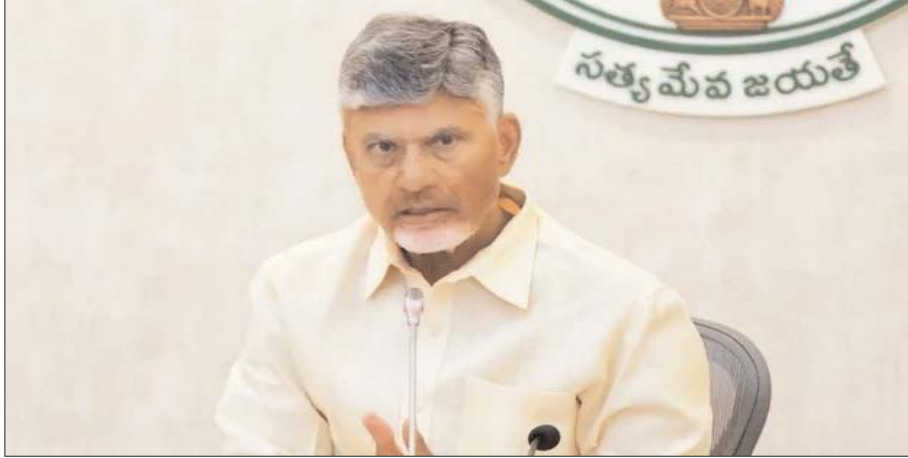
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## CM Chandrababu Naidu Emphasizes Data-Driven Governance at RTG Review Meeting in Amaravati



(By Our Staff Reporter) Amaravati, April 13: A high-level Real Time Governance (RTG) review meeting was held at the Secretariat under the chairmanship of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, focusing on strengthening data-driven decision-making in governance. The meeting took place at the RTGS Conference Hall in the Velagapudi

Secretariat, where the Chief Minister conducted a comprehensive review of the performance of the Real Time Governance System (RTGS). Senior officials, including secretaries from key departments, and representatives from Finance, Planning, and Welfare departments, actively participated in the discussions. During the meeting, the Chief Minister highlighted

the growing importance of leveraging data and technology in effective governance. He stressed that modern governance systems must rely on real-time data, analytics, and technological integration to ensure better policy implementation and public service delivery. A key topic of discussion was the development of a centralized "data lake," (Contd. on pg.2)



New Delhi, April 13 : Andhra Pradesh Minister for Human Resources Development Nara Lokesh, along with NDA MPs from the state called on President Droupadi Murmu here on Monday to thank for approving the Bill passed by the Parliament to give statutory recognition to Amaravati as the sole and

permanent capital of the state. Minister Lokesh said on social media platform X that it was a privilege to meet President Murmu and convey the heartfelt gratitude of crores of people of Andhra Pradesh for approving the Bill that notifies Amaravati as the state capital. (Contd. on pg.2)

## Asha Bhosle cremated with full state honours at Mumbai's iconic Shivaji Park



Mumbai, April 13 : The curtains fell on a golden era of Indian music as the legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle was cremated with full state honours on Monday at Mumbai's iconic Shivaji Park. 'Asha Tai', as she was affectionately known, passed away on Sunday, April 12, at the age of 92 due to multi-organ failure following a cardiac arrest.

She had been admitted to Breach Candy Hospital a day earlier as she was suffering from extreme exhaustion and a chest infection. The Maharashtra government accorded the veteran singer a state funeral, a tribute reserved for those who have made monumental contributions to the nation. (Contd. on pg.2)

## Women's participation will be biggest guarantee for our bright future: PM Modi at Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam event

New Delhi, April 13 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that growing public discussion around women's representation reflects the strength of Indian democracy, asserting that the Nari Shakti Vandan initiative will give "new wings" to the aspirations of women across the country. He also stated that women's participation in decision-making will be the



"biggest guarantee for our bright future." Addressing the Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan at Vigyan Bhawan, the Prime Minister said, "I am seeing that in the last few days, women have been vocal about this issue. An extensive debate is ongoing in the country. It is the strength of the democracy that new wings are about to be given to all your (Contd. on pg.2)

## SC refuses to quash land-for-jobs case against Lalu Prasad Yadav



New Delhi, April 13 : The Supreme Court on Monday declined to quash the CBI FIR and charge sheets against RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav in connection with the alleged land-for-jobs scam. A bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and N. Kotiswar Singh, while disposing of Yadav's plea challenging the Delhi High Court order refusing to quash the corruption case, granted him liberty to raise legal objections during trial and exempted him from personal appearance

before the trial court. "After hearing senior counsel for the parties, the issue pertaining to whether the application of the provision is prospective or retrospective is left open. Liberty is granted to the petitioner to raise the issue at the time of trial," the Justice Sundresh-led Bench said. The apex court clarified that it was not expressing any view on the contentious issue relating to the applicability of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption (Contd. on pg.2)

## NATO Allies reject US plan to Block Strait of Hormuz amid rising Iran tensions



New Delhi, April 13 : As tensions between the United States and Iran reach a critical stage, key NATO allies have declined to support a proposed American plan to impose a naval blockade in the Strait of Hormuz. The move, reportedly pushed by former US President Donald Trump, has exposed growing divisions between Washington

and its European partners. According to reports, the proposal came after peace talks in Islamabad failed to produce a breakthrough. Following the stalled negotiations, Trump suggested that the US military, along with allied nations, could take steps to block maritime traffic to Iranian ports through the strategically

## AP Govt Makes NIDHI Portal Mandatory for Pension Processing from May 1

By Skyline Staff Reporter Amaravati, April 13: The Andhra Pradesh government has taken another significant step towards enhancing transparency and reducing delays in the pension sanction process by mandating a fully digital system. As per the latest orders, all pension cases across the state will henceforth be processed exclusively through the NIDHI (RBPS) portal from May 1, 2026, effectively bringing an end to the existing paper-based application system. The government has also set a clear deadline for the



transition. Officials will accept physical pension applications only until April 30, 2026. Any applications submitted after this date will not be con-

sidered in paper form and must be filed online through the NIDHI portal. To ensure a smooth transition, authorities have been (Contd. on pg.2)

## AP Government introduces strict timelines for Cabinet meetings to boost transparency

By Skyline Staff Reporter Amaravati, April 13: The Andhra Pradesh government has introduced key reforms to enhance transparency, efficiency, and timeliness in the conduct of State Cabinet meetings. The new guidelines set clear deadlines for the preparation of Cabinet agendas and submission of proposals by various departments. As per the latest orders, all ministers and departmental officials must submit their proposals, known as Cabinet Memos, by 11:00 AM on the day prior to the



scheduled Cabinet meeting. The government has made it clear that any proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for inclusion in the Cabinet agenda. Once proposals are submitted, the agenda will be finalized only after approval by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. However, in exceptional or urgent situations, certain matters may still be introduced at the last minute as "Table Items," but only with the Chief Minister's approval. (Contd. on pg.2)

## Key Decisions Taken at Durgagudi Governing Council Meeting in Vijayawada



By Skyline Staff Reporter Vijayawada, April 13: The Governing Council meeting of the Kanaka Durga Temple (Durgagudi) concluded with discussions on 37

key agenda items, focusing primarily on improving facilities for devotees and strengthening temple administration. Speaking to the media after the meeting,

Durgagudi Chairman Borra Radhakrishna said that several important decisions were taken to enhance the experience of devotees visiting the temple. It was decided to install television screens both in queue lines and inside the temple premises so that devotees can watch the goddess's puja rituals while waiting. He noted that donors have come forward to sponsor these TV installations. The Chairman also announced that the temple authorities are planning to (Contd. on pg.2)

## Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha Reviews Arrangements for Simhachalam Chandanotsavam

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam April 13: State Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha Simhadri visited Appanna Swamy. The temple authorities gave her a grand welcome with temple etiquette. After the darshan of the Swamy, Vedic scholars offered their blessings. The Home Minister inspected the arrangements for the Appanna Swamyvari Chandanotsavam to be held on the 20th of this month. She conducted a review with the authorities on infrastructure, parking and traffic management to ensure that devotees do not face any difficulties and made several suggestions. He instructed the police to take preventive measures to avoid traffic problems. He also advised that NDRF and SDRF teams should



be ready at the temple to deal with emergencies. He said that continuous monitoring should be done from the command control room through CCTV cameras and if necessary, AI technology should be used. He advised that a large number of ORS packets should be



made available for devotees. The minister said on this occasion that the Chandanotsavam is a unique event. He said that on this occasion, devotees from across the state will gather in large numbers to have a real darshan of the

Lord. Last year, about 1.2 lakh devotees attended and it is estimated that about 2 lakh people are likely to come this time. He said that keeping in mind the convenience of the devotees, facilities like medical camps, (Contd. on pg.2)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## CM Chandrababu Naidu Emphasizes Data-Driven Governance at RTG Review Meeting in Amaravati

The meeting took place at the RTGS Conference Hall in the Velagapudi Secretariat, where the Chief Minister conducted a comprehensive review of the performance of the Real Time Governance System (RTGS). Senior officials, including secretaries from key departments, and representatives from Finance, Planning, and Welfare departments, actively participated in the discussions.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister highlighted the growing importance of leveraging data and technology in effective governance. He stressed that modern governance systems must rely on real-time data, ana-

lytics, and technological integration to ensure better policy implementation and public service delivery. A key topic of discussion was the development of a centralized "data lake," which aims to integrate data from multiple departments into a single platform. This initiative is expected to enhance data accessibility, enable real-time monitoring, and support informed decision-making across various government sectors. Officials also deliberated on advanced data analytics tools and methodologies that can be utilized to derive actionable insights from large volumes of data. The Chief Minister

emphasized that the use of technology in governance needs to be further expanded and institutionalized. He noted that data-driven governance not only improves transparency but also enhances efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness in public administration. Representatives from key organizations such as the Real Time Governance Society (RTGS), Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Limited (APSFL), and technology partners including Digital Corporation, Tricore, and Vasar Labs participated in the meeting. Their inputs

focused on strengthening digital infrastructure and improving analytical capabilities within government systems. Officials from the Anna Canteen Trust and the Grama-Ward Secretariats (GSWS) were also present and shared insights on how data can be effectively used to monitor welfare schemes and grassroots-level service delivery. The Chief Minister directed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure seamless data sharing and integration. He underlined that inter-departmental collaboration is crucial for maximizing the benefits of data analytics and achieving better

governance outcomes. He further advised officials to adopt a proactive approach in using data for decision-making rather than relying solely on conventional administrative methods. By integrating technology and analytics into everyday governance processes, the government aims to deliver more targeted and efficient services to the public. The meeting concluded with a strong emphasis on transforming Andhra Pradesh into a model state for data-driven governance, with RTGS playing a central role in enabling real-time monitoring and informed policy decisions.

## Asha Bhosle cremated with full state honours at Mumbai's iconic Shivaji Park

The ceremony mirrored the farewell given to her elder sister, the late Lata Mangeshkar, at the same historic ground. Her mortal remains were kept at her residence in Lower Parel, from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. to allow fans and celebrities to pay their last respects.

Thousands of emotional fans lined the streets of Mumbai as the funeral procession made its way to Dadar. At around 5 P.M., amid a somber atmosphere, she was cremated with a 21-gun salute and a guard of honour by the Maharashtra Police. Political leaders including Chief

Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Pawar, ministers Chhagan Bhujbal, Ashish Shelar, Bharat Gogawale, Sanjay Shirsat, MNS chief Raj Thackeray and Shiv Sena UBT MP Anil Desai, were among those who were present at the funeral to pay their final respects. Further, Bollywood superstars including Amir Khan also attended the cremation. They expressed their profound grief over the loss of the "most versatile voice" in music history. "Deeply saddened by the passing of Asha

Bhosle Ji. Her extraordinary musical journey, spanning decades, enriched our cultural heritage and touched countless hearts across the world," said Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his condolence message. From the film industry, stars including Shah Rukh Khan, A.R. Rahman, and Hema Malini shared heartfelt tributes, describing her as an "irreplaceable pillar" of Indian cinema. With a career spanning over eight decades, Asha Bhosle's statistics are as staggering as her talent. Recognised by the Guinness World Records as the most

recorded artist in music history, with over 12,000 songs, she mastered everything, from classical ghazals and soulful melodies like 'Dil Cheez Kya Hai' to high-energy pop hits like 'Dum Maro Dum'. She was also a recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Padma Vibhushan, and two National Film Awards. The void left by Asha Bhosle's passing is immense, but as her fans often say, she will live forever through the timeless magic of her voice.

## SC refuses to quash land-for-jobs case against Lalu Prasad Yadav

Act, which mandates prior sanction for initiating investigation against public servants for acts done in discharge of official duties. It further observed that the impugned order of the Delhi High Court refusing to quash the matter would not preclude the petitioner from raising the legal contention before the trial court.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Yadav, contended that prior sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act was mandatory before initiation of investigation since the allegations related to acts purportedly done by Yadav in discharge of his official

functions as the then Union Railway Minister. He contended that prior sanction was mandatory at the stage of investigation itself and that the absence of such approval rendered the entire proceedings illegal. Opposing the plea, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S.V. Raju submitted that Section 17A would apply only where the accused was the decision-making or recommending authority. He argued that Yadav did not fall within that category and, therefore, no prior approval was required. During the hearing, the Justice Suresh-led Bench expressed reservations over

the CBI's submission, observing that the question of influence exercised by a person holding the highest office in the ministry could not be brushed aside merely because no formal recommendation was made on record. However, the top court refrained from adjudicating on the merits of the rival submissions and left the issue open to be decided during trial. The development comes after the Delhi High Court had earlier dismissed Yadav's petition to quash the FIR, charge sheets, and cognisance orders, observing that the plea was devoid of merit. The case pertains to allegations that

appointments in the Indian Railways were made in exchange for the transfer of land parcels to the family members and associates of the former Railway Minister. The CBI had registered the case in May 2022 against Lalu Prasad Yadav and several others, including his wife and former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi, along with other family members and unidentified public servants. Subsequently, charge sheets were filed against multiple accused persons under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

## Andhra minister Lokesh meets President Murmu, thanks her for approving Amaravati Bill

Nara Lokesh, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) General Secretary, noted that President Murmu graciously acknowledged the extraordinary resilience and sacrifice of our farmers, and the steadfast leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu in bringing long-awaited clarity on the state capital.

"I also had the honour of presenting her (President Droupadi Murmu) a coffee table book that captures Amaravati's jour-

ney and the inspiring story of our farmers' struggle," Minister Lokesh, who is also the son of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, said. "A delegation from Andhra Pradesh, comprising Union Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Andhra Pradesh Minister of Education and IT Nara Lokesh, and Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha members of the state, called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati

Bhavan," a social media post from the official X account of the Rashtrapati Bhavan said. President Murmu on April 6 gave her assent to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which was passed by the Parliament. The same day the Union government issued a gazette notification, giving Amaravati the statutory status as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh. The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation

(Amendment) Act, 2026, amended the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. The Parliament on April 2 gave its final approval to the Amendment Bill, officially designating Amaravati. The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill through a voice vote, a day after the Lok Sabha cleared it. After the Parliament passed the Bill, Minister Lokesh along with NDA MPs had met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to thank him.

## Women's participation will be biggest guarantee for our bright future: PM Modi

dreams. There is a positive atmosphere across the nation. From the Independence struggle to the decisions of the Constituent Assembly, India's Nari Shakti has made an unlimited contribution." He highlighted the contributions of women leaders in the post-Independence era, stating that those who assumed leadership roles brought distinction to their positions.

"Even after Independence, the women who got the opportunity to lead did wonderful work for the nation. From the post of the President to the Prime Minister, no matter where the women served, they made a different legacy for themselves. Even

today, important posts like the President and the Finance Minister are also being held by women. These women have taken forward the dignity and legacy of the nation," he added. The Prime Minister noted that more than 14 lakh women are currently working in local governance institutions across India, underlining their growing role in grassroots democracy.

"In many studies, it has been observed that when women's participation in decision-making processes increases, it brings greater sensitivity to the system. This is a very important strength. As a result, in areas such as water, education, health, and nutrition,

more dedicated, sensitive, and effective work has been done. I believe the Jal Jeevan Mission is the biggest example of this success, in which women's participation at the panchayat level has played a very important role," he said. Emphasising the importance of women's participation in the journey towards achieving the resolution of Viksit Bharat, PM Modi said, "The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam is going to become a major opportunity in the lives of all such women. Now, their journey from the panchayat level to Parliament will become even easier."

Highlighting various government

initiatives aimed at women's welfare, the Prime Minister said efforts have been made to support women at different stages of life. He mentioned that the Centre has taken several initiatives in this direction -- the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Mission Indradhanush, Sainik Schools and opening paths to National Defence Academy, Ujjwala Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, etc. Calling for broader political support, the Prime Minister urged lawmakers to act in consensus for the benefit of women.

"I request my fellow Members of

Parliament to take the right decisions in the interest of women and to do so with consensus. Friends, I have one more request for you. Please take the discussions of the Nari Shakti Vandan programme to every village in the country. Through personal interactions, social media, and other means of communication, we must ensure that this major decision of the country reaches every woman in the nation," he said. "We will all come together and take this pledge that women will have their rights and will fully participate in the decision-making process. This is the biggest guarantee of our bright future," he added.

## NATO Allies reject US plan to Block Strait of Hormuz amid rising Iran tensions

vital Strait of Hormuz. However, major NATO countries, including United Kingdom and France, have clearly distanced themselves from the plan. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer emphasized that their priority is to ensure the free flow of trade through the strait rather than escalate tensions through a blockade. The Strait of Hormuz, located between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, is one of the world's most critical energy corridors. Nearly 20% of global oil supplies pass through this narrow waterway. Any disruption, especially a complete

blockade, could trigger a severe global energy crisis, leading to soaring fuel prices and economic instability worldwide. European nations appear to be taking a cautious approach, focusing on maintaining stability in global trade routes. By rejecting the blockade proposal, they aim to prevent further escalation of the conflict and avoid direct military involvement in the region. The US plan reportedly involves intercepting and halting ships bound for Iranian ports, effectively cutting off Iran's oil exports. Such a move could significantly weaken Iran's economy

but also risks provoking a strong response, potentially intensifying the conflict into a broader regional war. With NATO allies unwilling to back the proposal, the United States may be forced to act unilaterally if it chooses to proceed. This situation highlights growing differences within NATO on handling the Iran crisis and raises concerns about unity within the alliance. As the situation unfolds, the world watches closely, with fears that any miscalculation in the Strait of Hormuz could have far-reaching geopolitical and economic consequences.

## AP Govt Makes NIDHI Portal Mandatory for Pension Processing from May 1

instructed to clear all pending physical applications by forwarding them to the respective offices before the April 30 deadline. This move is aimed at preventing backlog issues and ensuring that all existing cases are integrated into the new system without delay. The introduction of the

digital platform is expected to significantly improve the efficiency and speed of pension processing. One of the key advantages of the system is that applicants will be able to track the status of their pension files online in real time. This eliminates the need for repeated visits to government offices and

reduces dependency on intermediaries. Additionally, the online system is designed to facilitate quicker approvals through streamlined workflows and better coordination among departments. The government aims to ensure that pension services are delivered directly to beneficiaries in a

timely and transparent manner. Clear instructions have been issued to all heads of departments and district officials to strictly implement the new policy. They have also been directed to upload pension-related documents of employees onto the NIDHI portal well in advance of their retire-

ment, ensuring seamless processing once they become eligible. This reform is expected to benefit thousands of retired employees and pensioners across the state by minimizing delays and procedural hurdles. The primary objective of the initiative is to address longstanding technical and admin-

istrative challenges in pension disbursement and to strengthen the overall system through the use of technology. With this move, the Andhra Pradesh government continues its push towards digital governance, aiming to deliver faster, more efficient, and transparent public services.

## Key Decisions Taken at Durgagudi Governing Council Meeting in Vijayawada

sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a hospital to ensure better healthcare facilities for temple employees. Addressing concerns related to misuse of temple premises, he revealed that certain toilets in Kanaka Durganagar were found to be misused for illegal activities, including substance consumption. Strict measures are being initiated to prevent such incidents in the future.

On temple properties, Radhakrishna stated that the temple owns around 234 acres of land. However, some portions currently lack proper lease agreements, while others have reportedly been encroached upon. The council discussed measures to regularize leases and take action against encroachments. Temple Executive Officer

Seenanayak said that special arrangements will be made at Indrakeeladri Hill to ensure that devotees do not face difficulties while standing in queues. He emphasized that the temple will be developed in all aspects in line with a comprehensive master plan. He further stated that pending bills to contractors will be cleared and that leasing of temple lands will be streamlined. Additionally, facilities such as laddu prasadam preparation (laddu potu) and annadanam services are expected to commence by June.

The authorities reiterated their commitment to the holistic development of the temple, ensuring improved infrastructure, better management, and a smoother experience for the large number of devotees visiting the shrine.

## AP Government introduces strict timelines for Cabinet meetings to boost transparency

In a significant move aimed at improving security and maintaining confidentiality, the government has also revamped the system for distributing Cabinet agendas. Going forward, Cabinet-related documents will no longer be shared through platforms like WhatsApp or other social media channels. Instead, all information will be made available exclusively through the secure e-Cabinet portal, ensuring better control over sensitive government data. These changes come in response to delays previously experienced in agenda preparation and circulation. By enforcing strict timelines, the government aims to provide ministers with sufficient time to review proposals thoroughly and make informed decisions during meetings.

Officials believe that these reforms will streamline administrative processes and reduce last-minute confusion. The structured approach is also expected to improve coordination among departments and ensure that only well-prepared proposals are brought before the Cabinet.

The initiative reflects the government's broader focus on leveraging technology to strengthen governance and decision-making systems. By integrating digital platforms like the e-Cabinet portal, the administration seeks to enhance both efficiency and accountability. Overall, these measures are expected to accelerate governance, improve policy planning, and reinforce transparency in the functioning of the State Cabinet.

## Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha Reviews Arrangements for Simhachalam Chandanotsavam

Swamy, Vedic scholars offered their blessings. The Home Minister inspected the arrangements for the Appanna S w a m y v a r i Chandanotsavam to be held on the 20th of this month. She conducted a review with the authorities on infrastructure, parking and traffic management to ensure that devotees do not face any difficulties and made several suggestions.

He instructed the police to take preventive measures to avoid traffic problems. He also advised that NDRF and SDRF teams should be ready at the temple to deal with emergencies. He said that continuous monitoring should be done from the command control room through CCTV cameras and if necessary, AI tech-

nology should be used. He advised that a large number of ORS packets should be made available for devotees.

The minister said on this occasion that the Chandanotsavam is a unique event. He said that on this occasion, devotees from across the state will gather in large numbers to have a real darshan of the Lord. Last year, about 1.2 lakh devotees attended and it is estimated that about 2 lakh people are likely to come this time. He said that keeping in mind the convenience of the devotees, facilities like medical camps, drinking water, and buttermilk are being set up at ten places. He revealed that darshan will begin from 3 am and inner temple darshan will be available only till 5 am.

# Srikakulam Road - Tirupati Humsafar Express lagged off

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 13  
In a historic milestone aimed at enhancing passenger convenience and strengthening rail connectivity in the region, the Humsafar Express connecting Srikakulam Road to the world-renowned Hindu pilgrimage destination, Tirupati, was flagged off for the first time at Srikakulam Road Railway Station.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by Shri K. Ram Mohan Naidu, Hon'ble Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India, in the august presence of Shri K. Ravi Kumar, Hon'ble MLA of Amudalavalasa; Shri G Shankar Hon'ble MLA



Srikakulam; Divisional Railway Manager Shri Lalit Bohra; District Collector Srikakulam Shri Swapnil Dinakar and other distinguished dignitaries. The introduction of Train No. 17440 Srikakulam Road - Tirupati Weekly Humsafar

Express is expected to significantly benefit passengers from the region by providing improved connectivity to Tirupati, Vijayawada, and other intermediate destinations. This service has been introduced in response to the long-standing demand of the

public and aligns with the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Minister of Railways to strengthen regional connectivity and promote the vision of a Viksit Bharat. This new train service will greatly enhance access to



pilgrimage, education, healthcare, employment, and trade opportunities, thereby acting as a catalyst for socio-economic growth in the region. East Coast Railway is always committed to improving passenger amenities, enhancing connectivity, and responding proactively to public needs through such passenger-friendly initiatives. SRIKAKULAM ROAD - TIRUPATI - SRIKAKU-

LAM ROAD WEEKLY HUMSAFAR EXPRESS (TRAIN Nos. 17440 / 17439) The Train No. 17440 Srikakulam Road - Tirupati Weekly Humsafar Express train will leave from Srikakulam Road on Mondays at 15:00 hrs with effect from 13.04.2026 and will reach Duvvada on the same day at 17:58 hrs and departure at 18:00 hrs and will reach Tirupati at 08:10 hrs on Tuesday. In the return direction, Train No. 17439 Tirupati - Srikakulam Road Weekly Humsafar Express train will leave from Tirupati on Sunday at 16:55 hrs with effect from 19.04.2026. The train will

reach Duvvada on the next day (Monday) at 09:33 hrs and departure at 09:35 hrs and will reach Srikakulam Road at 12:30 hrs. Composition: The pair of trains will consist of total 22 coaches, comprising: 3rd AC - 15, Pantry Car - 01, Sleeper Class coaches - 04, Generator Class cum Luggage Van - 02 coaches. Stoppages: Chipurupalli, Vizianagaram, Kottavalasa, Pendurthi, Duvvada, Anakapalli, Elamanchili, Samalkot, Rajahmundry, Eluru, Vijayawada, Tenali, Bapatla, Chirala, Ongole, Nellore, Gudur and Renigunta between Srikakulam Road - Tirupati stations both directions.

## Tribal villagers protest delay in issuing death certificates



By Skyline Staff Reporter Paderu (ASR District), April 13: In a unique and emotional protest, tribal residents of Buriga and Chinna Konela hilltop villages in Ananthagiri mandal on Sunday knelt with folded hands, appealing to officials to issue pending late death certificates. The villagers said that as many as 18 applications for death certificates were submitted at the Rompilli Secretariat nearly a year ago, and the required challans were also paid. However, "even after one year, the certificates have not been issued," they alleged, expressing distress over the delay.

They urged the district collector to intervene and resolve the issue at the earliest. "If our problem is not addressed, we will undertake a padayatra from Buriga village to the Ananthagiri Mandal Revenue Office," they warned. Around 70 families live in the remote hilltop villages under Rompilli panchayat. Villagers said they have to travel nearly 12 km to reach the secretariat at Rompilli, while the mandal headquarters Ananthagiri, is about 70 km away. The district headquarters at Paderu is nearly 150 km from their villages, making access to

services difficult. Former ward member Somulu Appalaraju and tribal farmers' leader Vanaparthy Simhachalam said that earlier there was little awareness about the need for birth and death certificates. "After the village secretariat system was introduced, we came to know through volunteers that death and legal heir certificates are necessary," they said. Villagers, including Badmani Kothamma and Somulu Errayya alleged that despite following due procedure, revenue officials have failed to respond to their applications.

## PGRS requests should be addressed with quality solutions

District Collector M. Abhishikth Kishore instructions to the officials

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 13 : District Collector M. Abhishikth Kishore has ordered that quality solutions be provided to the complaints received from the public through the PGRS platform and satisfactory action be taken. In the PGRS review held at the Collectorate meeting hall on Monday morning, he gave clear directions to the officials. He said that each petition should be



read thoroughly and suggested that the concerned officials should

speaking directly to the complainant. Later, the complaints from the public were received. The problems raised by the people were listened to carefully. Appropriate orders were issued to the concerned officials on the actions. Meanwhile, a total of 334 complaints were registered in the PGRS program held on Monday. Out of them, 59 were from the Revenue Department, 83 from the GVMC, 23

from the Police Department, and 169 from other departments. In the PGRS, the District Collector, Joint Collector Gobbilla Vidyadhari, DRO M. Visveswara Naidu, and ADC Satyaveni received complaints from the people, while RDOs and Tahsildars took complaints from the people at the Revenue Clinic. Officers of all departments were present.

## The first installment of the Chandanam Aragaditha festival begins with grandeur

The first installment of the three-manufactured sandalwood offering on the night of the Chandan Festival Participating in festivals is a good deed from a previous birth - Gantla

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 13 : The Simhachalam Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, which is a famous pilgrimage site in the world, will host the Simhadri Nadudu Chandanotsavam on the 20th of this month with great pomp. This festival, which is traditionally held on the Vaishaka Shuddha Tadiya every year, will be held with great pomp this year as well. The arrangements for the festival are

being completed at a rapid pace under the guidance of the temple EO J. Venkata Rao. On the night of the Chandan festival, devotees will offer three handfuls of sandalwood to Lord Simhadrinadhudu in a grand manner, after having darshan. On Monday, on the occasion of the Ekadashi festival of the Vaisakh month, the first phase of the sandalwood aragaditha program was started after special pujas in the early morning. Temple chief



priests Godavarthy Srinivasacharyulu, Kari Seetharamacharyu, Sthanacharyulu Rajagopal, temple EO J Venkatrao TP AEO

Thirumaleswara Rao, former members of the Simhachalam Devasthanam Board of Trustees, special invitees National Journalists Association Secretary Gantla Srinu Babu and others participated in the sandalwood aragaditha program. First, the priestly groups started the sandalwood aragaditha. Gantla Srinu Babu said that participating in the most glorious Simhadrinath festival is considered a blessing from a previous birth.

## Waqf Board provides financial assistance to Iran women

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 13 : The Waqf Board has provided financial assistance of Rs 1,50,000 to Iran women stranded in Visakhapatnam due to the war in Pachhimasia. The Waqf Board office in the District Collectorate came to know that two Iran women were facing hardships and provided them with their help. The members of the Muslim Welfare Society said that they had provided financial assistance to two women, Zeinab Mohammadi and Salman Mohammadi, who had come to study pharmacy, who were facing financial



difficulties due to the war. The Iranian women were emotional and expressed happiness as the members of the society provided heartfelt help. They said that their family members were in touch until ten days ago, but since then they have not been able to contact them. They

expressed their concerns that they are facing financial difficulties. Mecca Masjid President S.K. Abdul Munir, Secretary Syed Amir Jan, Haji Ikram Ali, Chirag Ali, Shakeel, Ahmed Ali, Iniyatullah Baig and others participated in the program.

## A grand gathering of Padmasali Doctors

Doctors' Day celebrations should be held on a grand scale

A large number of doctors from Uttarandhra districts will attend.

By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 13 : A grand gathering of Padmasali doctors was held at a hotel in the city under the auspices of the Padmasali Employees Welfare Association. The meeting, chaired by renowned Emergency Medicine Professor Dr. Siddhanati Naveen, was attended by doctors from Visakhapatnam, Uttarandhra and East Godavari districts. In particular, the strengthening of the doctors' association and issues related to the Doctors' Day celebrations to be held in Guntur on July 5th were discussed.



All Padmasali doctors should remain united and achieve further strength. On this occasion, many senior and junior doctors who have rendered special

services in their respective fields also provided advice and suggestions. It was decided to hold a meeting of doctors' intimate gathering every three

months and to appoint district committees and state committees. In this meeting, the association's state general secretary Raparthi Venkat Rao, Vizianagaram

doctors Dr. Tirumala Prasad, Dr. Uday Bhaskar, Dr. Ande Venkateswara Rao, Dr. Kolli Jaikishan participated as chief guests, while Visakhapatnam president Mittipati Mohan Murali, Padimi Venkata Satyanand, Bosetti Venka teswara Rao, Akula Visveswara Rao, Dr. Sivaramakrishna, Leela, District Padmasali Emplo yees Association representative Neelam Jogiraju and many other members of the association participated. Doctors from Kakinada and Rajah mundry districts to Srikakulam district attend- ed in large numbers.

## Strengthening cooperatives key to farmers' growth: Nagarjuna

By Skyline Staff Reporter Cheepurupalli (Gurla), April 13  
Highlighting the crucial role of cooperative societies in supporting the farming community, Vizia nagaram DCCB Chairman Kimidi Nagarjuna called for more efficient and accountable functioning of these institutions. As part of his field visit, he inspected the Kella PACS in Gurla mandal and reviewed its overall performance. He closely examined the implementation of crop loans, fertilizer and seed distribution, and assessed the recovery of loans. During the inspection, he also reviewed godown facilities, stock availability, and record maintenance, stressing the need for systematic management and transparency in all operations. Addressing officials and staff, Nagarjuna made it



clear that farmers should receive uninterrupted and fair services, without any political influence. He directed that all transactions must be recorded transparently and that eligible farmers should receive loans

without delay. He also warned that any negligence or irregularities would invite strict action, and emphasized maintaining the quality of stored agricultural inputs. Local leaders, including

Mandal Party President Chanamala Maheswara Rao, PACS President Vimala Rani, former Sarpanch Karrotu Govinda, along with officials, staff, and farmers, participated in the visit.

## Poshan Pakhwada Awareness Drive Conducted in Geddapuvvalasa

By Skyline Staff Reporter Cheepurupalli (Garividi), April 13  
An awareness programme was organized at Geddapuvvalasa village under the ICDS Garividi Project as part of the 8th Poshan Pakhwada, being observed from April 9 to April 23, 2026. The initiative aims to strengthen awareness on nutrition and brain development during the first six years of a child's life, which is considered crucial for overall growth. This year's campaign highlights the importance of holistic development and community participation, with a special focus on increasing men's involvement in nutrition practices. During the session, health officials educated pregnant women and lactating mothers on essential nutrition practices. They emphasized the importance of consuming home-cooked and traditional foods, maintaining proper dietary habits, and avoiding junk and packaged foods, which can lead to various health issues.



Officials also explained how balanced nutrition supports both physical health and cognitive development in children. The programme was attended by

CDPO Arudra, Supervisors Jyothi and Varalakshmi, School Headmaster Ravi Kumar, along with several mothers, pregnant women, and community members.

## SKYLINE

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## Urban Fragility

The crisis unfolding across India's cities is not, at its core, about cooking gas. It is about the quiet architecture of exclusion that underpins urban growth. A disruption in liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supplies ~ linked to tensions around the Strait of Hormuz ~ has done much more than inconveniencing households. It has exposed how precariously India's migrant workforce is integrated into city life. For millions of low-income workers, access to cooking fuel is not guaranteed by formal systems but mediated through informal arrangements ~ small refill operators, shared cylinders, and neighbourhood brokers.

These networks function efficiently in normal times but collapse quickly under stress. When they do, the consequences are immediate and personal: kitchens go cold, food security falters, and the cost of daily survival rises sharply. What follows is not merely hardship but withdrawal. Workers begin to leave. This pattern should be familiar. During the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, India witnessed a mass reverse migration that stunned policymakers and exposed the invisibility of urban labour. What is striking now is that a far less dramatic trigger ~ a supply bottleneck rather than a national shutdown ~ is producing a similar behavioural response. That suggests the underlying vulnerability has not been addressed. At the heart of the problem lies the conditional nature of welfare access.

Schemes designed to subsidise LPG or ensure food security remain tied to fixed addresses and local documentation. Migrant workers, who are by definition mobile and often informally housed, fall through these cracks. Economists have long argued for portability in welfare entitlements, yet implementation remains uneven. The result is a system where those who build and service cities cannot reliably access basic urban amenities. The economic implications are significant. India's micro, small and medium enterprises depend heavily on migrant labour for sectors ranging from construction to textiles. As workers leave, production slows, costs rise, and recovery timelines extend. This is not just a labour issue; it is a demand shock in the making, as departing workers also withdraw their consumption from urban markets.

Equally concerning is the environmental regression. Faced with fuel shortages, households revert to firewood, kerosene, or coal ~ undermining years of progress under initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana. What was framed as a transition to clean energy risks becoming reversible under supply stress. The official position that supplies are adequate may well be accurate at a macro level. But availability is not the same as accessibility. A system can be well-stocked and yet functionally exclusionary. This moment, therefore, is less a supply crisis than a governance test.

It raises a fundamental question: can India's cities sustain growth while treating a large share of their workforce as administratively temporary? Until access to essential services becomes portable, affordable, and independent of rigid documentation, each external shock ~ whether geopolitical or economic ~ will continue to trigger internal instability. The exodus of workers is not an overreaction. It is a rational response to a system that still does not fully recognise them as part of the city they sustain.

## Islamic NATO or Europe: Is Gulf rethinking its options after Trump's 'betrayal'?

Almost two hours before US President Donald Trump's deadline to 'end the whole of civilisation' through massive bombings on the night of April 7, his post on Truth Social announced a two-week-long ceasefire brokered by Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir. Speculations were divided: many doubted Iran would act on Trump's threats, while a significant number believed a strike against Iran's energy infrastructure was imminent. The security landscape in the Gulf has been permanently altered by the ceasefire, which now hangs in limbo as talks between US and Iran held in Islamabad collapsed.

The escalation from the US, Iranian retaliation, and Europe's limits have reshaped Gulf security in ways Washington did not anticipate. Every major war in West Asia has reshaped the region's power politics, with global implications. After the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the Jewish state emerged victorious with more territory under its control than it had before it. Similarly, the 1956 Suez crisis ended the global influence of Britain and France, the two major colonial empires. The 1967 Six-Day War reestablished Israel's military dominance and laid the groundwork for the present-day Gaza crisis. In 1973, the Yom Kippur War caused a major oil crisis after Saudi-led oil-producing countries refused to sell to the US over its support for Israel. The aftermath of the war saw the emergence of the petro-dollar system and the start of the US-Saudi military partnership in exchange for the trade of oil in dollars. The Gulf wars of 1991 and 2003 weakened and later led to the removal of Saddam Hussein from power, making Iran the sole rival to Saudi Arabia in the region.

Similarly, the 2026 Iran-US war has turned the region increasingly vulnerable, has left its energy infrastructure more exposed, made Iran weaker, and forced the Gulf to rethink its security partnership with the US.

**Gulf Disillusioned?**  
The US and Israel have had strong ties for over eight decades. The Arab world witnessed a thaw in its relations with the Americans, especially with the emergence of the petro-dollar

trading system, which further increased the demand for the US dollar in exchange for security guarantees.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which include Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, the UAE, and Oman, have invested heavily in their relationship with the US, assuming their interests would be well-considered over Israel's. However, Donald Trump, who is known for being unpredictable, has prioritised Israel's goals over the GCC's. Though Iran has remained a threat to these countries, as neighbours, the GCC and Iran maintained trade relations despite differences.

The primary driver behind the Iranian attacks on its neighbours was the presence of the US military in West Asia, especially in the Gulf. Even in its 10-point peace plan, Iran demanded a US military withdrawal from the Middle East.

The Gulf countries acted cautiously. The crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed Bin Salman, reportedly pushed Trump to continue the war, seeing it as an opportunity to reshape the power dynamic in the region. The goals of the GCC were hedged against the assumption that a regime change would take place soon. However, Iran's attacks on oil refineries and natural gas infrastructure continued. According to an assessment from the Stimson Centre, in a month, the GCC received 83% of Iranian drones and missiles compared to just 17% launched at Israel. The message was clear - Iran attacked both military and civilian assets to destabilise the region's energy infrastructure and ensure that the ripple effects of the war go beyond the region. Only a ceasefire has been established, but hostilities remain.

**Is Europe A Safer Bet?**

In this context, Europe can emerge as a better partner for the Gulf than the US. One of the key reasons behind this observation is Europe's stance of not intervening directly in the war. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer vehemently rejected America's request to send British troops to fight the war against Iran; however, the UK allowed the US to use its bases to launch attacks. In response, Iran fired ballistic missiles at Diego Garcia,

located 4,000 km away. Even so, Europe is unlikely to emerge as a genuine alternative to the US in the near future, largely due to its own continued reliance on American air defence systems for both wide-area and localised protection. This dependence was highlighted, for instance, during the conflict when the redeployment of two Patriot missile system batteries from Germany to Turkey created air defence gaps across Europe.

Secondly, American weapons sales have seen a dramatic increase, soaring from 27% to over 50% following the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. This is because US-made systems, such as the Patriot, THAAD, NASAMS, and Stinger air defence platforms, remain globally dominant. While the newly elected German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called for Europe to pursue strategic 'independence' from the US in 2025, the continent collectively remains reliant on American defence capabilities. But, despite its military dependency on the US, Europe remains a middle power and a strong economic partner, which can anchor the Gulf countries, and Asian countries such as India, South Korea, and Japan, which in future can help create a military partnership that does not have the US as the foundational pillar.

**US-Europe Fracture**

Trump's rhetoric and actions in West Asia have been more destabilising for Europe than for Russia recently. In 2022, Europe faced an energy crisis due to its reliance on Russian gas. The effects of the energy crisis still exist, though the continent has agreed to phase out its dependence on Russian gas and actively depends on the US, Norway, Algeria and Australia for fossil fuel supplies.

Now, the Iran war has had a disastrous effect on European economies, with at least 18 countries announcing relief packages for their citizens. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which Trump withdrew from, is also a case in point. It was considered a European and American diplomatic victory under the Obama regime to stop the Iranian nuclear programme and integrate Iran into the global economy.

Another key takeaway from the war is



Trump's increased skepticism of NATO as an unreliable partner. He has called out members of the alliance for not increasing the defence budget to 5% of the GDP, and laments the US taking the burden of spending more. He has threatened to take Greenland by military force and ranted about NATO allies not supporting the US to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Last week, he said, "NATO wasn't there when we needed them, and they won't be there if we need them again. Remember Greenland, that big, poorly run, piece of ice!" The US President also betrayed his desperation when he wrote an expletive-laden post on Truth Social on Easter. However, not once has Trump hinted at implementing Article 5 of the NATO charter, which states that any attack on a member will be deemed as an attack on the entire alliance. Article 5 has been implemented only once after the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

Donald Trump's threats to take over Greenland by force, attacking Iran without consulting its European partners, and criticising NATO for not joining in its war efforts have caused fissures in their relationship.

**A Catalyst For Islamic NATO?**

A former US security official, who has extensively studied Iran, recently said in London that forming an "Islamic NATO" would be incredibly challenging due to the diverging strategic interests of countries. In the 1950s, the CENTO or Central Treaty Organization was considered an extension of NATO in Asia. It was dissolved in 1979 after the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Pakistan, Turkey, Iran and the UK were members of the military alliance. In 2026, Israel is a military superpower in the region,

along with Saudi Arabia and Turkey, possessing a strong military. The Gulf countries have had differences with Iran, but they continue to cooperate with Tehran because of the vulnerabilities of their energy infrastructure to any attack from Iran or vice versa. The worst-case scenario, which the US wargamed for years - of Iran's violent strikes on its neighbours - just became real for the Gulf. Despite that, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other countries refused to get actively involved, instead letting the US finish the job. Who would, then be the adversary if an Islamic NATO were to be established? Pakistan sees Iran as an important neighbour. At the same time, a military alliance without Pakistan, which offers a nuclear umbrella, would be impotent.

Even so, the world has now witnessed Pakistan taking a stronger diplomatic role, and any future engagement concerning Iran would involve Islamabad. A wounded Iran, which is emboldened by its experience of attacking its neighbours and hijacking the global energy supply chain, makes a strong case for Islamic countries in Central Asia to partner militarily.

The war is still on. Iran has reasserted the significance of geography in global politics through its control of the Strait of Hormuz. The conflict allowed Israel to bomb Hezbollah targets in Lebanon south of the Litani River, attacking bridges and railroads, to create a military buffer zone to defend northern Israel. Now, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has agreed to speak to Lebanon for a ceasefire. The next two weeks will decide the fate of this war.

## Where a woman works depends on who she is

The increase in women's participation in labour force is generally celebrated as an umbrella statement. According to the PLFS report, the labour force participation rate for urban women has increased from 22 to 22.2 per cent, and their worker population ratio has increased from 20.5 to 20.7 per cent. However, these statistics often do not get into the depth of how these numbers change across caste. Studies have previously shown how caste acts as an important pre-market, social identity which impacts labour market outcomes of the workers.

Since identities of caste have historically arisen through the division of labour, these outcomes can get more complicated when they intersect with the identities of gender. Often, we relegate the impacts of caste to a relic of the past. However, a nuanced analysis can reveal interesting insights into gender and caste, and whether meritocracy has indeed successfully replaced caste-based division of labour. Theoretically, labour markets are not unified spaces where workers compete on equal terms. Instead, they are divided into segments that differ in wages, job security, and mobility. Entry into these segments is shaped not only by skills and education but also by social identity. In India, caste remains a key determinant along which such inequalities are organised. Research shows that caste and gender-

based disparities persist in urban labour markets, influencing who accesses better jobs and who remains confined to precarious work. Data from the PLFS 2023-24 shows the continued relevance of these patterns. Urban women are concentrated in a limited set of industries, with services and manufacturing accounting for the majority of employment. Nearly two-fifths of urban working women are employed in services, while about a quarter are in manufacturing.

Trade and allied activities, along with transport and communication, account for smaller but still significant shares. However, this concentration does not imply equal access within these sectors. A caste-disaggregated view reveals clear differences in how women are distributed across industries. SC women are more likely to be concentrated in sectors such as construction, which is typically associated with lower pay and higher precarity, whereas upper caste women are more prominently represented in services. These disparities extend to occupational distribution.

A large share of the urban working women is concentrated in lower-end roles. Elementary occupations, typically constituting low-skill, routine jobs such as cleaning, sweeping, and other basic service tasks, account for 23.26 per cent of employment. Service and sales roles account for



another 18.5 per cent while 17.36 per cent of women are engaged in crafts and related trades. In contrast, about 18.25 per cent of women are employed as professionals, representing one of the more skilled segments of the labour market. Caste differences within these occupations are stark. Upper caste women, in particular, make up about half of the managers and professionals.

In contrast, SC women constitute only 8.32 per cent of managers and 9.71 per cent of professionals, highlighting their limited presence in these occupations and their disproportionate concentration in lower-paying roles. For instance, SC women constitute 30.5 per cent of those in elementary occupations, a category that already represents the largest share of women's work. Education is often expected to

equalise opportunities across social groups. While higher levels of education do improve access to better jobs for all women, they do not fully eliminate caste-based disparities. Among graduate women, 56.25 per cent of upper caste women are employed in professional occupations, compared to 41.87 per cent of SC women. These differences are even more pronounced in access to managerial roles. Among postgraduates, 10.82 per cent of upper caste women are employed as managers, compared to just 4.58 per cent of SC women. At lower levels of education, SC women remain significantly more concentrated in elementary occupations than their upper caste counterparts. This suggests that while education enhances labour market outcomes, it does not

fully offset the influence of caste. Disparities also extend to the quality of employment.

Regular salaried jobs are those which are generally considered the best types of jobs. These typically come with some amount of security and regularity of income. While nearly half of urban women are engaged in regular salaried jobs, access to such employment varies significantly across caste groups. Upper caste workers have the highest share in regular employment (53.96 per cent) and are almost absent from casual labour (2.64 per cent), indicating strong concentration in secure forms of work.

In contrast, SC workers are significantly more likely to be engaged in casual employment (14.73 per cent), reflecting greater exposure to insecure and low-paying jobs. While urban India may appear more modern, its labour markets continue to reproduce old hierarchies in new forms. Caste continues to shape not only where women work, but the kind of work they access and the security it provides. Education improves outcomes, but it does not level the playing field. As a result, women from marginalised caste groups remain concentrated in lower-paying and precarious jobs, even within the same urban economy. In this sense, the promise of urban meritocracy remains unfulfilled.

## The red revolution on your plate: Why tomatoes are being called nature's ultimate healing secret

A simple kitchen favourite is now grabbing attention for its powerful health benefits. Tomatoes, rich in lycopene and nutrients, may support heart, eyes, lungs, skin, and overall immunity.

It started like a simple kitchen habit: slicing a tomato for salad, but suddenly this humble red fruit is back in the spotlight, and people are talking about it like it's a tiny health superstar hiding in plain sight. The buzz began after Acharya Balkrishna shared a post on Facebook calling tomato a true blessing for health. And just like that, the internet is once again looking at this everyday ingredient with fresh curiosity.

But is the hype real? Science says: there is more power in this red fruit



than most people imagine. The red secret inside every tomato. Tomatoes are packed with a powerful antioxidant called lycopene, the same compound that gives them their bright red colour. This natural pigment does more than just make

your plate look colourful. It helps protect the body's cells from damage caused by harmful free radicals. Lycopene works like a shield against stress on cells and may help reduce the risk of several serious diseases. Research suggests it can

lower chances of cancers such as lung, stomach, and prostate cancer. Some studies also link it to reduced risk of cancers in the pancreas, colon, throat, mouth, breast, cervix. But lycopene is not alone. Tomatoes also carry potassium, folate, vitamin C, and a mix of vitamins B and E along with flavonoids. These nutrients together help strengthen immunity and support overall body function.

**Heart Health: The hidden support system**

Tomatoes are quietly working for the heart in many ways. Lycopene may help reduce LDL or "bad" cholesterol and may also support healthy blood pressure levels. Both are key factors in preventing heart disease.

Along with that, vitamins B and E and other antioxidants found in tomatoes help improve cardiovascular health and reduce stress on blood vessels.

Studies also suggest that regular tomato consumption may reduce the risk of stroke. This happens because tomatoes may help lower inflammation, support immunity, reduce cholesterol, and even prevent unwanted blood clotting.

Eyes, lungs, and body defense boost

Tomatoes are not just heart-friendly. They may also support your eyes. They contain lutein and zeaxanthin, two powerful compounds that help protect eyes from harmful blue light coming from smartphones, laptops, and screens.

## USD 1 billion, 'most beautiful Turkish woman as wife' or it's all over: Ugandan Army Chief's unusually bizarre ultimatum to Turkey

Diplomacy took a strange turn last week after Ugandan Army Chief Muhoozi Kainerugaba publicly rolled out his bizarre demands to resolve differences with Turkey — USD 1 billion as "security dividend", the most beautiful Turkish woman as a wife or else he will sever diplomatic relations with Ankara. The demands may sound unusual to a sane mind but this is what Muhoozi Kainerugaba, son of Ugandan "dictator" Yoweri Museveni, has actually asked Turkey to begin talks on resolving the differences. The Ugandan Army chief has accused Turkey of profiting from infrastructure deals in Somalia while his troops have been protecting the African nation for nearly two decades from the al-Shabaab group. Citing this, Kainerugaba said Uganda should receive USD 1 billion as compensation. "On top of



the \$1 billion from Turkey, I want the most beautiful woman in that country for a wife," he wrote in a series of posts on X. In another post, he added, "If they do not address our problems, we will terminate all diplomatic relations with Turkey within the next 30 days." After the controversy, the posts have now been deleted and the general reposted a clarification

from Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, Adonia Ayebare. "Tweets by @mkainerugaba on Türkiye are a reflection of dissatisfaction with the way Uganda's serious concerns have been handled. Uganda values its partnerships with our Turkish Friends but not at the expense of our sovereignty. Uganda looks forward to good faith talks aimed

at resolving our concerns which I am sure @mkainerugaba supports. There should be no cause for alarm," the Ugandan diplomat said. Kainerugaba later said he loves the 86 million "brothers and sisters" in Turkey. "I love the 86 million brothers and sisters in Turkey. Twitter insults mean nothing to me. We send all Turkish people love from Uganda," he added.

## Trump's threat of naval blockade of Iran sparks global energy alarm; key Iranian ports under direct target

The United States has declared to choke Iran's maritime lifelines, with the US Central Command announcing a sweeping naval blockade that halts all shipping traffic to and from Iranian ports from Monday morning. The move, ordered under US President Donald Trump, threatens to rip millions of barrels of oil out of global supply chains and push an already fragile energy market toward crisis. The blockade applies to vessels of all nations entering or exiting Iranian territory, tightening pressure on Tehran while allowing passage only to ships bound for non-Iranian ports. The blockade extends across Iran's entire coastline—from the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman—effectively sealing off critical export hubs. Target ports include: Bandar Abbas — Iran's largest and busiest container port; Bandar Imam Khomeini — A crucial bulk cargo and container hub; Bandar-e-Mahshahr — A major oil export terminal; Chabahar — Strategic port

on the Gulf of Oman Kharg Island — Iran's primary oil export terminal; Bandar-e-Bushehr — Important regional trade hub; Bandar Lengeh — Smaller commercial harbour with regional significance; Assaluyeh — Crucial for gas and petrochemical exports; Strait of Hormuz: Global energy lifeline at risk. At the heart of the crisis lies the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical shipping corridors. Nearly a quarter of global seaborne oil and vast quantities of liquefied natural gas pass through this narrow stretch. Any disruption here does not stay regional; it sends shockwaves across continents. Around 20-25% of global oil trade flows through the strait. Asia absorbs 86% of this supply. China alone accounts for 31% of shipments. India follows with 14%. Oil supply shock looms large. Analysts warn the blockade could trigger the most severe disruption since the oil crisis of the 1970s.



Up to 2 million barrels per day of Iranian oil could be cut off immediately. A broader escalation could impact 9-11 million barrels per day globally. Iranian exports, already near 1.8 million barrels per day, risk collapsing. Even before the blockade, Iran had ramped up shipments, leaving over 180 million barrels floating at sea, a buffer that may only briefly cushion the shock. Global fallout: Prices, trade, and tensions. The crisis is already spilling into global shipping lanes.

Around 3,200 vessels are reportedly stranded west of the strait. Insurance costs and freight rates are expected to surge. Supply chains for fuel, fertilisers, and industrial goods face severe disruption. Blocking Iranian exports removes a key supplier from the market, but the greater danger lies in escalation. A wider shutdown of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz could send oil prices soaring worldwide, deepen inflation, and strain economies already under pressure.

## China calls for unobstructed navigation through Strait of Hormuz amid Trump's blockade warning



While the United States has enforced a maritime blockade on Iran, China has stressed the need for free and safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Responding to the developments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said safeguarding stability and ensuring uninterrupted navigation in the Strait of Hormuz is in the shared interest of the global community. He also reacted to Washington's warning of

tariffs if Beijing is found supplying arms to Iran, saying trade wars benefit no one and reiterating China's long-standing position against such measures. "China's position is very clear: tariff wars have no winners," he said, as cited by Global Times. The tensions come ahead of a likely visit by Trump to Beijing in mid-May for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The visit, originally expected earlier in

April, was postponed after Trump said he needed to remain in Washington to monitor the ongoing conflict involving Iran. Earlier this month, China again underlined its role in promoting stability in the Middle East. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Beijing remains committed to encouraging dialogue and the peaceful resolution of tensions. Her remarks followed

claims by Trump that China had helped bring Iran to the negotiating table during recent diplomatic efforts. At the same time, diplomatic activity between Beijing and Moscow is set to continue, with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov scheduled to visit China for talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi. Discussions are expected to cover bilateral ties as well as key regional and global issues.

## From Netanyahu's side to Mossad's helm: Roman Gofman to lead Israel's intelligence agency

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has named his military secretary, Major General Roman Gofman, as the next head of Mossad, backing a close aide with battlefield experience to lead the country's top intelligence agency. The appointment, cleared by an advisory panel on senior positions, comes at a time of heightened regional tensions, with Israel's security establishment navigating ongoing conflict and evolving threats. Netanyahu calls Gofman "bold and creative". Confirming the decision in a post on X, Netanyahu said he had approved Gofman's appointment after it was vetted by a committee led by former Supreme Court President Asher Grunis. "Major General Gofman has served as my military secretary for the past two years. He is an outstanding officer—bold and creative—who has demonstrated throughout the war a perspective outside the box and impressive



resourcefulness. I wish Major General Gofman great success in his next role as Mossad chief, and I am confident that he will do much for Israel's security," Netanyahu stated. When Gofman takes charge and who he replaces According to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office, Gofman will take over as Director of the Israeli Institute for Intelligence and Special Operations on July 2, 2026, for a five-year term. As reported by The Times of Israel, he will succeed outgoing Mossad chief David Barnea, whose tenure is set to conclude in June.

Close aide with operational and strategic roles Gofman is considered a trusted associate of Netanyahu and has served as his military secretary for nearly two years. In that role, he travelled on behalf of the prime minister on various assignments and helped oversee the execution of directives within the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the Times of Israel reported. Born in Belarus, Gofman moved to Israel with his family in 1990 at the age of 14. He later built his career in the IDF Armoured Corps, eventually rising to the rank of division commander

before stepping away from frontline roles. Injury during October 7 attack, policy views spark debate During the October 7, 2023, Hamas-led attack, Gofman was commanding the Tzeelim training base. He reportedly rushed to the Gaza border and was seriously injured in a firefight with militants near Sderot. Before taking up his current role in 2024, he had authored a policy paper suggesting that Israel retain military control over Gaza after defeating Hamas, a proposal that triggered debate within policy circles.

## 'No cards...very desperate Iran': Trump orders oil blockade, says 'I don't care' if talks collapse

US President Donald Trump on Sunday (local time) doubled down on Washington's hardline approach towards Iran, calling the country "very desperate" and confirming that a US-led blockade aimed at cutting off its oil exports will take effect at 10 am on Monday. The announcement follows a 21-hour round of talks in Islamabad that ended without agreement, leaving both sides entrenched even as a ceasefire in the region continues to hold for now. Speaking to reporters, Trump made it clear that the United States would proceed regardless of diplomatic uncertainty. "The blockade will go into effect tomorrow at 10 am," he said, adding that "there are many boats heading toward our country to fill up with oil." The US blockade targets Iran's oil exports, Strait routes. The blockade is aimed at restricting Iran's ability to sell oil, a key source of revenue that Washington believes funds its nuclear ambitions. Trump said other countries were cooperating with the move. "Other nations are working so that Iran cannot sell oil," he said, without naming them.



He also pointed to attempts to bypass traditional shipping lanes, including the Strait of Hormuz. "They are not going through the Strait of Hormuz. And ultimately, that will be corrected," he said. In a Truth Social post, Trump confirmed that the US Navy would begin intercepting vessels. "Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz." "I don't care": Trump shrugs off return to talks. Trump dismissed the possibility of renewed negotiations with Tehran after the Islamabad talks ended in a stalemate.

"I don't care if they come back or not. If they don't come back I'm fine," he said. He also accused Iran of not honouring commitments linked to a ceasefire arrangement, especially regarding access through the Strait of Hormuz. "Their promise was that they were going to open the Strait of Hormuz. They didn't do it. They lied," he said. Reiterating Washington's position, Trump added, "Iran will not have a nuclear weapon." "They have no cards": Trump claims Iran's military weakened. In a separate interview, Trump claimed Iran's military capability had been significantly degraded and said Tehran had "no cards"

left in negotiations. "They have no cards... Their Navy is gone. Their Air Force is gone. Totally gone. They have nothing," he said. He asserted that Iran's missile stockpiles and manufacturing capacity had been "largely depleted" after US military operations. "We've destroyed most of those weapons," he said. Referring to Iran's past rhetoric, Trump added, "For years, I've had to listen to them say, death to America... death to Israel." Projecting confidence in the US position, he said, "I told my people I want everything. I don't want 90 per cent. I don't want 95 per cent. I told them I want everything." NATO criticism surfaces amid escalation. Trump also used the interaction to criticise NATO, expressing dissatisfaction with the alliance. "I'm very disappointed in NATO, they weren't there for us. We pay trillions of dollars for NATO and they weren't there for us," he said. He declined to respond to questions on Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and ended the exchange shortly after.

## 'Hungary has chosen Europe,' says EU Commission President as poll results show victory for Magyar



President of the European Union, Ursula von der Leyen on Monday said that Hungary chose Europe, after Hungary's long-serving Prime Minister Viktor Orban conceded defeat in the parliamentary elections. Von der Leyen said that the European Union has now become stronger. In a post on X, she said, "Hungary has chosen Europe. Europe has always chosen Hungary. A country reclaims its European path. The Union grows stronger. Hungary has chosen Europe. Europe has always chosen Hungary. A country returns to its European path. The



Union grows stronger." Earlier in the day, Hungary's partial official results indicated a decisive victory for Peter Magyar and his Tisza party, marking a significant political shift in the country after 16 years of continuous rule by Fidesz. With 97.35 per cent of precincts counted, official results reported by Al Jazeera showed that Magyar's centre-right Tisza party secured 138 seats in the 199-member parliament, winning 53.6 per cent of the vote. In contrast, Orban's nationalist Fidesz party managed to secure 55 seats with 37.8 per cent of the vote, reflecting a sharp

decline in support compared to previous elections. Following the announcement of the early results, Orban accepted the outcome, effectively conceding defeat as it became clear that his party would not be able to form a majority government. The results are being widely seen as one of the most significant electoral reversals in Hungary's recent political history. In his victory speech delivered before thousands of supporters gathered in central Budapest, Magyar said his government would seek to reposition Hungary more firmly within the European mainstream and

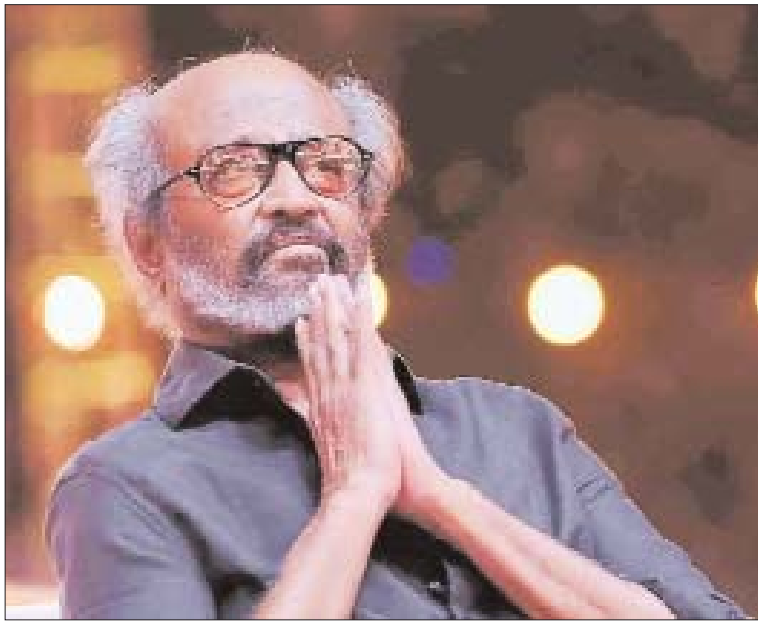
strengthen ties with Western allies. He emphasised that Hungary's future direction would be closely aligned with European institutions and values. "Hungary will once again be a strong ally representing Hungarian interests, because our country's place is in Europe," Magyar said, Euro News reported. Outlining his immediate foreign policy priorities, Magyar said his first official visits would include Warsaw and Vienna, followed by a trip to Brussels. There, he said, he would work to secure the release of billions of euros in suspended European Union funds.

## A Truly Unexpected Crisis for Rajinikanth Films

Uncertainty continues to surround *Thalaivar 173*, as the much-awaited next project of Rajinikanth finds itself stuck in a cycle of directorial changes. What initially looked like a straightforward collaboration has now turned into one of the most talked-about developments in Kollywood.

The film was first entrusted to Sundar C, but he reportedly stepped away following creative differences and script revisions. Soon after, Cibi Chakravarthy was officially announced as the director, raising expectations among fans.

However, the latest reports indicate that he too has exited the project, adding to the growing uncertainty. Now, Ashwath Marimuthu has emerged as the



frontrunner to take over the film. While there is no official confirmation yet, the constant reshuffling has sparked confusion and concern among fans.

Interestingly, the film is said to be backed by Kamal Haasan's production banner, making the stakes even higher. Adding to the superstar's challenges is the ongoing chatter around *Jailer 2*, which is already facing criticism for its rumored cameo.

For a superstar like Rajinikanth, these unexpected hurdles have certainly become a talking point across the industry. With one project dealing with creative clutter and the other struggling to lock a director, the situation appears far from ideal for Rajinikanth.

## Good news Mega Fans - Chiru Bobby look test today

After the pooja ceremony was postponed due to the unfortunate piracy issue surrounding *Jana Nayagan*, the Chiranjeevi-Bobby project faced uncertainty. However, reports of a look test happening today bring renewed hope. This development signals positive momentum, hinting that the much-awaited film may finally move ahead without further delays. Today, director Bobby and KVN Productions producer met Pawan Kalyan to personally invite him for the launch event of *Chiru - Bobby's* upcoming film. The event is scheduled for April 11. However, there is still no clarity on whether Pawan will attend, as he is currently busy with his administrative...



Megastar Chiranjeevi has got super busy after coming back to movies. He has signed back-to-back films and is also acting as the industry head looking into the various issues of the industry. Chiru, who is waiting for the release of *Acharya*, is going to have a blast for his birthday... Megastar Chiranjeevi's Next

with Bobby will officially launch on April 11. Reports reveal Priyamani will play the lead opposite Chiru, while Anaswara Rajan is set for a key role. The film has been long-awaited, and this launch news has sent waves of excitement among fans eager for updates on the...

## Godari Gattupaina finds a slot in summer



Sumanth Prabhakar's upcoming film *Godari Gattupaina* has locked its release date. Co-starring Nidhi Pradeep, the movie is set to hit theatres on May 8th, right in the middle of the summer season.

It's a strategically chosen date, as schools and colleges will begin their summer break by then, giving the film the advantage of a long holiday window.

The release-date poster features Nidhi in a white bridal gown, her expression tense and uncertain, as though caught between two difficult choices.

To her left stands Sumanth in casual attire, looking slightly away with a conflicted expression. To her right, Jagapathi Babu appears in a serious, almost stern mood as he looks toward her.

Directed by debutant Subash Chandra and produced by Red Puppet Productions, *Godari Gattupaina* is billed as a rustic, emotional, and rooted love story.

The film has already created a positive impression with its songs and glimpse, and the team is gearing up to unveil more promotional content in the coming days.

## Nagabandham's Sura Sura to celebrate Indian wedding culture!

The buzz surrounding Abhishek Nama directorial Pan-India epic *Nagabandham: The Secret Treasure* has reached a fever pitch with glimpse and first single. Young leading man Virat Karan's massive transformation to play Lord Shiva and his performance have been talk of the town. Today, the makers have announced the release of the film's second single, *Sura Sura*, on April 19th.

Director Abhishek Nama is crafting this high-budget venture by seamlessly blending mythology, history, and action. While the film promises intense sequences, *Sura Sura* is designed as a grand wedding celebration song.

The musical duo Junaid Kumar and Abhe have composed this lively anthem, combining traditional folk rhythms with cinematic orchestration. To elevate the visual experience, the legendary Ganesh Acharya has choreographed the song. The song features an incredible lineup of vocalists, including Anurag Kulkarni, Kaala Bhairava, Mangli, and Nalgonda Gaddar, bringing a unique blend of contemporary and folk textures. With lyrics penned by Kasarla Shyam, the track perfectly aligns with the theme of togetherness. Produced by NIK Studios and Abhishek Pictures, the film features a stellar cast including Nabha Natesh, Ishwarya Menon, Jagapathi Babu making this release a significant milestone for the project.



## Telugu Producer Moves Council Against Tamil Director Over Rs.5 Cr

A Telugu Producer had dragged a Tamil Director to Tamil Producers Council. The director is none other than Cibi Chakravarthy who was supposed to direct *#Thalaivar173*. There are reports that he is now dropped.

Coming to the topic, The producer of the planned Telugu film with Nani is Chitturi Srinivasa. Cibi narrated a storyline to Nani and the actor sent it to Chitturi. The director said he would finish the film in 65 Crore without

remunerations which was fine for the Producer. Chitturi gave him a team of writers and opened an office in Chennai.

The director developed the story and gave another narration to Nani which the actor again liked. But this time, he went to the producer and said it would cost 150 Crore. He also refused to give any breakup for the Producer to see how the budget increased.

"If the budget shoots from 65 Crore to 150 Crore even before the



## Gopichand's Bharata Varsha Glimpse: Monumental

T Gopichand teams up with director Sankalp Reddy for a grand historical action drama, produced by Srinivasaa Chitturi under Srinivasaa Silver Screen and presented by Pavan Kumar.

The makers unveiled the film's title with a powerful, action-packed glimpse that showcases its massive epic scale.

Set in 642 AD, the glimpse opens in the land of Shula. Enormous battle sequences, intense sword and axe combat, and fiery visuals make the promo strikingly cinematic.

The title *Bharata Varsha* appears with force-echoing pride, power, and the spirit of ancient Bharata.

Sankalp Reddy brings an overlooked chapter of Indian history to life with scale, authenticity, and depth.



Gopichand undergoes a complete transformation, portraying a fearless warrior with commanding intensity. His appearance, body language, and screen presence stand out.

Production designer Chinna creates detailed and immersive sets, while cinematographer Soundar Rajan captures the period with grandeur. Anudeep Dev's background score amplifies the drama and

emotion. With outstanding technical finesse and production value, Srinivasaa Silver Screen is mounting an ambitious theatrical experience.

The teaser clearly signals something monumental. With shooting nearing completion, *Bharata Varsha* is gearing up for its theatrical release.

## Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen Begins His Next Big Journey



A new film starring Vishwak Sen has officially started its journey. This movie is being produced by Yuvasudha Arts as their third project. The banner is already known for backing successful films and this new venture has created good excitement among fans.

The film began with a traditional pooja ceremony. Many well wishers and team members attended the event. It marked a positive start for the project.

Director Koratala Siva gave the first clap at the ceremony. Producer Shyam Prasad Reddy handed over the script. The camera was also

switched on as part of the ritual. These moments are considered very special in Indian cinema as they bring good luck to the film.

This movie is directed by Rajath. It is said to be a modern romantic comedy. The story is expected to be fresh and entertaining.

Vishwak Sen who is popularly called *Mass Ka Das* will be seen in a new style in this film. Fans are already eager to see him in this genre.

The technical team also looks strong. Aravind Vishwanathan will handle the cinematography. He is known for giving rich visuals. The music will be

composed by Thejas Krishna. Good music always plays a big role in romantic films and the team is confident about the songs.

The production house Yuvasudha Arts gained attention with their previous big project *Devara*. Now with this new film, they are aiming to continue their success. Even before shooting begins the movie has created strong buzz. This shows the trust audience has in the team.

The shooting of the film will begin soon. More details about the cast and release date will be announced later.

## NTR's beast mode for Dragon leaves fans stunned

One upcoming pan-India film which has been regularly making headlines due to frequent rumours about its shooting formalities is NTR's much anticipated action saga with director Prashanth Neel. Tentatively titled *Dragon*, the big-budget entertainer has been in the making for nearly a year, but not even a single poster or glimpse has been unveiled so far. Despite not giving any update, the team is maintaining that the shooting is progressing at a brisk pace. With NTR's birthday arriving in just over a month, fans have been waiting with a bated breath for the first glimpse from this film. As there is no hint about this big news from the makers so far, reports are making rounds that there won't be any glimpse on May 20 as expected.



'Built, Not bought'. This amazing picture has now become a trending topic on social media platforms and fans started going gaga over his transformation journey. NTR has instantly drawn the attention with his unexpected treat and left the fans elated. Moreover, this has given hope that there is something big loading very soon from *Dragon* as it has been quite a while since the project went on floors and did not make any noise unlike all other upcoming

pan-India biggies which are already making a lot of noise with frequent updates.

If the makers come up with a glimpse for NTR's birthday, it is likely to create a massive buzz on the film as there are huge expectations on this combination from the day it was announced. The genre and storyline have been kept under wraps so far to build the anticipation. So, the first content might drop some hints on what is Neel cooking this time after *KGF* and *Salaar*.



Murtham. One can not imagine how much it will become by the time of the

release," the producer lamented. He informed the hero and

they mutually decided to call off the project.

Its been two and a half years now and Chitturi approached the Tamil Producers' Council asking the director to payback 5 Crore which they invested on the project for Advances, Office Expenses, Salaries, and Interests. The director is only in favor of returning the advance he took.

Meanwhile, it is rumored that Nani is still interested in doing the film and asked another Producer to stay in touch with Cibi.

# ICC announces record prize pool for WT20 WC, winners to get USD 2.34 mn



Dubai, April 13 : The International Cricket Council (ICC) has unveiled a record prize fund of USD 8,764,615 for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026, reflecting a 10 per cent boost compared to the 2024 edition.

This amount surpasses the USD 7,958,077 shared among the 10 participating nations in the United Arab Emirates two years ago, as the tournament is set to expand to 12 teams for the first time. The 2026 edition will feature hosts England

joined by Australia, Bangladesh, India, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the West Indies. The winners will once again receive USD 2,340,000, while the runners-

up will get USD 1,170,000. Losing semi-finalists will earn USD 675,000, and each group match victory will be rewarded with USD 31,154. All 12 teams participating are guaranteed a minimum prize of USD 247,500, the ICC said in a release.

The news arrives just 60 days before the tournament begins on June 12, when England will face Sri Lanka at Edgbaston, Birmingham. The 33-match event will take place across seven venues over 24 days, with teams competing for the top prize.

ICC CEO, Sanjog Gupta, said, "The growth of women's cricket continues to accelerate, and the expansion of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup to 12 teams, combined with a record prize pool, underlines our commitment to building a stronger, more competitive global game."

"The continued rise of women's cricket through increased investment and opportunity reflects the growing influence and impact of female athletes on the global stage. With that same momentum building across every aspect of women's cricket, this event is shaping up to not only set a host of new attendance and viewing records in the sports and media ecosystems but also leave a lasting impact on the

wider socio-cultural landscape across the world."

All roads now officially lead to England and Wales this summer, thanks to the ICC Trophy Tour, which kicks off Monday and will travel across Europe in the weeks before the competition.

The Trophy Tour begins in London, where it will be displayed in the square at Lord's Cricket Ground, the venue for the final and known as the Home of Cricket. It will be showcased with a spectacular projection—making it the first time anything has ever been projected onto the ground's renowned pavilion.

The trophy will travel to the Netherlands, Ireland and Scotland, the tournament's qualified European member nations, before embarking on an extensive tour of the tournament's host cities through May, building excitement ahead of the tournament's first ball on 12 June.

The tour will feature visits to major locations with multiple fan engagement opportunities across the host cities, including Millennium Square (Leeds), St Peter's Square (Manchester), Bullring (Birmingham), Cabot Circus (Bristol), Guildhall Square (Southampton), and Trafalgar

Square (London).

Tournament Director Beth Barrett-Wild said, "The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 is set to be a landmark moment for the game - on course to become the most attended women's cricket event in history, with record-breaking ticket demand and the largest-ever prize pot for a global women's T20 competition. That level of investment, alongside prize money that matches the men's game, is a powerful reflection of the status, quality and global appeal of women's cricket today."

"That same ambition is shaping how we build towards the tournament, with the trophy tour playing a key role in taking the game to new audiences, building excitement across England and Wales, and showcasing women's cricket on the biggest stages as we count down to an unforgettable summer."

The ICC Women's T20 World Cup trophy will visit the host cities on the following dates:

Scotland: May 7 to 10  
Netherlands: May 11 to 14  
Ireland: May 15 to 18  
Leeds: May 19 to 24  
Manchester: May 25 to 27  
Birmingham: May 28 to 29  
Bristol: May 31 to June 1  
Southampton: June 3 to 4  
London: June 5 to 8

## Kohli, Rohit are striking at 152, feels like they're driving a Ferrari: Aakash Chopra

New Delhi, April 13 : Former India opener Aakash Chopra has highlighted the shift in batting approach of modern-day greats Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the IPL, noting a rise in their strike rates over the last two seasons, and stating that seeing them bat at a powerful strike rate 'feels like they're driving a Ferrari.' Kohli and Rohit, traditionally seen as key players in T20 cricket, have adjusted their playing styles to meet the format's evolving pressures, adopting a more aggressive approach since 2024. At the ongoing IPL 2026, both players have been performing exceptionally well for their teams. "Look at the way both have switched gears. From 2020 to 2023, Kohli and Rohit's strike rates were 126 and 127 in the IPL, a bit slow and sedate, but look at how both have transformed



since 2024; they are striking at 152. It almost feels like they are driving a Ferrari now," Chopra told JioStar. Meanwhile, former India captain Anil Kumble offered a technical breakdown of why emerging spinner Digvesh Rathi has been difficult for batters to read, particularly due to the subtle variations in his wrist and finger positions. "There isn't much difference between a leg-spin

delivery that goes away from the batter and the googly in the way that he bowls, so it's not easy to read. His grip on the ball remains almost the same, with his thumb on the side, the index finger on top of the seam, and the old middle finger. He just positions his index finger a little differently on his inward-turning ball, but that too isn't easy to pick. His speeds are also very good, so if you don't

pick the length correctly, there's a high chance of getting out," he noted. The legendary leg-spinner also shared advice for young bowlers aiming to develop spin skills, emphasising the importance of practice and building finger strength from an early stage. "You can definitely start practising spinning the ball with a rubber ball or a tennis ball, because you'll need to squeeze the ball a bit to bowl the carrom ball. So, if you start from there, first focus on getting the turn, and later work on control by simply bowling as much as you can. After that, when you move to a cricket ball, you might be able to execute this skill properly, because the key is learning how to hold the ball tightly and making your fingers strong enough to spin it and then just try and perfect it," he said.

## 'He took Indian cricket to a different level': Yuvraj reflects on Gary's Kirsten impact on India's rise

New Delhi, April 13 : Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh has highlighted the transformative impact of former head coach Gary Kirsten on Indian cricket, recalling how his man-management and belief in players played a defining role in the team's success between 2008 and 2011. Speaking to former England captain Michael Vaughan on India's white-ball growth during Kirsten's tenure from 2008-2011, Yuvraj reflected on the South African's arrival at a crucial phase, when India were building towards a period of sustained dominance across formats. "I think Gary Kirsten was a big influence in that moment. Gary was a good man. We needed a good guy. That's all we wanted. Someone who said, 'Guys, let's be one on the park. Let's be together.' And Gary was very hard-



working," Yuvraj said in a video shared by 'Stick to Cricket' podcast on Monday. "And I think the day he came, he said that in the next four years, till the 2011 World Cup, we are going to be the number one T20 side. We are going to be the number one Test side. And we are going to be the number one ODI side. And a couple of guys looked at each other. 'What are you saying?' And that's what we did in the next four years. While Australia was dominating as well. So, I think his intention was good. He is a good man. And he

took Indian cricket to a different level," he added. Kirsten's tenure coincided with one of India's most successful phases, culminating in the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup triumph and consistent top rankings across formats. Yuvraj, one of the key architects of that era, also emphasised the role of the coach in instilling confidence, noting how belief from the leadership group helped players unlock their potential. "It's also about the confidence level of the coach, right? If I come to you and say, 'You're my match winner, I want you to go and win

the game for me. I don't care how many failures you've had, just go and win the game.' Then, suddenly, your mindset switches that the team and the coach believes in me, that they want me to go and win the game, they have the confidence in me. And Gary always told me, 'You're a game changer.' He said, 'If you bat 20-25 overs you're going to change the game. Go do that.' Even in whatever Test cricket I played, he told me the same. 'Go and play your game. If you do that, you're going to win for India.' That gave me a lot of confidence to go out and bat," the all-rounder added. Under Kirsten's guidance, players like Yuvraj flourished in clearly defined roles, with the coach's emphasis on unity, clarity, and belief becoming central to India's rise as a dominant force in world cricket.

## IPL 2026: 'Wanted to keep the batsman guessing,' says Krunal on his strategy in RCB's win over MI

Mumbai, April 13 : Following Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) 18-run victory over Mumbai Indians (MI) at the Wankhede Stadium, all-rounder Krunal Pandya shed light on the tactical execution that helped swing the game decisively in his side's favour. In a match dominated by explosive batting performances earlier, it was RCB's control through the middle overs that proved crucial. Krunal, operating in tandem with young leg-spinner Suyash Sharma, played a key role in slowing Mumbai's chase just when it threatened to gain momentum. "I just wanted to be one step ahead and keep the batsman guessing and that worked for us. And yes, Suyash bowled really well. Taking those two wickets in (his) first over changed the momentum. And I always believe bowling is about partnerships. And we were able to do that for the team, which was quite satisfying," Krunal said of the overs 7, 8, 9 and 10, which the duo bowled. Mumbai had started strongly in pursuit of a daunting 241, but Suyash's double strike, removing key batters, shifted the balance.



Krunal emphasised that the young spinner's growth has been a product of consistent behind-the-scenes work. "He (Suyash) has been getting better. I'll give a lot of credit to Malolan (Rangarajan), who is our spin-bowling coach. He has been constantly working with Suyash in the off-season as well as during the season. He is always having conversations with him. And credit goes to Suyash that he has been able to adapt to things and he has been able to be consistent as a bowler, which always helps in a game where batters are taking you every ball," he said. The match started as a high-scoring affair, with RCB accumulating 240/4 thanks to quick half-centuries from Phil Salt and Rajat Patidar, while Virat Kohli provided stability with a reliable fifty. However, Krunal highlighted that modern T20

strategies, particularly the Impact Player rule, have considerably increased the challenges faced by bowlers. "I have never shied away from trying different and new things. Because if you see, with the impact player rule, previously without an impact player, you had No. 6 allrounder or No. 7 allrounder. Batmanship was quite different. But now, having eight pure batters and the skill set, you see young boys like Mukul and Vaibhav, so many of them are just coming and hitting from ball one consistently. So again, as a bowler, I always want to be one step ahead with the skill set as well as with the mental battle as well," the spinner stated. Krunal also spoke about his evolving methods, including the occasional use of bouncers, a rarity for finger spinners, as he looks to stay unpredictable in a format domi-

nated by power-hitting. "Whether it's me bending my knee and bowling a bouncer, I'm glad that it is coming out well and hope that in this format, there are fingerspinners who will survive and who can take something out of it and do well in this format. Because for fingerspinners, with flat tracks and eight batters, it has become very difficult. I don't pre-plan that I want to bowl a fourth- or a fifth- or a sixth-ball bouncer. "There are days where I'll bowl two bouncers back-to-back, and suddenly I'll bowl the first ball and a sixth ball. So there are no such plans. But yeah, it's more sort of a gut feeling when to bowl which ball and I just commit 100% to that. I've been able to get batsmen out with spin and deceiving flight. I don't practise that much where I go and bowl bouncers. It is just I bowl in the game," he mentioned. Although Mumbai made a late push, the middle-overs pressure from Krunal and Suyash kept the required run rate rising. Ultimately, this phase, characterised by control, variation, and effective partnership bowling, was crucial in securing RCB's third victory of the season.

## IPL 2026: 'It's always winning and learning, never losing,' says Hardik after MI's third straight defeat



New Delhi, April 13 : After a frustrating loss at the Wankhede Stadium, Hardik Pandya chose reflection over reaction, delivering a calm but purposeful message to his Mumbai Indians squad in the dressing room following their 18-run defeat to the Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Drawing from

head coach Mahela Jayawardene's philosophy, Pandya urged his players to confront the setback collectively rather than retreat into isolation. "Taking from what MJ (Mahela Jayawardene) said, I think here there are two options we can do. One is, go back in our rooms, go back in our

cocoon spaces and try to figure it out. I know it's tough, losing is always tough, but let's learn, let's not disappear. It's always winning and learning, never losing," he said in a video shared by the franchise on X. So, let's do that, that's what something which tonight, after the game, once we go back to the hotel, let's have meal together; we'll figure something out. We'll talk about cricket, we'll talk about something else, but we'll figure it out," Pandya added. The address came after Mumbai slumped to their third consecutive defeat, falling short despite a spirited late surge. The match itself had been defined by

RCB's dominant batting display, powered by aggressive half-centuries that set a daunting target. RCB posted a massive 240/4, powered by explosive half-centuries from Phil Salt (78 off 36) and Rajat Patidar (53 off 20), while Virat Kohli added a steady 50. In reply, MI started well but suffered a major setback when Rohit Sharma retired hurt. Despite fighting knocks from Hardik Pandya (40), Ryan Rickelton (37), and a late blitz by Sherfane Rutherford (71\*), they finished at 222/5, falling short. MI will next play the Punjab Kings at the same venue, their home ground, on Thursday.

## Sachin Tendulkar breaks down while paying his last respects to Asha Bhosle

Mumbai, April 13 : Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar was overcome with emotion as he paid his last respects to legendary singer Asha Bhosle, who was laid to rest with full state honours on Monday. Tendulkar and his wife, Anjali, who share a close, deeply personal bond with the iconic vocalist, arrived early to stand with the grieving family. Known to regard Bhosle as a maternal figure, the former India captain appeared visibly shaken during the final rites, as the nation mourned the loss of one of its most celebrated cultural figures. In recognition of her extraordinary contribution to Indian music, Bhosle's mortal remains were draped in the national tricolour, while the Mumbai Police ceremonial band paid tribute with a final salute, marking the end of a remarkable career that spanned over eight decades. In a nod to her personal taste, the legendary singer was dressed in a striking blue saree, a colour she was fond of and often chose for public appearances, adding a poignant, per-



sonal touch to the solemn ceremony. The relationship between Tendulkar and Bhosle extended beyond public admiration, rooted in mutual respect and familial warmth. Over the years, Bhosle had often spoken about Tendulkar's humility and values, embracing him as one of her own rather than as a sporting superstar. Bhosle's final public appearance came earlier this year at the wedding of Tendulkar's son, Arjun Tendulkar, on March 5, where she was seen warmly interacting with guests and posing for photographers, an appearance that, in hindsight, marked her last before her brief hospitalisation and passing. Following her demise, Tendulkar took to social media to express his grief in a heartfelt tribute: "A deeply sad day for India, and for music lovers across the world. For us, Asha Tai was family. Today, words feel too small for the loss we feel. One moment, the heart falls silent, and the next, it drifts through the countless melodies she gifted all of us. It feels as though time itself has paused."

## Tenth Class Examinations Conclude Smoothly Under Tight Supervision

**MEO S.M.N. Khuddus Ensures Smooth, Incident-Free Class 10 Exams in Guntur**



(By Our Staff Reporter) Guntur, Apr 13: The Class 10 public examinations conducted in Guntur city concluded successfully in a calm and orderly atmosphere without any untoward incidents. The efficient performance of Mandal Education Officer S.M.N. Khuddus has drawn widespread appreciation from

the education community. From the very beginning of the examinations, Khuddus remained vigilant and personally inspected several examination centers across the city. By closely monitoring the situation at each center, strict measures were implemented to prevent malpractice and ensure a

fair examination process. Special precautions were taken to avoid any disturbances or irregularities. Following the directions of the District Education Officer, Khuddus provided clear guidance to teachers and staff, enabling them to carry out their duties effectively. Particular attention was given to maintaining a peaceful environment at the examination centers for students. The efforts of Khuddus played a crucial role in helping students appear for their exams without stress. Parents, teachers, and members of the education sector have appreciated the arrangements, describing the conduct of examinations as exemplary. Education circles opined that the way examinations were managed in Guntur this time can serve as a model for other regions.

## Awareness Program on Foundational Learning Assessment Conducted in Guntur

(By Our Staff Reporter) Guntur, Apr 13:



A one-day awareness program on the use of tablets was organized at Mahaveer Junior College in Guntur for selected teachers and DIET students from various districts. Speaking as the chief guest, District Education Officer Dr. Shaik Saleem Basha stated that under the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), 16 schools in Palnadu district and 17 schools in Guntur district have been selected for the Foundational Learning Assessment (FLA). He explained that DIET students selected for this initiative must assess the competencies of Class 3 students studying in Telugu, English, and Mathematics using the provided tablets. He emphasized that no negligence should be shown in carrying out this responsibility. District Educational Development and Monitoring Committee

Secretary A. Tirumalesh said that the Central Government has undertaken this program as a prestigious initiative. Therefore, DIET students must conduct the Foundational Learning Assessment for at least 12 Class 3 students from Telugu, English, and Urdu medium schools using tablets. The training program was attended by Kakumanu Mandal Education Officer K. Vijayabhaskar, Palnadu Additional Mandal Education Officer Poomachandra Rao, DIET senior lecturers Haragopal and Poleramma, and resource persons Bhuvanachandra and Saleem, among others.

## Traffic Woes Trouble Public in Machilipatnam

Machilipatnam Correspondent: Apr 13 Traffic congestion at Kota Thulluru Center on the main road in Machilipatnam has become chaotic, causing severe inconvenience to both pedestrians and motorists. The area, which remains busy throughout the day, is facing heavy traffic jams due to multiple roadside establishments. A wine shop on one side, milk booths on another, along with tiffin stalls, a chicken pakodi cart, and sugarcane juice vendors are occupying space along the main road, leading to frequent traffic blockages. Due to the high traffic volume, a single constable is unable to effectively manage the situation. Additionally, vehicles coming from the Avani Gadda bypass road, along with the movement of cattle such as cows and buffaloes, are further worsening the congestion at the junction. The intense summer heat is adding to the hardship, making it difficult for commuters and pedestrians to cope with both



the traffic and weather conditions. Residents have urged authorities to respond promptly by improving traffic regulation and taking strict action against those causing obstructions on the road.

## Appoint Booth Level Agents in Full Strength: District Collector D.K. Balaji



Machilipatnam Correspondent 13th April: District Collector and District Election Officer D.K. Balaji has instructed all political parties in the district to appoint booth-level agents for every polling station across all constituencies before the next review meeting. On Monday morning, the Collector held a district-level meeting with representatives of various political parties at his chamber in the city to review election-related matters. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that out of 1,769 polling stations in the district, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) has appointed 1,710 booth-level agents, though some appointments are still pending in Machilipatnam, Gudivada,

and Gannavaram constituencies. He further stated that the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has appointed 1,233 agents, but is yet to appoint any in Gudivada and Penamaluru constituencies. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has appointed only 21 agents in Avani Gadda constituency. Jana Sena Party has completed the appointment of booth-level agents in Avani Gadda. The Indian National Congress (INC), CPI(M), and BSP have not yet appointed any booth-level agents in the district. The Collector directed all parties to complete the appointment process before the next meeting and submit the list of agents to the respective Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) of each

constituency. He informed that the Election Commission of India will soon provide training to booth-level agents, enabling them to work along with booth-level officers in door-to-door verification for preparing an accurate voters' list. He also made it clear that complaints from political parties will not be entertained unless they appoint booth-level agents. Regarding voter list applications, the Collector said that a total of 86,313 applications (Forms 6, 7, and 8) were received, out of which 84,354 have been resolved, while 1,959 applications are still under process. He added that 69% of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) mapping of the 2002 voter list with the 2025 voter list has been completed in the district. District Revenue Officer Chandrasekhara Rao, along with representatives from TDP, INC, BJP, CPI(M), BSP, and YSRCP, including Das, Matin Khan, P.V. Gajendra Rao, Kodali Sharma, Rajesh, Balaji, Upendranath, Silar Dada, and Basha, as well as election staff from the Collectorate, attended the meeting.

## False Allegations Against Committee Are Unacceptable – Politicizing a Sacred Pilgrimage Is Shameful

(By Our Staff Reporter) Amaravati, Apr 13: The Andhra Pradesh Haj Committee has strongly condemned the false allegations being made by certain political forces against the Haj Committee and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. The Committee stated that dragging the sacred Haj pilgrimage into political controversies for vested interests is highly unfortunate. Speaking on the occasion, State Haj Committee Chairman Adi Hasan Basha said that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has been consistently working for the welfare of Muslim

minorities. He noted that the Chief Minister holds deep respect and concern for the Muslim community and is ensuring that Haj pilgrims face no inconvenience by issuing clear and timely directions. He further stated that, for the first time, the government is facilitating arrangements for a record number of pilgrims from Andhra Pradesh to undertake the sacred pilgrimage to Mecca. This achievement, he said, is a result of the Chief Minister's commitment and determination. With the support of the Minority Welfare Department, the functioning of the Haj Committee

is being closely monitored, and necessary steps are being taken regarding fund allocation and the safety of pilgrims. He criticized opposition parties for making baseless allegations through the media, stating that such actions are merely attempts to defame and create unnecessary controversy. He clarified that all appointments and activities of the Haj Committee are being carried out strictly as per rules and regulations. Adi Hasan Basha also warned that the Muslim community is closely observing attempts to politicize the Haj pilgrimage. He cautioned that anyone acting



with malicious intent in such a sacred matter will face strong response from the people. He reaffirmed that the Andhra Pradesh Haj Committee remains

committed to the welfare of pilgrims and will continue to work towards the development of minorities in line with the vision of the Chief Minister.

## UTI Large Cap Fund Rs. 10 lakhs invested at the inception of fund has grown to Rs. 23.03 crores as of March 31, 2026

Vijayawada, 13th April: UTI Large Cap Fund is India's first equity-oriented fund (launched in October 1986) and has a track record of wealth creation of over 38 years. UTI Large Cap Fund is an open-ended equity scheme which predominantly aims to invest in large cap companies having competitive advantage in their respective fields. It follows an investment style of Blend for stock picking. This means that it's an approach that combines both growth and value stocks to create a balanced, all-weather equity portfolio. The Fund aims to invest in companies that are fundamentally strong with controlled borrowings, consistent revenue growth, focus on profitability, higher return on capital than cost of capital and consistent operating cash-flows generation. Such companies may generate

free cash flows for future expansion and avoid dilution of existing shares. Owing to this Blend approach of, UTI Large Cap Fund may invest in companies with competitive franchise were, 1. The market is underestimating the companies' ability to sustain growth over the long term or the benefits of pricing power. 2. The growth trajectory is improving through industry wide phenomena like favourable demand cycle, consolidation, clearances of regulatory hurdles or through company specific factors like cost competitiveness and prudent capacity expansion. 3. The business is capital intensive but the companies invest prudently and execute efficiently. 4. The companies having opportunities to reinvest cash flows at high Return on Capital Employed (RoCE). 5. The rel-



ative valuation within the sector is attractive. This provides the investors an opportunity to create a long-term wealth by owning a portfolio of quality companies. UTI Large Cap Fund has a portfolio of leading companies such as HDFC Bank Ltd., ICICI Bank Ltd., Reliance Industries Ltd., Infosys Ltd., Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd., Larsen & Toubro Ltd., Bharti Airtel Ltd., Bajaj Finance Ltd.,

Axis Bank Ltd., and Eternal Ltd., and the top 10 stocks account for about 49% of the portfolio. The Scheme is currently overweight on Consumer Services, Consumer Durables, Information Technology, Construction and Capital Goods, and underweight on Power, FMCG, Financial Services, Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels, and Healthcare as of March 31, 2026. The Fund

has a corpus of over Rs. 11,200 crores as on March 31, 2026. The Fund aims at obtaining capital appreciation / or income distribution over long-term, follows a disciplined approach to invest as stated above and has maintained a stream of annual dividends every year since its inception. UTI Large Cap Fund has distributed a total dividend of about Rs. 4,500 crore.

## Krishna District Police Crack Theft Case at Former Minister's House ; One Arrested; 15 kg of Silver Seized

(By Our Staff Reporter) Machilipatnam 13th April: Krishna District Superintendent of Police (SP) Vidyasagar Naidu presented before the media the accused arrested in connection with a theft that took place at the residence of former state minister Katari Eshwar Kumar. The police arrested an inter-state criminal, Dodoji Babu alias Ravi Babu, who is reportedly involved in 11 cases. From his possession, approximately 15 kilograms of silver articles worth around ₹15 lakh were

recovered. Addressing the media, the SP shared details of the case. He stated that the accused was working as a lorry cleaner and had fallen into bad habits. In an attempt to earn money easily, he resorted to committing thefts. Based on a complaint received regarding the theft that occurred on March 14 at the residence of former minister Katari Eshwar Kumar, located in Anjaneya Peta under Gudivada Two Town police station limits, a case was registered. Despite the lack of initial evidence,



Gudivada Two Town police acted swiftly and intelligently to apprehend

the accused. The SP appreciated the police for solving the case by effectively using technology

along with human intelligence at the crime scene.

## “Mee Kosam” Petitions must be resolved on priority: District Collector D.K. Balaji



Machilipatnam Correspondent 13th April: District Collector D.K. Balaji has directed officials to resolve petitions received under the “Mee Kosam” grievance redressal program on priority and within the stipulated time. On Monday, the Collector, along with senior officials, conducted the program at the Collectorate and received petitions from people across the district. A total of 132 applications were submitted. The Collector patiently heard the grievances and instructed officials to take immediate action. Among the petitions, a resident requested relocation of a TIDCO housing flat from the fourth floor to a lower level due to difficulty in access. Another complaint highlighted alleged threats and encroachment attempts over government land. Representatives of the Krishna District Farmers' Association raised concerns over pending cyclone compensation, silted drains causing flooding of fields, and demanded urgent desilting works and repair of sluices to protect

thousands of acres. Reviewing the performance of officials, the Collector expressed dissatisfaction over improper online updates of petition disposal and warned of showcause notices if negligence continues. He emphasized accountability and timely resolution of grievances. The Collector also instructed officials to maintain cleanliness in government schools, hostels, and institutions by ensuring compost and soak pits. Drinking water sources must be disinfected every 15 days with proper monitoring to prevent contamination. He further directed officials to be prepared for the visit of the State SC Commission on the 17th of this month with complete reports. Applications under the Right to Information Act must be handled online, and all departments should complete their login processes. Officials showing outstanding performance in resolving petitions were appreciated and awarded during the program.