

EYE SECRETS

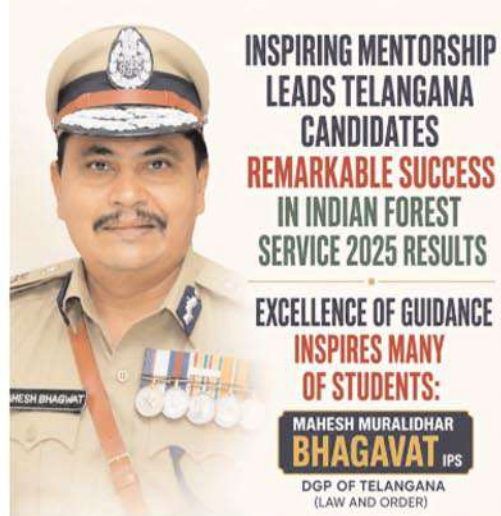
English Daily

Spy in every blink

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Guiding Excellence: Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat IPS Inspires Remarkable Success in Indian Forest Service 2025

Hyderabad sunil veer :The Indian Forest Service Examination 2025 results, declared on May 8, brought immense pride to Telangana and the civil services fraternity across the country. A significant number of successful candidates were mentored by Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, IPS, DGP (Law and Order), Telangana. Out of 148 candidates selected nationwide, 84 aspirants received interview guidance and mentorship under the leadership of Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, IPS, reflecting his exceptional commitment to shaping and encouraging future civil servants. Among the notable achievers from Telangana is Challa Yamini, who secured All India Rank 119. She is the daughter of Head Constable Challa Yadgiri of Suryapet Rural Police Station, Telangana. Her achievement has brought pride to the Telangana Police Department and the state. Another distinguished achiever is Pawar Akshay Harib-



hau, who secured All India Rank 81. He hails from Pathardi in the Ahilyanagar district of Maharashtra, the native region of Mahesh Bhagwat, IPS. Adding further glory to this accomplishment, candidates mentored through this initiative have produced the All India Rank 1 topper in the Indian Forest Service examinations consecutively in 2023, 2024, and 2025, showcasing

a rare legacy of excellence, dedication, and consistent guidance. Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, IPS, expressed gratitude to all mentors, including senior officers and academicians from across the country, who contributed to this noble initiative. He congratulated all successful candidates and emphasized that true success must always remain rooted in the spirit of public service, discipline, and humility. Encouraging aspirants who could not succeed this time, he advised them to reassess their preparation strategy positively once the marks memo becomes available, while reminding them that UPSC results alone do not define an individual's life or future. This achievement stands as a shining example of dedicated mentorship, disciplined preparation, and the inspiring role played by senior officers in nurturing the next generation of public servants.

CM flags off Haj pilgrims at Haj House

Hyderabad : Chief Minister Revanth Reddy flagged off Haj pilgrims at Haj House in Nampally on Friday. Revanth Reddy noted that due to the West Asia conflict, aviation fuel charges have increased, resulting in higher air travel fares. However, he assured that the Telangana government is bearing the additional burden so that Haj pilgrims do not face any extra financial hardship. He emphasised that the government does not believe in discrimination and stated Hindu-Muslim Bhai Bhai. The Chief Minister recalled that 44 people died in a bus accident during last year's pilgrimage. He said the state supported the affected families by providing an ex gratia compensation of Rs 5 lakh to each deceased pilgrim's family. Revanth Reddy stated that the government is ensuring minorities receive their rightful share in welfare and development. He added that the administration is committed to ensuring minorities receive their due in employment opportunities. Reiterating this commitment, he added that Telangana should be made the number one state in the country in terms of development.



DMK Targets Vijay Over Government Formation Bid, Says TVK Must Secure Allies First

Political tensions rise in Tamil Nadu as DMK criticises TVK chief Vijay for staking claim to form the government without proving majority support. Here's the latest on the Tamil Nadu government formation drama. Tamil Nadu Political Drama Intensifies as TVK Stakes Claim to Form Government The political battle in Tamil Nadu has intensified after Vijay, founder of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), met Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar to stake claim to form the government following the 2026 Assembly election results. However, the move has drawn sharp criticism from leaders of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), who argued that TVK should first secure the support of enough legislators before approaching the Governor.



TVK emerged as the single largest party in the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly with 108 seats but remains short of the majority mark of 118. Despite ongoing talks with several parties, uncertainty continues over whether Vijay has the required numbers to form the government.

DMK leader TKS Elangovan questioned Vijay's approach, stating that he should first obtain confirmed support from other political parties before making a formal claim to the Governor.

Support Talks Continue Across Parties

In recent days, TVK has report-

edly received support from sections of the Congress and Left parties, while negotiations with other regional players continue. Reports suggest that parties including CPI and CPI(M) have extended outside support to prevent prolonged political uncertainty in the state. Congress has also backed TVK under certain conditions, including maintaining distance from the BJP. At the same time, rival parties are actively strategising to prevent TVK from comfortably reaching the majority mark. Political observers say the current situation marks one of the most dramatic government formation battles in Tamil Nadu in decades.

Resort Politics and Political Negotiations Return

Amid fears of defections and cross-voting, several MLAs from rival camps have reportedly

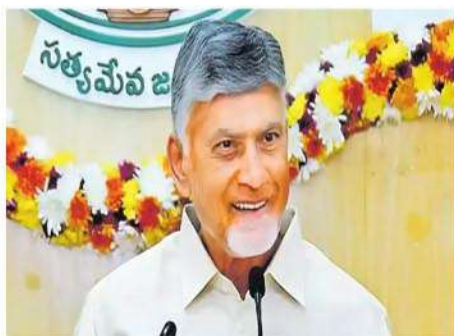
been shifted to resorts in neighbouring regions, reviving the familiar "resort politics" seen in many Indian states during closely contested elections. Meanwhile, Governor Arlekar has reportedly asked Vijay to submit proof of majority support before any invitation to form the government is issued.

A Historic Shift in Tamil Nadu Politics

The 2026 Tamil Nadu election has already reshaped the state's political landscape, ending decades of dominance by the DMK and AIADMK. Vijay's TVK making such a strong debut has emerged as one of the biggest political stories in India this year. As negotiations continue, all eyes remain on Chennai to see whether Vijay can gather the numbers required to officially form the next government.

AP CM Chandrababu heads to Kolkata for West Bengal CM Swearing-In

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has departed for Kolkata to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the West Bengal Chief Minister. He left his Undavalli residence by helicopter at 7:05 AM today



(Saturday) to Vijayawada Airport, where he boarded a flight to Kolkata at 7:40 AM. He is expected to arrive at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport at 9:20 AM. From there, he will travel by road to the Brigade Parade Ground, participating in the ceremony from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM. At 1:45 PM, he will depart for Hyderabad, arriving at Begumpet Airport by 3:45 PM, before returning to his residence in Jubilee Hills. Meanwhile, Suvendu Adhikari is set to assume office as West Bengal's Chief Minister. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, several Union Ministers, NDA Chief Ministers, and BJP cadres are expected to attend the event.

Heatwave persists in AP, Telangana; Rainfall Expected Soon

The Telugu states are enduring a relentless heatwave, with temperatures soaring above 40°C, causing significant discomfort due to intense heat and high humidity. Amidst this, the Meteorological Department has issued a positive forecast, indicating the possibility of rainfall in both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The Hyderabad Meteorological Centre reported that a trough extending from Madhya Pradesh to the Comorin region remains at an altitude of 0.9 km above sea level. This system stretches from the Marathwada region through the Karnataka coast, North Interior Karnataka, and Central Maharashtra, linked to a surface cyclonic circulation over the Southeast Arabian Sea and Lakshadweep area. Under the influence of this weather system, Telangana's forecast for the next three days predicts light to moderate rains at isolated places on Saturday and Sunday, with dry weath-



er expected on Monday. Temperatures are expected to stay steady over the next two days, followed by a gradual increase of 2 to 4 degrees Celsius over the subsequent four days. The weather warnings indicate that gusty winds of 30-40 km/h, along with thunderstorms and lightning, could occur at isolated locations during the rainfall periods. Hyderabad business directory In Andhra Pradesh, the Amaravati Meteorological Centre stated that northeasterly and southerly winds are

prevailing in the lower troposphere over the state and Yanam. Consequently, the forecast for the next three days suggests scattered light to moderate rains and thunderstorms across various regions. North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam are likely to experience rain or thundershowers at one or two places, accompanied by lightning and gusty winds of 40-50 km/h. Similar weather is expected in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema, with thunderstorms and gusty winds, and isolated lightning strikes possible.

Across the state, maximum temperatures are expected to remain relatively steady over the next five days, with no significant change anticipated in Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, and Rayalaseema. Overall, while the intense heat continues to affect the region, the upcoming rainfall could provide some relief to residents.

Hyd emerging as India's aerospace and defence capital: Uttam

Hyderabad

Hailing India's defence sector transformation, Telangana Minister of Irrigation and Civil Supplies, Uttam Kumar Reddy, said it has positioned Hyderabad as the undisputed nerve centre of the country's aerospace and defence ecosystem.

The sector in Telangana, Reddy said, is witnessing over 30 per cent annual growth, with exports registering a staggering 103 per cent compound annual growth



rate (CAGR) between 2024 and 2026.

Over 1,500 MSMEs are already active in the state's aerospace and defence

supply chain. The minister made the remarks while delivering the keynote address at MSME SPARK 3.0. Reddy attributed the growth to the early Congress governments, which focused on building a strong defence industry.

The continuous work by the following governments allowed the country to grow quickly and now produce over 60 per cent of its own military equipment.

"Exports have surged 34 times- from Rs 686 crore to Rs 23,622 crore over a period of

time," he said.

India is ready to achieve a production target of Rs 3 lakh crore and an export target of Rs 50,000 crore by 2029, he added.

The growth is evident through the 16,000 small and medium businesses already in the national defence supply chain, and private sector involvement is increasing.

This progress points toward a huge domestic market potential of Rs 10 lakh crore over the next two decades.

MURDER OF RETIRED IPS OFFICER'S WIFE

Police suspect escape of accused; probe underway

Hyderabad

Investigators suspect that the culprits in the brutal murder of Tanuja, wife of retired IPS officer Vinay Ranjan Ray, fled the city by train from Nampally railway station, even as hectic efforts were underway to apprehend them.

Telangana DGP C V Anand, who visited Ray's residence on Friday, said in a post on X that "offences committed by Nepali domestic workers have become increasingly common, and it is time to verify them through the local police or even consider stopping their employment altogether."

Police sources said on Saturday that they suspect the accused left the city via the Hyderabad-New Delhi Telangana Express, though the investigation is ongoing to determine the exact escape route. Multiple teams have been deployed to trace and apprehend them. Three persons, apart from the domestic help, Kalpana, are believed to have been involved in the crime.

Kalpana had been working in the household for the past year and had been missing since the incident, police said. The family discovered the murder after a worker



engaged in maintenance work at the house called Tanuja's daughter, as he did not receive any response from the domestic help. The daughter then went to Tanuja's room and knocked on the door. When there was no response, she looked through a window and found her mother dead, sources said. Tanuja (62) was allegedly killed at her residence in Prashasan Nagar, Jubilee Hills, in the early hours of Friday.

Police suspect that a group of Nepali nationals, with the assistance of the domestic help, was involved in the crime. The victim's hands were tied, and her mouth was gagged with a cloth, leading to death by suffocation, police said. The accused allegedly smothered her before fleeing with valuables from the house.

Ray, a DG-rank officer who retired from the Andhra Pradesh cadre, was out of station at the time of the incident, while the couple's children were on the upper floor of the house, police said.

Special teams have been formed to investigate the case and apprehend the accused. Police in other states, as well as the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), have been alerted.

DGP Anand said that crimes involving domestic workers from Nepal have been reported in several metropolitan cities, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Hyderabad.

He also stated that coordination challenges have been faced in some cases during attempts to apprehend suspects across the border, though investigations are ongoing.

Telangana woman drowns in Florida

Hyderabad

one more accidental death in america has sent shock waves in Telangana as the woman belongs to Hyderabad.

A young woman hailing from Hyderabad allegedly drowned in a swimming pool in Florida, United States.

Veena, whose parents live in Lingojiguda in LB Nagar, was residing in



Virginia. Two days ago, she travelled to Florida to attend a family function.

During that time, she reportedly entered the swimming pool and drowned. Her sudden demise has left her parents and her daughter in a state of shock.

Retired teacher duped Rs 82 lakh in digital arrest scam

Hyderabad

A retired teacher from Mahabubabad, Telangana, lost Rs 82 lakh in a digital arrest scam, with fraudsters posing as police officers, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) personnel and telecom officials threatening the man and his wife with fake arrest warrants and criminal cases. The teacher's wife first received a call on April 11 from an individual claiming to be a telecom employee from Airtel.



The caller warned the teacher that his mobile phone would be blocked since it had 17 harassment cases directly linked to his Aadhaar card. The couple was redirected to talk to a different fraudster via a WhatsApp video call. The person, dressed in a police uniform, introduced himself as a sub-inspector from Bengaluru. He misled the couple, saying that a Canara Bank account in the teacher's name had been opened in Mumbai, using the victim's Aadhaar card information. Rs 75 allegedly linked to an international crime network had been deposited into that account, the "sub-inspector" told the couple.

Harish questions CP over security lapse

Hyderabad

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLA T Harish Rao on Saturday questioned Hyderabad Commissioner of Police VC Sajjanar regarding a security lapse after a former IPS officer's wife was murdered by her domestic help on Friday, May 8.

"If the wife of a DG rank IPS officer is not safe, then who is?" Rao asked, expressing concern over the culprits still being on the run. He also noted that the commissioner had cautioned people against hiring

EX-IPS OFFICER'S WIFE'S MURDER



Nepalese nationals. He attacked the Telangana police, saying that it could not prevent the attack on BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy's office in Karimnagar by the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers. The former Telangana minister referred to Malkajgiri Commissioner of Police Samathi's undercover operation and alleged that Hyderabad is not safe for women who want to go out at night. Addressing a press conference, Rao accused the Telangana police of being incapable of maintaining law and order.

"The police are only filing cases against K Chandrashekar Rao and other BRS leaders. What is Krishank's fault, why was he arrested," Rao questioned.

VH begins indefinite hunger strike demanding BC census

Hyderabad

Advisor to the state government and former MP V Hanumantha Rao began an indefinite hunger strike at his residence in Amberpet on Saturday demanding that the Centre conduct a Backward Classes (BC) census as part of the National Census 2027.

Hanumantha Rao, who belongs to the Munnuru Kapu community, has argued that if BC communities are developed irrespective of politics, the population has to be enumerated. By not conduct-



ing a BC census along with the National census, the senior Congress leader said the community will be deprived of welfare bene-

fits and reservations in education, employment and politics.

He had earlier demanded that Prime Minister

Narendra Modi make his stand clear on the issue ahead of his Hyderabad visit on Monday, May 10.

As no response came from the Centre, he went on an indefinite hunger strike.

All India OBC Students Association (AIOBCSA) expressed its support for Rao's hunger strike on Saturday.

On behalf of AIOBCSA, its national advisor Alla Ramakrishna, national secretary and HCU-unit president Lakshminarasiah, and others met him at his residence and offered their support.

National Lok Adalat to be conducted in TG on June 20

2,07,66,548 cases amicably settled at across country

New Delhi

The National Legal Services Authority on Saturday organised the second National Lok Adalat of the year across the country.

According to a release, "A total of 2,07,66,548 cases were amicably settled, comprising 1,87,63,883 pre-litigation matters and 20,02,665 pending cases, involving an overall settlement amount of Rs 3,440.81 crore."

It attributed the comparatively lower figures, vis-a-vis some previous National Lok Adalats, primarily to the staggered schedule in certain states and Union territories and the ongoing consolidation of data from various jurisdictions.

According to the release, the Lok Adalat was organised across 21 states and six Union territories through thousands of benches constituted at various courts, tribunals, consumer commissions, and permanent Lok Adalats.

"Owing to summer vacations and administrative exigencies, the National Lok Adalat shall be con-



ducted on June 13 in Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal; on June 20 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Telangana; and on July 11 in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka," it said.

The matters settled on Saturday included bank recovery cases, cheque dishonour matters, motor accident claims, matrimonial disputes (excluding divorce), labour disputes, consumer matters, compoundable criminal cases, traffic challans, service matters, land acquisition disputes, arbitration matters, plea bargaining, succession cases, revenue cases, public utility cases and other civil cases

amenable to settlement, the release said. "Special emphasis was placed on long-pending matters identified through the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), reaffirming NALSA's commitment towards reducing pendency and strengthening the justice delivery system," it said.

"OWING TO SUMMER VACATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXIGENCIES, THE NATIONAL LOK ADALAT SHALL BE CONDUCTED ON JUNE 13 IN KERALA, PUDUCHERRY, TAMIL NADU AND WEST BENGAL; ON JUNE 20

Traffic restrictions announced ahead of PM Modi's visit to Hyd

Hyderabad

The Malkajgiri police have announced traffic restrictions ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting at the Parade Grounds in Secunderabad on Sunday, May 10.

The restrictions will remain in place from 1-9 pm. Commuters moving from Begumpet to Sangeeth

Junction may take the route towards Paradise-Patny-Clock Tower-Sangeeth and vice versa. Traffic moving from Begumpet to Trimulgherry should flyovers-St Johns rotary, Shenoy-AOC-KV-Trimulgherry and vice versa. Those travelling from Balanagar to Secunderabad should take Balanagar junction-Fathenagar-Ameerpet-Panjagutta-Begumpet.



Alternate route- Panjagutta-Begumpet- Rasoolpura junction- Minister Road- Ranigunj- Secunderabad. Commuters moving from Secunderabad to

Trimulgherry may take Clock Tower- Sangeeth- St John's rotary- Shenoy- AOC- KV-Trimulgherry and vice versa. Secunderabad to Bowenpally may take Clocktower- Patny- Paradise- CTO- Bowenpally and vice versa. Tank Bund to Trimulgherry may take towards Paradise- CTO- Tadburn-Diamond Point- Bowenpally Market- Trimulgherry.

ED claims Rs 284 crore laundering in Sravanthi Group probe; three arrested

New Delhi/Hyderabad

The ED on Saturday said its money laundering probe into Dandamudi Venkateswara Rao (D V Rao), promoter of Sravanthi Group, and his associates has uncovered alleged large-scale laundering worth approximately Rs 284 crore, and that three persons, among them Rao, have been arrested.

All three have been remanded to Enforcement Directorate custody by a competent court until May 12.

The ED said in a press release that its investigation originated from an FIR registered at a police station in Gurugram, wherein it was alleged that DJW Electric Power Projects Private Ltd, controlled by Rao, had fraudulently availed loans from various entities.

The ED investigation thus far revealed that the total loan amount involved in the fraud was approximately Rs

58 crore, the release said. According to the ED, while the accounting records of DJW showed that loans were being repaid to the original lenders, the banking RTGS system was allegedly misused.

The ED said the RTGS mandate forms fraudulently mentioned the names of actual lenders but provided bank details of Kolkata-based shell entities.

Consequently, loan repayment funds were allegedly siphoned off to shell companies instead of being returned to legitimate lenders.

Further investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act led to registration of another scheduled offence and a parallel money laundering probe involving Sravanthi Energy Private Limited (SEPL), also controlled by Rao.

The release claimed SEPL had been paying approxi-



mately Rs 75 lakh per month as "consultancy fee" to a shell entity that had no office or employees and was registered in the name of DV Rao's father-in-law.

Through this arrangement, Rs 89.36 crore was allegedly diverted, it said. Simultaneously, SEPL booked bogus purchases of over Rs 139 crore through fake invoices from more than 100 shell entities, without any actual supply of goods or

services. These payments were allegedly received back in cash by Rao and his family.

The total proceeds of crime identified against Rao and his family in the SEPL case are approximately Rs 228 crore, it claimed. The ED investigation further revealed that D V Rao had earlier defaulted on large amounts to banks, which led SEPL to become a Non-Performing Asset (NPA), it said. This, in turn, com-

pelled banks to resort to a compulsory One-Time Settlement (OTS), resulting in an alleged loss of more than Rs 1500 crore to the banking system.

The ED alleged that while the company was under financial stress, Rao was systematically siphoning funds for personal enrichment.

It claimed he defrauded not only banks but also investors in the company. Several PSU banks hold minority shares in the company, it added.

During search operations, the ED said it seized gold and diamond jewellery valued at approximately Rs 5 crore and multiple luxury vehicles belonging to D V Rao and his family members.

Thereafter, the ED issued a provisional attachment order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Sravanthi Energy Pvt Ltd and others. Despite multiple

summons, D V Rao remained absconding and did not cooperate with the investigation, it alleged.

His alleged non-cooperation led to the issuance of an open-ended non-bailable warrant against him by a court to ensure his presence before the investigating agency.

The ED further alleged that his brother, Dandamudi Avaniindra Kumar (DA Kumar), played an active role in obstructing the investigation. The evidence on record shows that Rao was hiding at DA Kumar's residence in Hyderabad to evade ED proceedings, the release said.

Sravanthi Group, according to its website, offers end-to-end engineering solutions for the development of conventional and renewable energy-based power generation projects in India. The group was established in 2009 and is headquartered in Gurugram.

Govt doctor dies in car-bus collision

Hyderabad

A 43-year-old government doctor died in a road accident after his car collided with a private school bus in Mahabubnagar district on Saturday, May 9, morning.

Vijay Kumar sustained serious injuries in the collision that took place near Carlo Bonvini Memorial Degree College on the Raichur Kodada National Highway near Kalwakurthy town.

Following the incident, Kumar was rushed to a private medical facility in the town.

However, he eventually succumbed to his injuries while receiving medical care.

His body was later transferred to the town government hospital for a post-mortem examination. The doctor had reportedly gone to the Vande Mataram Foundation premises near the town for an early



morning workout and was on his way back when the accident occurred.

The victim was originally from Makthal town in Narayanpet district and had been practising at the Kalwakurthy Government Hospital for three years.

He is survived by his wife, Dr Yashwanth Rani, and their two children.

Delhi LG Sandhu stresses Yamuna revival, green cover expansion

New Delhi

The Yamuna is an ecological lifeline, and restoring the river is closely linked to Delhi's environmental future, Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Delhi Taranjit Singh Sandhu said on Saturday. Developing biodiversity zones and eco-restoration efforts across the Yamuna floodplains are particularly significant in this regard, he said at the 5th International Summit & Expo on Bioenergy Value Chain BBB 2026.

"From reviving the Yamuna river to expanding green cover across the capital, our focus remains on transforming sustainability into a collective, citizen-led movement," he said in a post on X.

As the national capital, Delhi faces many environmental and urban challenges confronting modern cities globally, such as air



pollution, urban heat stress, waste management, mobility pressures, and ecological sustainability, he said. Urban horticulture, tree-cover expansion, shade infrastructure, and Miyawaki-style dense plantations are important interventions for addressing heat stress, improving air quality, and strengthening urban resilience, he said.

Delhi has the opportunity to become a model for urban environmental

transformation.

A greener Delhi must become central to both quality of life and climate resilience, Sandhu stated, emphasising citizen participation.

Resident Welfare Associations, adopting parks, school-level plantation drives, community participation in green initiatives, and greater public ownership of environmental spaces can create a more sustainable and urban culture, he suggested.

254 ACRE MIRA-BHAYANDER LAND Mah govt to move apex court against HC order

Mumbai

The Maharashtra government will move the Supreme Court against the Bombay High Court order directing the transfer of around 254.88 acres of land in Mira-Bhayander in Thane district to two builders, Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule said on Saturday.

According to an official statement, the Bombay High Court had ruled in favour of The Estate Investment and Mira Real Estate Developers in connection with the land, valued at crores of rupees.

"The land belongs to the state government. We will strongly present the government's side before the

Supreme Court and ensure the land remains in government possession," Bawankule said while announcing the decision to challenge the April 30 verdict through a Special Leave Petition. The minister said the verdict was unexpected as the land was owned by the state government, and directions had been issued to file an appeal in the apex court.

Explaining the background of the case, the official statement said changes were allegedly made in the revenue records of the land from 1948 onwards without prior government approval. Initially, the name of Estate Investment Company and later Mira Salt Works was inserted in the records illegal-



ly, it claimed. "In 1958, the name of the Centre's Salt Department was added because of salt pan usage on the land. Subsequently, the ownership dispute reached the Supreme Court, which directed that an appeal be filed before the Thane district collector. In 2002,

the district collector rejected the claim of Mira Salt Company and ordered that the entire land be vested with the government," the statement said. However, in 2019, the companies and the Centre's Salt Commissioner challenged the order before the Bombay High Court through a first appeal. On April 30, the HC dismissed the Salt Commissioner's appeal and held that the land belonged to Mira Salt Works, according to the statement.

The government claimed the issue before the HC concerned the maintainability of the first appeal, but the matter was decided on merits, creating the possibility of private entity Mira Real Estate Developers retaining its claim

"THE LAND BELONGS TO THE STATE GOVERNMENT. WE WILL STRONGLY PRESENT THE GOVERNMENT'S SIDE BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT AND ENSURE THE LAND REMAINS IN GOVERNMENT POSSESSION," BAWANKULE SAID

over government land. Citing provisions of Section 29(3)(c) of the Maharashtra Land Revenue Code, 1966, Bawankule asserted the land belongs to the state government.

NPF farmers' wing to undertake statewide inquiry tour across Nagaland

Kohima

The ruling Naga People's Front's farmers' wing on Saturday announced a statewide tour to engage directly with farming communities across the state to understand the ground realities and to highlight successful agricultural practices and initiatives. Addressing a press conference in Kohima on Saturday, NPF Central Farmers' Wing (CFW) president Vikeho Swu said as part of a statewide 'appreciative inquiry tour', three teams would cover all districts of the state, travelling towards Tuensang, Mon and the central region. He said the tour aims to identify and acknowledge successful Naga farmers, promote agricultural initiatives, and interact with Krishi Vigyan Kendras, agri and allied departments, and field officers. Swu appreciated the government's efforts in promoting agriculture through distribution of seeds, saplings, farm tools and identification of crop clusters, while also highlighting challenges such as the ageing farming population and climate change.

He said younger generations are increasingly moving away from farming towards white-collar jobs, adding that farmers must adopt climate-resilient crops and farming methods to cope with unpredictable weather conditions.

On modern farming, Swu said the shift from traditional jhum cultivation would require collective decision-making involving both the government and local communities, while stressing that jhum remains deeply linked to Naga culture and identity.

PDP chief Mufti questions bulldozer action against drug peddlers

Srinagar

People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti said on Saturday that strict action should be taken against drug peddlers, but innocent families should not suffer by having their houses demolished.

While addressing a party convention in central Kashmir's Budgam district, the former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir said, "If anyone is involved in drug trafficking, they should be jailed, but you should also ask those police personnel who release them after taking money from them.



Why are their houses being bulldozed? What is the fault of the family members? Why are you demolishing their houses?"

There is no justice."

She also criticised chief minister Omar Abdullah over the coercive action, saying, "Omar, if the people had liked bulldozer baba, why would they have voted for you? People voted for you and gave you 50 MLAs thinking you will safeguard them." Referring to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's padyatra as part of the Nasha Mukh J-K Abhiyaan in south Kashmir's Anantnag district earlier in the day, the PDP president alleged that government employees, school teachers and students were directed to arrive for the event at 6:30 am.

"I will not name the person who messaged me at midnight last night. That person said the LG is organising Nasha Mukh Abhiyaan event in Anantnag, but all employees and schools, including women and girls, have been directed to arrive at 6:30 am. I want to tell the LG that the campaign is a good initiative, but... making them wait, I think, is an excess," she said. The PDP chief accused the government of "rampant corruption", saying deserving youths are denied opportunities while political favoritism dominates recruitment.

Bihar: Sultanganj Nagar Parishad chairman dies days after shooting

Patna

Sultanganj Nagar Parishad chairman Rajkumar, who was shot in his office, succumbed to the injuries at a hospital in Patna on Saturday, officials said.

Three armed men allegedly entered his office in Bhagalpur district on April 28 and opened fire. Rajkumar and executive officer Krishna Bhushan Kumar were critically injured in the incident, they said. Kumar died at a local hospital, while Rajkumar was shifted to a hospital in Patna for advanced treatment, they added. Rajkumar remained in a critical condition before



passing away. Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary expressed grief over Rajkumar's death. In a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office, Choudhary described Rajkumar as a "simple and good-natured person" who was widely popular in the area and always accessible to

the public. "His untimely demise has caused an irreparable loss to the political and social spheres," the statement said. The chief minister said he had directed the DGP immediately after the incident to ensure a speedy trial in the case so that justice could be delivered to the victim's family.

The mastermind behind the attack, Ramdhani Yadav, was killed in an encounter with the police on April 29. Investigators alleged that the attack was orchestrated due to personal rivalry. Yadav was the husband of Neelam Devi, he vice chairperson of the civic body.

Four killed in car-lorry collision in Karnataka

Tumakuru (Karnataka)

Four people travelling in a car were killed in a head-on collision with a lorry in this district on Saturday, police said. The accident occurred near Chigani Palya in Kunigal taluk of Tumakuru district between a car travelling from Tumakuru towards Mandya and a lorry coming from Kunigal towards Tumakuru, they said. Due to the impact of the collision, Kumar Narasimhaswamy (65), his wife Gayathri (60), and his sister Gayathri (55), residents of Suvamasandra in Mandya district, died on the spot, police said. Another person, believed to be the car driver, also lost his life. His identity is yet to be confirmed, they added.

The lorry driver, however, escaped unhurt and was subsequently taken into police



custody. According to the police, Kumar along with his wife and sister had visited Devarayanadurga, a temple town and hill station, on the occasion of their wedding anniversary.

They were returning home when the tragedy occurred. Kunigal Police Station Inspector Madhya Nayak and his staff visited the spot and conducted an inspection. The bodies have been shifted to the Kunigal Government Hospital, a senior police officer said.

Cabinet expansion buzz in UP as CM meets Governor Patel

Lucknow

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday evening met Governor Anandiben Patel at Jan Bhavan in Lucknow, fuelling speculation over a possible cabinet expansion.

According to an official statement, Adityanath called on the governor at Jan Bhavan and presented her a copy of the book "Bhartiya Gyan Parampara Avadharna" written by Lalchand Ram.

The meeting assumes significance amid long-standing speculation over a cabinet expansion in the state. Political circles are abuzz with the possibility of an expansion taking



place on Sunday or Monday, though no official confirmation has been made so far.

The speculation has gained momentum following the Bharatiya Janata Party's strong performance in the recently concluded assembly elections in five states, including West Bengal and Assam. In the 403-

member Uttar Pradesh Assembly, the maximum strength of the council of ministers can be 60. At present, six berths are vacant.

Political observers believe that any expansion of the ministry ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections could factor in caste and regional equations.

Security guard hacked to death in UP

Saharanpur (UP)

A 23-year-old security guard posted at an Industrial Training Institute (ITI) was allegedly hacked to death here, police said on Saturday.

They said the victim's body, identified as Aditya Khatana, was recovered from a field in Issapur village under the Gangoh police station area.

After receiving information about the incident, Gangoh police station personnel and Circle Officer Ashok Sisodiya reached the spot and began an investigation. Police examined CCTV footage

installed on the college campus.

According to officials, a suspicious man from Amalapur village in neighbouring Shamli district was seen moving around the vicinity on Friday night.

Police said the suspect was recently released from jail and has a criminal background.

The victim's family members and villagers were angry over the incident, the police said.

They only agreed to let the police take the body for a postmortem after Sisodiya assured them that the accused would be arrested soon, they said.

CM calls for scientific study on recurring cloudburst incidents in Himachal

Shimla

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has directed the Himalayan Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience at Himachal Pradesh University to undertake detailed scientific studies on the recurring cloudburst incidents in the state.

He said the study should include an assessment of the impact of dams, temperature variations, and terrain conditions, besides an aerial distance-based analysis of the frequent cloudburst events in the Himalayan region, a statement issued here on Saturday said. Chairing a high-level meeting to discuss disaster risks, resilience planning and related research initiatives, he said the Himalayan centre would carry out state-level research and development activities related to disaster studies, hazard assessment and technical evaluations.

He said cloudbursts across the state have become a frequent phenomenon and



people are suffering significant losses of life and property due to these incidents, stressing the urgent need for scientific study into the pattern of cloudbursts occurring in Himachal.

Sukhu directed the Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (HPSDMA) to allocate Rs 6 crore for capacity building and strengthening of the Himalayan institute through specialised training programmes. He also approved an additional grant of Rs 10 crore for institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement initiatives.

Carbon credit: Study finds under ground treasure of Delhi's forests

New Delhi

In a city struggling with toxic air and rising temperatures, Delhi's forests have been quietly storing an underground climate treasure.

Researchers from the Jawaharlal Nehru University and the University of Delhi have found that urban forests in the national capital are absorbing massive amounts of carbon in their trees and soil, with the potential to generate over Rs 4 lakh per hectare through carbon credits.

The study said that one hectare of urban forest land inside the JNU campus could store nearly 346.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, or around 3,46,900 kilograms. One hectare equals nearly 2.47 acres.

Researchers estimated the carbon credit value of this storage at nearly USD 4,846, or more than Rs 4 lakh per hectare.

According to the study, the biggest carbon storage

was happening underground rather than in trees.

Researchers said soil organic carbon accounted for more than 43 per cent of the total carbon stored in the ecosystem. The soil alone stored nearly 149.73 tonnes, or around 1,49,730 kilograms, of carbon dioxide equivalent per hectare, with an estimated carbon credit value of nearly USD 2,096 or around Rs 1.74 lakh per hectare.

Among tree species, neem (Azadirachta indica) and babool (Acacia nilotica) emerged as the strongest carbon absorbers in the forest ecosystem studied by researchers.

The study found neem trees stored 55.10 tonnes, or around 55,100 kilograms, of carbon dioxide equivalent per hectare, with an estimated carbon credit value of over USD 771, or more than Rs 64,000. Babool trees stored 54.43 tonnes, or around 54,430 kilograms, of carbon dioxide equivalent per



hectare, valued at around USD 762, or over Rs 63,000.

Researchers also found that litter on the forest floor, shrubs, herbs and underground microbial activity contributed significantly to carbon storage, showing that entire forest ecosystems, and not just large trees, help absorb greenhouse gases.

The researchers said urban forests in Delhi could become critical natural buffers against rising emissions and worsen-

ing climate conditions in the city if protected and expanded properly.

The study noted that native species such as neem and babool are especially important in semi-arid urban conditions because of their high carbon storage potential and ability to survive harsh climatic conditions.

Researchers also found that forests with greater biodiversity and healthier soil

stored more carbon overall. The findings come amid the Delhi government's push to monetise pollution reduction through a Carbon Credit Monetisation Framework approved by the Cabinet in January this year.

Under the framework, pollution reduction achieved through electric buses, plantation drives, solar energy projects and waste management initiatives will be scientifically measured and converted into carbon credits that can be sold in national and international markets.

A carbon credit is essentially a tradable certificate representing one tonne of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere or prevented from being released. Governments and companies buy these credits to balance out their emissions.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, the Environment Department will appoint a specialised

agency through a tender process to identify projects eligible for carbon credits and register them under international standards.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta had said the framework would help Delhi strengthen climate action efforts while also generating additional revenue for development works.

For the study, researchers examined forest patches spread across the 1,019-acre JNU campus (nearly 412 hectares). They created five separate study plots and used stratified random sampling methods to record tree species, trunk diameter, tree height and biomass.

Researchers also collected soil samples up to a depth of 30 centimetres and analysed them in laboratories to measure organic carbon, nitrogen and microbial activity. The study recorded 11 dominant tree species with an overall density of 826 trees per hectare.

**Editor's
TAKE**

BENGAL'S NEW ERA

With the BJP grabbing power in West Bengal, three major political establishments that ruled the state in the past for different periods—namely the Congress, the Left and the Trinamool Congress—are equally on the defensive. This has been the case one after another in the past six decades while politics grabbed the upper hand and developmental aspirations took major hits there. What was once the capital of India, the East India Company and the British Raj, progressively saw a huge decline. The Communists ruled West Bengal for over three decades at a stretch, mostly under the charismatic leadership of western-educated Jyoti Basu with a patently feudal mind-set, followed by Buddhadeb Bhattacharya. Singur, where Bhattacharya gave the nod for the Tatas to set up a huge vehicle factory, leading to massive protests, proved to be the ultimate undoing for the Left.

Situations conspired to unseat the Left from power in 2011. On the one side was a resurgent Mamata Banerjee, who had started as a Congress leader and then went on to become a parliamentarian and railway minister, to finally form her own party, grab power and become chief minister. Her sincerity to the causes she upheld cannot be questioned though. An anti-incumbency factor worked against her this time. The BJP, through sustained efforts since 2014 managed to win over sizable sections of the voters and some senior TMC leaders as well, prominently including Suwendu Adhikari. One of Adhikari's grouses against Mamata as CM was the "undue importance" she gave to her nephew, Abhishek Bajerjee, who was made the second-in-command in the party.

The alienation of a section of her prominent Muslim support base, with a senior Muslim leader forming his own party, also undercut Mamata Banerjee's political base. Curiously, the alienation of the Muslims and the other backward communities from the CPIM was one major reason for the exit of the Left from power 15 years ago. They mostly shifted their loyalties to the TMC. It is safe to assume that the BJP this time managed to consolidate the strength of the Hindus to its advantage. Kolkata for long years remained as the nerve-centre of commercial activities in the eastern sector. Yet, there was no palpable growth to the eastern metropolis compared to the way Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bengaluru prospered. The trade union militancy of the Left undercut its progress for many years. Industries fled the big city in a steady stream to other states. This apart, the confrontational attitude of the Left with the Congress governments at the Centre, and the AB Vajpayee dispensations too, proved deadly to West Bengal. Mamata Banerjee continued with the same policy vis-à-vis the Modi government. For this reason, states like Kerala also failed to get their dues from the Centre. Now, when Narendra Modi promises speedy progress under Double Engine Sarkaars, he openly undercuts the spirit of federalism. By the same token, however, it is now incumbent on the BJP government in the state to take economic development forward in Bengal in speedier ways. The state will have to catch up with lost time. Major infrastructure projects for which central funds are required will need to gain a new momentum. The five years for Suwendu Adhikari could be a period of big changes for Bengal and Bengalis.

'Where is the CDC?' as hantavirus outbreak unfolds on cruise ship

No quick dispatching of disease investigators. No news conference to inform the public. No timely health alerts to doctors. In the midst of a strange outbreak of hantavirus on a cruise ship that involves Americans and is making headlines around the world, the US government's top public health agency, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has been missing in action, according to a number of experts.

"We seem to have things under very good control," President Donald Trump told reporters Friday evening. But experts say the situation has not spiralled because, unlike COVID-19 or measles or the flu, hantavirus does not spread easily. It has been experts in other countries, not the United States, who have been dealing primarily with the outbreak in the past week.

"The CDC is not even a player," said Lawrence Gostin, an international public health expert at Georgetown University. "I've never seen that before."

The CDC's diminished role in this outbreak is an indicator the agency is no longer the force in international health or the protector of domestic health that it once was, some experts said.

The hantavirus outbreak is "a sentinel event" that speaks to "how well the country is prepared for a disease threat. And right now, I'm very sorry to say that we are not prepared," said Dr Jeanne Marrazzo, chief executive officer of the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

How the outbreak unfolded

Early last month, a 70-year-old Dutch man developed a feverish illness on a cruise ship travelling from Argentina to Antarctica and some islands in the South Atlantic. He died less than a week later. More people became sick, including the man's wife and a German woman, who both died.

Hantavirus was first identified as a cause of sickness of one of the cases on May 2. The World Health Organisation (WHO) swung into action and by Monday was calling it an outbreak.

About two dozen Americans were on the ship, including about seven who disembarked last month and 17 who remained on board.

It's WHO taking centre stage

For decades, the CDC partnered with the WHO in such situations. The CDC acted as a mainstay of any international investigation, providing staff and expertise to help unravel any outbreak mystery, develop ways to control it and communicate to the public what they should know and how they should worry.

Such actions were a large reason why the CDC developed a reputation as the world's premier public health agency. But this time, the WHO has been centre stage. It made the risk assessment that has told people the outbreak is not a pandemic threat.

"I don't think this is a giant threat to the United States," said Jennifer Nuzzo, director of Brown University's Pandemic Centre. But how this situation has played out "just shows how empty and vapid the CDC is right now," she said.

Tumult until Trump

The current situation comes after 16 tumultuous months during which the Trump administration withdrew from the WHO, has restricted CDC scientists from talking to international counterparts at times and



HANTAVIRUS WAS FIRST IDENTIFIED AS A CAUSE OF SICKNESS OF ONE OF THE CASES ON MAY 2. THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO) SWUNG INTO ACTION AND BY MONDAY WAS CALLING IT AN OUTBREAK. ABOUT TWO DOZEN AMERICANS WERE ON THE SHIP, INCLUDING ABOUT SEVEN WHO DISEMBARKED LAST MONTH AND 17 WHO REMAINED ON BOARD

embarked on a plan to build its own international public health network through one-on-one agreements with individual countries.

The administration has laid off thousands of CDC scientists and public health professionals, including members of the agency's ship sanitation program.

As this was playing out, Trump's health secretary, Robert F Kennedy Jr, said he was working to "restore the CDC's focus on infectious disease, invest in innovation, and rebuild trust through integrity and transparency."

Waiting to hear from the CDC

The CDC has not been completely silent on hantavirus. The agency on Wednesday issued a short statement that said the risk to the American public is "extremely low," and described the US government as "the world's leader in global health security."

Said Nuzzo: "Not only was that not helpful, it actually does damage because a core principle of public health communications is humility."

The CDC's acting director, Dr Jay Bhattacharya, posted a message on social media that the agency was lending its expertise in coordinating with other federal agencies and international authorities.

Arizona officials this week said they learned from the CDC that one of the Americans who left the ship—a person with no symptoms and not considered contagious—had already returned to the state. WHO officials said the CDC has been sharing technical information.

The CDC also is "monitoring the health status and preparing medical support for all of the American passengers on the cruise," Bhattacharya wrote.

But federal health officials have mostly been tight-lipped, declining interview requests. Some details emerged not through public statements but through disclosures from anonymous sources, including news Friday that the CDC was sending a team to Spain's Canary

Islands to meet the Americans onboard. On Friday evening, health officials issued an updated statement, confirming the deployment of a team to the Canary Islands. They also said a second team will go to Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska as part of a plan to evacuate American passengers from the ship to a quarantine centre.

COVID-19 comparison

In interviews this week, some experts made a comparison with a 2020 incident involving the Diamond Princess, a cruise ship docked in Japan that became the setting of one of the first large COVID-19 outbreaks outside of China.

The CDC sent personnel to the port, helped evacuate American passengers, ran quarantines, shared genetic data on the virus, coordinated with the WHO and Japan, held public briefings and rapidly published reports "that became the world's reference data on cruise ship COVID transmission," said Dr Tom Frieden, a former CDC director.

Some aspects of the international response to the Diamond Princess were criticised, and it did not halt the outbreak or stop COVID-19's spread across the world. But some experts say it was not for the CDC's lack of trying.

"The CDC was right on top of it, very visible, very active in trying to manage and contain it," Gostin said, while the agency's work now is delayed and subdued.

Instead of working with nearly all of the world's nations through the WHO, the Trump administration has pursued bilateral health agreements with individual nations for information sharing, public health support, and what it describes as "the introduction of innovative American technologies."

Roughly 30 agreements are currently in place. That's not sufficient, Gostin said. "You can't possibly cover a global health crisis by doing one-on-one deals with countries here and there," he said.

Birds of prey in South Africa are in trouble

● Study analyses data from 16 years of road counts

Birds of prey and vultures (raptors) play a vital role in ecosystems, both as top predators and key scavengers. However, compared to many other bird species, raptor populations are declining faster. This is because they need large areas to live in, have low population densities, and reproduce slowly. For these reasons, they are vulnerable to human impacts like farming with pesticides, electrocution, collision with wind turbines, or poaching.

In many cases, by the time scientists and conservationists fully understand how bad the declines are, it may be too late to act. Thus, having good population monitoring is vital to act as an early warning system of declines.

Many countries in the global south host important populations of raptors but lack effective monitoring programmes.

Africa is an important continent for raptor diversity. Several studies across Africa have used road counts (counting birds from repeated transects across routes) to monitor how raptor populations have changed over time.

A recent study went one step further, combining trends from these different surveys from across Africa to better understand these changes at a pan-African scale. Unfortunately, no data from South Africa were available to be incorporated into this analysis.

In our recent study, we took advantage of data that was collected by one dedicated fieldworker, Ronelle Visagie, who drove nearly 400,000 km (the distance from Earth to the moon) across the central area of South Africa (see map) between 2009 and 2025, while she worked for the Birds of Prey Programme of the Endangered Wildlife Trust.

During these 16 years, Ronelle counted all the raptors and large birds that she saw on these work trips. Comparing how the rate of these observations (numbers of individuals per 100km driven) changed over time allowed us to explore species population trends.

We had enough data to examine trends for 18 raptors and eight other large bird species over this period. Unfortunately, we did not find a good news story.

These road counts revealed that 50 per cent of the species (13 out of 26) declined significantly, while only three species (12 per cent) showed significant increases. The remaining ten species (38 per cent) showed no significant trends.

The declining trends raise serious concerns about the conservation status of several species in a region known to host important raptor pop-



DURING THESE 16 YEARS, RONELE COUNTED ALL THE RAPTORS AND LARGE BIRDS THAT SHE SAW ON THESE WORK TRIPS. COMPARING HOW THE RATE OF THESE OBSERVATIONS (NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUALS PER 100KM DRIVEN) CHANGED OVER TIME ALLOWED US TO EXPLORE SPECIES POPULATION TRENDS

ulations. Thus, urgent conservation actions are needed, especially for species declining by more than 50 per cent.

Given that several of these species are not currently listed as threatened either globally or regionally, their conservation status may need to be reassessed.

Trends in raptor populations

According to our results, 42 per cent of the assessed species declined by more than 50 per cent in the last 16 years.

Notable declines included all three migratory species assessed (lesser kestrel, Amur falcon and steppe buzzard). These trends match other studies from their breeding grounds in the northern hemisphere, which also suggested declines.

Protecting migratory species is especially challenging because action may be needed in breeding areas, non-breeding areas, and along migration routes, where the threats they face may differ. We also found declines of several resident

raptors, including jackal buzzard, Verreaux's eagle and secretarybird. Populations of these species declined by over 50 per cent in our study region.

In contrast, populations of white-necked raven, greater kestrel, and white-backed vulture increased. The latter is a critically endangered species, but seems to be increasing within our study area.

Some of the trends we detected were similar to a recent study that explored raptor population trends from across Africa using similar approaches to our study. For example, our findings of large declines for secretarybird and lesser kestrel were very similar to those reported in Kenya and Botswana. Additionally, similar population changes for secretarybird were detected during winter (but not summer) using road counts in the Nama Karoo (a major part of our study area) during the period just before our study (a 61 per cent decline between the late 1980s and early 2010s).

Ted Turner didn't just revolutionise television - he changed way we see our world

Ted Turner, who died on May 6, 2026, was bright, shrewd and, most of all, lucky. The cable TV visionary proved to be in the right place, at the right time, to change television and video news forever.

Most of his big gambles, on things such as the MGM studio and library, which led to the creation of the Turner Classic Movies channel, paid off handsomely.

But Turner will be remembered mostly for the creation and development of the Cable News Network - CNN - which launched in 1980 and made our knowledge of distant events instantaneous and our world more comprehensible. In this sense, Turner's legacy extends beyond television. He changed our conception not only of journalism but also of our world.

Turner's obituaries note his record-setting philanthropy, his impressive conservation efforts and his campaign to make the world safer by securing post-Soviet Union era nuclear weaponry. Over the course of his 87 years, Turner proved an outstanding yachtsman, an active and involved sports team owner and a quotable maverick in the business world. Yet as a scholar of broadcast history—and a former CNN employee—I think Turner's ultimate legacy is a bit more atmospheric than measurable. He changed the media ecology in profound and lasting ways. CNN's arrival disrupted an established media environment, in which broadcast journalism routines and audience viewing habits had become standardised by the ABC, CBS and NBC TV networks. The ramshackle early CNN, with its farcical "world headquarters" housed in a former Atlanta-area country club, was derided as the "Chicken Noodle Network" by veteran network journalists.

But by the mid-1980s, it had established profitability, and by 1991, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gulf War, it assumed a singular position in America's—and the world's—information environment.

CNN had matured to respectability, and Turner was recognised as a visionary by Time magazine, which named him 1991's Man of the Year. His idea had blossomed into a new arena for global information sharing, and his cable network fully competed with the established broadcast channels on big stories throughout the 1990s.

Right place, right time, right team

Turner's cable TV news revolution required significant collaboration. The fulfilment of his



vision needed luck, inherited money, innovative new technologies, supportive partners and even federal regulatory intervention.

For example, had Newton Minow's Federal Communications Commission not pushed Congress to pass the All-Channel Receiver Act of 1962, American TV manufacturers would likely never have placed the UHF dial on their sets. That UHF dial made additional local TV competition possible by allowing more stations to broadcast.

In 1970, Turner purchased UHF Channel 17 in Atlanta, which he named WTGC for "Turner Communications Group," and UHF Channel 36 in Charlotte, North Carolina, which he named WRET for "Robert Edward Turner," and began building his broadcasting empire.

By the mid-1970s, the cost of satellite distribution to cable system operators had decreased to such an extent that Turner realised—and seized—an opportunity to nationally distribute his local station. He worked with satellite and cable system operators, building early relationships that would prove beneficial to everyone in the cable industry as it developed over the 1980s and '90s.

In 1979 and 1980, he used these relationships to build the first 24-hour TV network, but it was his internal hires that made the original channel function. To launch CNN, Turner hired veterans of the TV news business, including Robert Wussler, who had previously been president of CBS Sports and the CBS Television Network.

Modi visits synonymous with Telangana's development



N. RAMCHANDER RAO



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits to Telangana have become synonymous with the state's development. During his visit in March 2024, he inaugurated, dedicated, or laid the foundation stone for Telangana-specific projects worth about ₹8,703 crore in Adilabad and ₹6,800 crore in Sangareddy. His October 2023 visit saw projects worth more than ₹13,500 crore in Mahabubnagar and ₹8,000 crore in Nizamabad. Earlier, in November 2022, he dedicated projects worth ₹9,500 crore at Ramagundam to the nation.

Together, these investments span power generation, fertilizer production, national highways, railway lines and electrification, petroleum and natural gas pipelines, aviation infrastructure, health facilities, higher education, and industrial connectivity. The message is clear: every Modi visit has translated into concrete development assets for Telangana. His visit to Hyderabad on May 10, the first after taking oath as Prime Minister for a historic third term, will be no different. He will inaugurate, dedicate, and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth nearly ₹ 7,823 crore. The message of his visits is unmistakable: Telangana's future will not be built on slogans, blame games, divisive politics, or family rule, but on infrastructure, connectivity, industry, investment, jobs, and accountable governance.

In a few days, Telangana will complete twelve years since its formation. These twelve years of BRS and Congress came with slogan and promise of — neellu, nidhulu, and niyama kaalu — This along with revenues from Hyderabad, one of India's strongest urban economies, supported by a thriving IT base, talented youth, and vibrant sectors such as pharma, defence, film, media, services, agriculture, and logistics. Yet, in these twelve years, successive state governments failed to build the significant industrial base, public infrastructure, revived factories, rural assets, and employment engines that people expected after statehood. Instead, Telangana today faces empty coffers, a soaring debt burden, and endless delays in dues owed

to employees, retirees, unemployed youth, students, patients, farmers, contractors, and panchayat presidents.

The fundamental failure of the BRS and Congress governments is not merely that they borrowed and spent large sums of money, but that they failed to create enough productive public assets. The BRS government's major capital-intensive showpiece, Kaleshwaram, has become unusable. BRS promised to revive closed industries such as the Nizam Sugar Factory. Congress made similar promises. Yet even today, the Nizam Sugar Factory and the Nizamabad Cooperative Sugar Factory remain shut — silent reminders of broken assurances. Announcements were made, committees were formed, deadlines were floated, but production never resumed. This has become Telangana's recurring experience: emotion and hope during elections, followed by excuses and heartbreak after.

This pattern extends to Telangana's public sector institutions, which have been pushed into distress. Singareni Collieries, DISCOMS, GENCO, and RTC are facing severe financial hardship, threatening their operations and the livelihoods of countless workers. CAG reports highlight the grim reality: of the 18 SPSEs audited, 11 incurred losses of ₹ 11,969.66 crore, while the net worth of 9 was wiped out by accumulated losses. The power sector tells an equally serious story, with Telangana DISCOM debt rising from ₹ 17,934 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 759,230 crore by FY 2024-25, while accumulated losses surged to ₹ 69,741 crore. Singareni too has been under relentless stress due to pending dues, including ₹ 18,827

crore from TSGENCO alone. Instead of a thriving public sector, Telangana has been left with a struggling one, where employees from one unit or another are forced to agitate for their rightful demands. The state government's lack of development vision is also visible in Hyderabad's startup ecosystem. Despite the city's private-sector vitality, strong technology base, and internationally acclaimed talent, Hyderabad has not matched the startup vibrancy of Bengaluru, Mumbai, or Delhi-NCR. Data presented in Parliament in 2025 showed that only 37 Telangana startups received support under the Fund of Funds, amounting to ₹600 crore — far behind Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Delhi. The number of startup unicorns emerging from these cities tells the same story.

Amid these challenges, a sharp contrast emerges. While successive state governments allowed institutions to weaken, the Modi government created productive assets in Telangana. The Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited plant, revived at a cost of more than ₹6,300 crore, restored a major industrial asset and strengthened domestic urea production. NTPC's 100 MW floating solar project at Ramagundam became India's largest upon full operationalisation in 2022. The first phase of the 2x800 MW Telangana Super Thermal Power Project at Ramagundam is already operational. Once the Telangana government signs the PPA, the second phase will add another 2,400 MW, with 85 percent of the power earmarked for our state. These are not election slogans. They are factories, power plants, jobs, and long-term capacity.

IN A FEW DAYS, TELANGANA WILL COMPLETE TWELVE YEARS SINCE ITS FORMATION. THESE TWELVE YEARS OF BRS AND CONGRESS CAME WITH SLOGAN AND PROMISE OF — NEELLU, NIDHULU, AND NIYAMA KAALU — THIS ALONG WITH REVENUES FROM HYDERABAD, ONE OF INDIA'S STRONGEST URBAN ECONOMIES, SUPPORTED BY A THRIVING IT BASE, TALENTED YOUTH, AND VIBRANT SECTORS SUCH AS PHARMA, DEFENCE, FILM, MEDIA, SERVICES, AGRICULTURE, AND LOGISTICS

That is why Prime Minister Modi's May 10 visit must be seen as the next new chapter in a decade-long record of converting Telangana's development aspirations into national projects and visible outcomes. National highway projects worth around ₹3,175 crore in the Mahabubnagar region, along with the third railway line between Kazipet and Vijayawada, estimated at ₹1,243 crore, will reduce congestion and accelerate passenger and freight movement. The upgraded Hafeezpet and Jogulamba railway stations, among 40 stations in Telangana being improved at a cost of ₹ 2,015 crore, will enhance comfort and pride among residents. The MMTS extension to Yadagirigutta will benefit commuters, students, workers, and pilgrims, making daily routines easier and journeys safer.

Even when state governments denied, delayed, or grudgingly extended cooperation, the Centre persisted with projects that directly improve the lives of ordinary citizens.

The Zaheerabad Integrated Industrial Smart City, under the Hyderabad-Nagpur Industrial Corridor, is another example of the Centre thinking beyond routine announcements. With an estimated cost of ₹2,360.54 crore and spread over 3,245 acres, it is designed as a modern industrial hub with the potential to attract more than ₹10,000 crore in investment and generate large-scale employment. This is the kind of project Telangana needs — not merely real estate speculation around Hyderabad, but manufacturing-led growth that reaches districts, youth, and workers.

The petroleum products terminal at Malkapur, Kazipet Railway Manufacturing Unit, Kakatiya

Mega Textile Park in Warangal, AIIMS Bibinagar, Sammakka Saralamma Central Tribal University in Mulugu, and the proposed revival of Mamnoon airport all fit into the same vision. Roads, railways, airports, health, industry, energy, education, and logistics are not separate silos. Together, they form the foundation of a Viksit Telangana.

The tragedy is that instead of enthusiastically partnering with the Centre, the BRS government often delayed land and clearance approvals, fearing that Prime Minister Modi would receive credit. Congress must not repeat that mistake.

It must also be remembered that the Modi government raised the states' share in the divisible pool of central taxes by almost one-third — from 32 percent to 42 percent, later adjusted to 41 percent after the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir. Telangana benefited from higher devolution. Therefore, the charge of "step-motherly treatment" routinely made by the BRS and Congress is not only false, but also a political cover for state-level inefficiency.

The people of Telangana have understood this. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, they rewarded the BJP with 8 seats, up from 4 in 2019, while reducing the BRS to zero. That verdict was a rejection of excuses and a vote for performance. The

recent mandate in West Bengal, where the BJP won 207 seats, and the BJP's breakthrough in Kerala with three seats for the first time, show that people across India are rejecting violence, appeasement, corruption, and stagnation. They want law and order, infrastructure, connectivity, factories, investments, and jobs. The Congress government in Telangana must stop portraying the Centre as an adversary and embrace cooperation for the state's development. Telangana's people are tired of blame games. They want progress, deserve execution, and seek transformation. Prime Minister Modi's visit inspires hope for Telangana's next leap — a leap built on capital expenditure that creates enduring assets, industries that generate meaningful jobs, power projects that strengthen energy security, transport networks that connect communities, and institutions that uplift the poor and the young. If the Central Government could achieve so much despite non-cooperation or grudging cooperation from the BRS and Congress governments, imagine the speed and scale of progress Telangana can achieve under a Double-Engine Sarkar. Now is the moment for Telangana to seize its destiny, move from missed opportunities to historic change, and become a proud engine of Viksit Bharat. Jai Hind. Jai Telangana.

(The writer is ex-MLC and Telangana BJP President)

MISSILES VS MOSQUITOES

Cheap Drones and Smart Code Bankrupting the Age of the Giant War Machine



ARJA SRIKANTH
SENIOR BUREAUCRAT



THAT WORLD IS NOW COLLAPSING WITH ALARMING SPEED. THE WARS OF THE PRESENT DECADE HAVE EXPOSED AN UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH FOR TRADITIONAL MILITARIES: A CHEAP AUTONOMOUS DRONE CAN NEUTRALIZE AN ASSET WORTH MILLIONS, AND SOMETIMES BILLIONS. THE BATTLEFIELD IS NO LONGER REWARDING ONLY SOPHISTICATION. INCREASINGLY, IT REWARDS AFFORDABILITY, SPEED, SOFTWARE INTEGRATION, AND MASS REPLICATION

destabilizing. Modern conflicts have revealed the arithmetic of asymmetry with frightening clarity. A loitering munition costing tens of thousands — or sometimes merely thousands — of dollars can force a superpower to respond with interceptor missiles worth hundreds of thousands or even millions. The danger is not only physical destruction; it is financial exhaustion. When defense becomes economically irrational, even the strongest military becomes vulnerable. Drone warfare does not merely destroy tanks, radars, or ships. It destroys the defender's budget logic. It creates a war of forced overspending, where the attacker's objective is not victory by conquest but victory by making the opponent bleed resources until the system breaks.

This is why the philosophy of deterrence is being rewritten. Traditional deterrence assumed that expensive systems guaranteed superiority. But drone swarms have shattered that assumption. Swarm logic overwhelms conventional defense not by defeating it directly, but by saturating it. It attacks the defender's inventory, not merely territory. Radar systems become flooded with targets. Missile stockpiles drain rapidly. Command-and-control structures become overloaded. Air-defense

economics collapse because the defender must spend far more than the attacker to survive each strike. In multiple modern conflicts, low-cost unmanned systems have blinded surveillance grids, struck strategic infrastructure, damaged naval assets, and penetrated supposedly impenetrable airspace. The battlefield has become flatter, cheaper, and algorithmically coordinated, where quantity itself becomes a form of intelligence.

At the heart of this new military order lies software supremacy. Earlier generations of military hardware derived value from metallurgy, propulsion, and engineering scale. The emerging generation derives value from data fusion, battlefield networking, predictive analytics, and autonomous decision support. Increasingly, the deadliest advantage is not the missile itself but the intelligence architecture connecting sensors, drones, satellites, and strike systems into a single continuous digital battlefield. Artificial intelligence is accelerating this shift dramatically. AI systems are already being deployed for target identification, pattern recognition, logistics optimization, surveillance coordination, and autonomous navigation. Though governments insist that lethal decisions remain under human oversight, the direction is unmistakable. Experiments are underway to automate larger sections of the "kill chain," enabling machines to identify, prioritize, track, and recommend targets at speeds no human command structure can match. This is not simply a technological upgrade; it is the transformation of warfare into machine-paced violence.

Yet the ethical and geopolitical implications are darker than most policymakers publicly admit. Defense technologists argue that AI-driven warfare may reduce casualties because machines are theoretically more precise and less emotional than human soldiers. Critics warn that algorithmic warfare creates unprecedented dangers: accidental escalation, opaque targeting systems, biased machine learning models, cyber manipulation, and autonomous lethal loops that move faster than political oversight can respond.

What to know about British elections that hammered Starmer's Labour Party

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer pledged to revive his struggling government but faced growing calls to resign after a disastrous set of local and regional elections for his Labour Party.

As the final results came in Saturday, Labour had lost 1,000 local council seats across England and was booted from power in Wales after 27 years. Anti-immigration party Reform UK won almost 1,300 seats across England, came second in Wales and made significant gains in Scotland.

It was a blunt verdict from voters in elections widely seen as an unofficial referendum on Starmer, whose popularity has plummeted since he led the centre-left party to power less than two years ago.

Here are five things we've learned from the elections.

Starmer is on borrowed time

Starmer insisted he would not walk away "and plunge the country into chaos", and the dire election results did not produce an immediate challenge to his leadership.

Starmer's Cabinet colleagues expressed support, and none of the high-profile Labour politicians considered potential challengers has made a move. Health Secretary Wes Streeting, former Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham are keeping quiet for now.

But a growing number of Labour lawmakers urged the prime minister to set a timetable for his departure this year. British politics allows parties to change leader mid-term without the need for a new election.

"There has to be a timetable," legislator Clive Betts told the BBC. Another lawmaker, Tony Vaughan, said there should be an "orderly transition of leadership".

Starmer tried to demonstrate change on Saturday by bringing back two figures from past Labour governments. He made former Prime Minister Gordon Brown a special

envoy on global finance, and appointed the party's ex-deputy leader Harriet Harman an adviser on women and girls.

Starmer is due to make a speech on Monday in an attempt to regain momentum, before the government sets out its legislative plans on Wednesday in a speech delivered by King Charles III at the State Opening of Parliament.

Reform UK is on the rise

The elections were a breakthrough for Reform UK, the latest hard-right party led by the veteran nationalist politician Nigel Farage.

Running on an anti-establishment and anti-immigration message, the party won hundreds of local council seats in working-class areas in England's north, such as Sunderland, that were solid Labour turf for decades. It also made gains from the Conservatives in areas like the county of Essex, east of London.

Farage said the results marked a "historic change in British politics". He said he's confident that "voters who have come to us are not doing it as a short-term protest".

Reform UK currently holds just eight of the 650 seats in Parliament and it's unclear whether it could repeat its success in a national election.

An increasingly disunited kingdom

The elections produced semi-autonomous administrations in Scotland and Wales led by parties devoted to independence and the breakup of the United Kingdom — though neither has that policy on the front burner.

The Scottish National Party, which has governed in Edinburgh since 2007, won another term but fell short of a majority, meaning an independence referendum is unlikely. Labour and Reform tied in a distant second place.

Plaid Cymru (The Party of Wales) won the most seats in the Cardiff-based legislature, the Senedd.



CBI searches 17 premises in connection with 3 cases against Reliance ADA Group companies

New Delhi

The CBI on Saturday conducted searches at 17 premises in Mumbai in connection with three cases registered against Reliance ADA Group companies Reliance Telecom Limited, Reliance Commercial Finance Limited and Reliance Home Finance Limited and their directors, officials said. "These searches are being conducted at the residential premises of directors of the above-mentioned companies as well as at the office premises of intermediary companies whose accounts were used for diversion of bank funds," a spokesperson for the

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said in a statement.

No immediate reaction was available from the companies.

The CBI got a search warrant issued from a special court in Mumbai on Friday. The searches have led to the seizure of incriminating documents, the officials said.

The total quantum of the alleged loss suffered by banks and the Life Insurance Company (LIC) of India in these cases is Rs 27,337 crore, they added.

"Searches have also revealed that multiple intermediary companies were



operating from same address. The investigation is continuing," the statement said.

The federal agency has lodged seven cases against the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group based on complaints

from various public sector banks and the LIC in connection with alleged frauds involving thousands of crores of rupees.

The CBI had conducted searches at 14 locations in the

last few months, immediately after the registration of these cases. The agency has arrested two senior executives of RCom - joint president D Vishwanath, who was the overall in-charge of the group's banking operations, and vice-president Anil Kalya, who had actively supported Vishwanath in managing the banking operations and payments and utilisation of funds - on April 24. "Both the accused persons are presently in judicial custody. The investigation into the cases relating to the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group is being monitored by the Supreme Court," the statement said.

Adani Agri Fresh to soon procure cherries from Himachal Pradesh

Shimla

Adani Agri Fresh Limited (AAFL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited, on Saturday announced that it will soon begin procuring stone fruits, especially cherries, from Himachal Pradesh.

"We will begin cherry procurement from the upcoming season and gradually expand into other stone fruits such as peaches and plums. This is part of our continued effort to build on our apple procurement experience and provide better market access to farmers," a company spokesperson said.

He said that this initiative is expected to improve fruit storage life, provide farmers access to larger markets,

and ensure better prices for their produce.

"AAFL has been among the first organised companies involved in apple procurement, storage, and marketing in Himachal Pradesh. The company started operations in 2006 under the Farm-Pik brand.

Since then, it has procured more than 300,000 metric tonnes of apples from over 17,000 farmers and has directly paid nearly Rs 1,500 crore to farmers," the official said.

The company has developed a total storage capacity of 25,000 metric tonnes in Himachal Pradesh, helping preserve fruits for longer durations and enabling farmers to access larger markets, he said.

HMSI recalls CB1000 Hornet SP motorcycle

New Delhi

Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India announced a voluntary recall for an unspecified number of its CB1000 Hornet SP motorcycles to address two technical issues, including the routing of the fuel feed hose.

The recall affects CB1000 Hornet SP motorcycles manufactured between September 30, 2024 and August 22, 2025, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd. (HMSI) said in a statement.

The recall addresses two identified technical issues. One relates to the routing of the fuel feed hose and may require inspection to ensure it remains properly secured under specific conditions, it added.

The other relates to oil consumption levels in the



engine, which may vary due to the characteristics of some components, and may need appropriate action to maintain optimal engine performance, the company said.

"As a precautionary measure, HMSI will undertake inspection and necessary corrective action at its authorised BigWing Topline dealerships across India," it said. The campaign will include rectifica-

tion of the fuel feed hose routing, as well as replacement of affected engine components, if required, HMSI said.

"All repairs will be carried out free of cost, irrespective of the warranty status of the motorcycle," the company said.

Customers will be notified via call, e-mail, or SMS to visit an authorised dealership, it added.

A new chapter of growth in State

Industry welcomes WB new CM Suwendu

Kolkata

Industry leaders on Saturday congratulated Suwendu Adhikari on being sworn in as West Bengal chief minister, with many expressing hope for a new chapter of growth in the state.

RPG Group chairman Sanjiv Goenka, who called it "a historic moment for West Bengal", said the state has "great expectations" from Adhikari.

Goenka, who described himself as emotionally connected to West Bengal, said he looked forward to contributing to the state "in every way I can."

ITC chairman and managing director Sanjiv Puri also congratulated Adhikari and extended greetings to the newly formed council of ministers.

Puri expressed confidence that the state would witness a "new dawn of growth and prosperity" under the new leadership and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat'



would serve as a guiding inspiration for the state's progress.

"As an Indian conglomerate headquartered in Kolkata for over a century, ITC remains committed to partnering the state in its journey of socio-economic development with our growing footprint across agriculture, manufacturing and services," Puri said.

ITC, with a market capitalisation of around Rs 3.8 lakh crore as of May, has business interests spanning FMCG, cigarettes, hotels,

paperboards and packaging, agri-business and information technology, and is among the prominent corporate employers in West Bengal.

Naresh Pachisia, president of the Bharat Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata, described the swearing-in as "not merely a constitutional transition" but the dawn of a new chapter in Bengal's journey towards progress, prosperity, stability and renewed confidence.

He said the electoral mandate reflected the aspirations of millions of citizens who have reposed their faith in a future defined by development, transparent governance, industrial resurgence, employment generation and social harmony.

The Indian Jute Mills Association's former chairman also welcomed Adhikari as chief minister, noting that the new CM had developed an early familiarity with the jute sector during his initial years with the BJP.

RFBL Flexi Pack fixes price band at Rs 47-50 for IPO

New Delhi

Flexible packaging materials manufacturer RFBL Flexi Pack Ltd on Saturday announced a price band of Rs 47-50 per equity share for its initial public offering, which opens for subscription on May 12.

The Rs 35.32-crore IPO of the Gujarat-based manufacturer and trader of printed multilayer flexible packaging materials comprises a fresh issue of up to 70,65,000 equity shares of face value Rs 10 each, the company said in a statement.

The issue will open for subscription on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, and will close on Thursday, May 14, 2026, on the NSE SME platform. The anchor investor bidding will open on Monday, May 11, 2026.

RFBL Flexi Pack Ltd intends to utilise Rs 35 crore of the IPO proceeds for repayment/prepayment, in full or part, of all or a



portion of certain borrowings availed by the company, while the remaining funds will be used for general corporate purposes and issue expenses, according to the offer document.

The company is engaged in the manufacturing and trading of printed multilayer flexible packaging materials such as plastic film rolls and pouches used across diverse industries including food, pharmaceuticals, home care, and consumer products.

Grow House Wealth Management Pvt.Ltd. is the Book Running Lead Manager (BRLM) to the Issue, while Kfin Technologies Ltd is the Registrar to the Issue.

RBI Governor's intervention sought to correct promotion policy

New Delhi

RBI officers' union has written a letter to RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, seeking his intervention to correct the promotion policy and restore a time-bound system.

RBI officers across various regional offices and the central bank's headquarters in Mumbai staged protests on Friday against recent policy changes that link promotions to vacancy availability, replacing the earlier time-bound promotion system.

Reserve Bank of India Officers' Association (RBIOA), in a letter dated May 8, expressed disappointment and anguish over the decision of the central bank to proceed with the revised promotion policy without adequately considering the serious concerns, objections, and constructive suggestions repeatedly placed by the association on behalf of the officer community.

The revised policy, in its present form, has caused widespread dissatisfaction, frustration and demoralisation among officers across cadres and grades, it added. Citing past interactions



with officers at various regional offices, it said that you (Governor) had indicated the possibility of a few time-bound promotions.

However, the final policy has not only failed to address the structural stagnation prevailing across grades but has also disregarded the core concerns repeatedly highlighted by the association, it pointed out.

According to an estimate, about 8,000 officers working at the RBI are going to be impacted by the change in the promotion policy.

Stagnation is rising across the various levels, leading to frustration, particularly among younger officers, who are now confronted with the prospect of remaining in the

same grade for prolonged periods without meaningful progression, it said.

"We earnestly request the top management to reconsider the matter urgently and initiate a comprehensive review of the revised promotion policy in consultation with RBIOA so as to arrive at a fair, balanced and sustainable framework for career progression of officers," it noted.

The association demanded that the newly issued promotion policy be immediately kept in abeyance and reviewed comprehensively in consultation with RBIOA through a structured and meaningful consultation mechanism.

A K Panda takes charge as SAIL Chairman & Managing Director

New Delhi

Ashok Kumar Panda on Saturday assumed charge as Chairman and Managing Director of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).

Panda succeeds Amarendu Prakash, whose tenure ended on April 1, 2026.

Panda was serving as Director (Finance) of SAIL, according to a company statement.

Panda began his journey with SAIL as a Management Trainee (Technical) in 1992 after completing his B.E. in Electrical Engineering.

Over the years, he has steadily risen to the highest levels of leadership within the company, reflecting his unwavering dedication, perseverance, and distinguished service spanning more than three decades. He has held diverse responsibilities across multiple Plants and Units, gaining extensive experience in operational, financial, and commercial domains, SAIL said in a statement.

During his tenure as Director (Finance), he spearheaded several strategic initiatives aimed at improving operational efficiency and overall profitability.

"SAIL is on track for its next phase of capacity expansion to 35 MTPA. Alongside expansion, we will continue to place the highest priority on safety across all our workplaces.

"Strengthening raw material security through enhanced domestic mining and exploration of overseas assets will be critical to support our growth ambitions.

PMJJBY, PMSBY settle claims worth Rs 25,160 cr since 2015

New Delhi

Jansuraksha schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana have settled claims of about Rs 25,160 crore since their launch in 2015, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday.

Jan Suraksha schemes Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) envisioned to extend affordable financial protection to all, particularly the under-served and vulnerable sections of society, were launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 9, 2015.

These flagship schemes, which completed 11 years, aim to broaden the insurance and pension landscape by shielding citizens against life's uncertainties and fostering long-term financial resilience.

Citing data on the 11th anniversaries of the Jan Suraksha Schemes, Sitharaman said that over 27 crore, 58 crore and 9 crore enrolments have been done under PMJJBY, PMSBY and APY, respectively.

On PMJJBY, she said the scheme has settled claims worth more than Rs 21,500 crore for over 10.7 lakh families.

Under PMSBY scheme, Sitharaman said it has settled claims worth nearly Rs 3,660 crore for over 1.84 lakh families.

"As we mark the 11th anniversary of the Jan Suraksha schemes, heart-



felt appreciation for all the stakeholders, including field functionaries of banks and insurance companies, whose dedicated efforts have made these schemes a huge success," she said.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said the launch of the online Jan Suraksha Portal has made it possible for citizens to enrol conveniently without visiting bank branches or post offices, and the digitising the claims process has ensured faster settlements, enabling timely support to bereaved families when they need it the most.

"As we celebrate the 11th anniversaries of the three-social security (Jan Suraksha) schemes - PMJJBY, PMSBY and APY, let us recount how these schemes have enabled affordable insurance and security to people (Jan Suraksha), their achievements and salient features," he said.

Launched in 2015, PMJJBY offers life insurance cover for death due to any cause at an annual premium of Rs 436. Eligible individuals between 18 and 50 years can enrol through participating banks or post offices. It provides Rs 2 lakh to the nominee in the event of the subscriber's death.

Gujarat builds 870 MW battery power backup network to stabilise renewable energy grid

Gandhinagar

Gujarat has initiated battery storage systems at five locations in the state, with a total capacity of 870 MW, to maintain the stability of the renewable power grid, officials said on Saturday.

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) are essential for storing electricity generated from solar and other renewable sources. They help manage additional load and maintain grid stability.

"Gujarat has initiated battery storage systems at five locations with a total capacity of 870 MW," an official release stated.

The state has also registered 13 projects across Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Banaskantha, Patan and

Kutch districts to set up additional battery storage systems, it said.

Modhera in Gujarat, India's first solar village, has launched the country's first BESS integrated with a solar power plant, it said.

"Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the state has continued to advance in this direction and has strengthened its position among the leading states driving battery storage systems in India," the release said.

Recently, a battery storage system was commissioned at Charal in the Sanand taluka of Ahmedabad, it said.

Four systems are operational at Modhera in Mehsana and Lakhpat in Kutch. The state government has also included advanced energy storage



systems as a key component in the Gujarat Integrated Renewable Energy Policy, 2025, the release said. Accordingly, standalone battery storage projects, works linked with new renewable energy installations, and those integrated with existing renewable energy systems

are being approved, it said.

Once the Standard Operating Procedure is approved, registrations for battery storage will open for commercial and industrial users, it said, adding that the move will allow them to set up battery storage alongside their solar or wind projects. The

state government is developing battery storage systems across Gujarat, with companies being invited in through a competitive bidding process. GETCO (Gujarat Energy Transmission Corporation) and power distribution companies strategically identify locations for battery storage systems based on grid capacity and operational requirements, the release said. Power generation from solar and other renewable sources fluctuates throughout the day. Excess energy generated during peak hours can be stored and supplied later during periods of high demand, especially in the evening when solar output declines. Battery storage systems help reduce stress on the grid and improve grid stability, it added.

Birla Corporation Q4 profit up 14.8 pc to Rs 294.8 cr

New Delhi

M P Birla Group firm Birla Corporation Ltd on Saturday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 294.77 crore in the March quarter of 2025-26 on a year-on-year basis.

It had posted a net profit of Rs 256.6 crore for the January-March period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Birla Corporation. However, Birla Corporation's revenue from operations was marginally up to Rs 2,836.12 crore in the March quarter of FY26. It was at Rs 2,814.91 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. This was "owing to poor realisation from the cement business and external shocks affecting the performance of Birla Jute Mills," said Birla Corporation.

However, sales realisations "remained subdued,



despite strong demand," it added.

Birla Corporation's revenue from the Jute division was down 2.63 per cent to Rs 120.14 crore as the mills continued to face jute shortage and a rise in raw jute prices.

This led to a decline in daily production to 110 metric tons. It was a decline of "18 per cent year-on-year and 7 per cent sequentially." "Raw jute prices in the March quarter were up 92 per cent year-on-year and 57 per cent sequentially. Total sales in the March 4 quarter dropped 2 per cent from a year ago to Rs 120 crore, with domestic sales falling 5 per cent year-on-year," he said. Total income of Birla Corporation, the flagship firm of MP Birla Group, was at Rs 2,875.07 crore, almost flat in the March quarter.

RCB look to regain batting firepower against MI to break two-match losing streak

Raipur

Royal Challengers Bengaluru will want their batting group to rebuild its muscle to snap a two-match losing streak, and put their IPL campaign back on track when they face Mumbai Indians here on Sunday. The Royal Challengers were off to an early season flier, winning four out of their first matches and the playoffs entry appeared a mere formality.

But now the situation has changed. The title holders have lost three of their last five matches to slip into a little mid-tournament crisis. RCB, who is currently third on the table with 12 points from 10 matches, are still in a prime position to enter the knockout stage.

But the Bengaluru outfit will certainly be aware that they have lost a bit of steam towards the business end of the tournament.

The RCB are tied with Rajasthan Royals and Gujarat



Titans on 12 points, and either RR or GT will go ahead them after their Saturday's match at Jaipur, pushing the Bengalureans down to fourth. That points table scenario in itself is slightly worrying, but apart from that external factor, the RCB will need the batting group regaining its range.

On a tad tacky Ahmedabad pitch against the Titans, the

RCB batters failed to go beyond 155 and even the 9-run DLS margin defeat against Lucknow Super Giants was not as close as the margin suggests.

The RCB required 19 runs in the final over to cross the line, but could not come close to that. Now, RCB batter are up against an even more potent, at least on paper, Mumbai

attack that consists of Jasprit

Bumrah, Corbin Bosch, AM Ghazanfar and Will Jacks.

The Raipur, the designated home venue of RCB, pitch is a bit of an unknown commodity and the champions will need their batters at their very best on the weekend.

Faltering Bethell, Jitesh

In that context, RCB would dearly welcome some runs

from Jacob Bethell, who came in for an injured Phil Salt.

But his four outings so far have produced 14, 20, 5 and 4, robbing power from RCB's opening combination, and it has left Virat Kohli to do all the heavy lifting.

Equally disconcerting is the diminished returns from wicketkeeper batter Jitesh Sharma, as his highest score this season is 23.

It has dented RCB's late charge to a certain extent, and he needs to buck the trend at the earliest.

While RCB batting has its own niggles, the MI line-up showed the glimpse of a glorious past, successfully chasing down 228 against LSG in the recent match.

Rohit Sharma marked his return from an injury layoff with a blistering 84 off 44 balls, and the victory gave them a temporary relief after a slew of defeats.

Jadhav wins maiden World Cup medal with bronze in Shanghai

Shanghai

Reigning World University Games champion Sahil Jadhav clinched his maiden Archery World Cup medal in only his second appearance on the global circuit, winning a bronze in the compound men's event of the Stage 2, here on Saturday. The 25-year-old Maharashtra archer defeated Denmark veteran player-coach Martin Damsbo 147-144 in the bronze medal playoff of the ongoing tournament. It also marked India's final medal in the compound section after none of his fellow mates reached the medal rounds.

India, traditionally a powerhouse in compound team events, had endured a disappointing campaign as all their teams bowed out early.

India will now look to add two more medals on the concluding day on Sunday in the recurve section.

The women's team will



compete for gold, while Simranjeet Kaur will begin her campaign from the semifinals, needing one win to secure her maiden World Cup medal. Jadhav was trailing by one point after the opening end as the 40-year-old Damsbo started with three perfect 10s.

But the Indian responded strongly in the second end, shooting a perfect 30 while the Dane managed 27, helping Jadhav move ahead 59-57 overall. From there, Jadhav stayed firmly in control, dropping just two points from his final nine arrows to seal a memorable

three-point victory. Jadhav, who had made his World Cup debut only last month in Puebla (Mexico), enjoyed a breakthrough campaign in Shanghai.

His impressive run began with a victory over India's senior-most compound archer and multiple World Cup and Asian Games medallist Abhishek Verma in the round of 32. He then defeated Germany's Ruven Fluss in the pre-quarterfinals before edging past 2022 world champion and world No. 6 Nico Wiener of Austria in a tense shoot-off to enter the semifinals.

Pukhraj Gill holds nerve to win maiden ADT title in Kuala Lumpur



Kuala Lumpur

Pukhraj Singh Gill, who held at least a share of the lead since the end of the first round, won the ADT Players Championship presented by The R&A, after a tense three-way play-off here.

A courageous Gill overcame a two-shot deficit over the last two holes and then finished off the job in extra holes at Saujana's Palm Course.

Gill (72), who plays for the team, Honer Homes Gurugram, on the IGPL, totalled 13-under as did Thanawin Lee (68) and Sean Ramos (68).

It took Gill two extra holes to secure the title and a cheque of \$19,250 at the Saujana Golf and Country Club.

The win puts Gill in a good position to make a bid for ADT Order of Merit and next he will play at the AM Green IGPL Morocco Rising Stars event at the Mazagan Beach Golf Resort.

After four events on the schedule Gill is third on the Order of Merit.

Another Indian, Kartik Singh, who played in the IGPL in 2025, shot the day's lowest round of 65 and finished T-30 and Khalin Joshi (77) was T-46.

Gill sealed his win with a six-foot putt in the second play-off hole. Even as the ball disappeared into the cup, he threw his hands up and let out a roar of relief. He was immediately besieged by his

fellow Indian players including Aman Raj and Aryan Roopa Anand, who were also playing this week.

Gill said, "It took a long time coming. This feels surreal. I think it's going to take a while to sink in, but I'm just so pumped right now. It's been a great week in Malaysia. I was very happy with the course design, playing it for the first time—it just really suits my eye, I am glad I could play the game I did."

Gill said it will take some for the victory to sink in.

"I made it a lot more 'interesting' than I would have liked to towards the end. It went into a play-off. And to have won after that I feel I am on Cloud 9. It is going to take some time to sink in."

"But it is only onwards and upwards from here. A big thank you to all the people back in India, I am so grateful for all your messages and support. I can't wait to get back to party and celebrate."

"I wish to thank IGPL for providing us a great Tour back home and to my team Honer Homes Gurugram for whom I play on the IGPL," he added.

It was Gill's first international title, and it came within months of his maiden pro title on the 2025 IGPL Tour. Gill had a share of the lead after the first round and was sole leader by two after two rounds and held a one-shot advantage after the third round.

What led to BCCI's IPL crackdown?

Reels in restricted zones, late night outings among reasons

Bengaluru

Reels made in restricted areas, outings that did not have security approvals and players' proximity to social media influencers were some of the concerns that prompted the stern advisory from BCCI and IPL franchises are now scrambling to ensure compliance without compromising on individual privacy.

The Board's Anti-Corruption Unit flagged unauthorised guests in the hotel rooms of players, support staff and team officials and also warned of the potential honey traps. As a result, the BCCI came up with an advisory that placed restrictions on the guests and made it mandatory for the players to keep security informed about their movements.

One of the major violations pointed out was the players' "excessive proximity" to influencers, who get hired for short durations to



create social media content for the participating teams.

In one such incident, one of the younger players asked the newcomers in the content team to assist him with reels, videos and pictures to be used on his private social media accounts.

While it's not an uncommon practice for a player to take external help for neo-media content generation, in this particular instance, the vlogger used some of the videos and pictures on his own private account to gain

traction.

The shoot happened inside the boundary line with clear visuals of the team's training and other on-field activities. It later spilled over to the player's hotel room as well.

The BCCI was not amused.

"Yes, we have received a new set of rules from the BCCI and steps are being taken to follow them with diligence. The new crop of players are so much into this social media activity. Yes, it is a modern trend, we accept it. But it has to be done

within the limit set by the BCCI," a franchise official told PTI.

"...it's impossible to track each and every movement of people. It's an issue. What we are trying to do is to make the players and content teams more aware of the BCCI norms, and the consequences if they break them."

A step in that direction is cutting down the size of content teams.

"We are trying to limit the number of content team members, particularly those who get hired for a fixed term like 2-3 months during an IPL season."

"Senior players will know the rules and how to follow them. But at times, cricketers coming to the IPL for the first time might not know the gravity of the situation. They will be eager to emulate the stars and get some social media likes and comments. So, we need to educate them more," the official added.

Yuvraj lone Indian to make cut, Shubhankar, Veer miss out in Spain

Barcelona

Yuvraj Sandhu, who is playing his maiden DP World Tour season, was the lone Indian to make the cut at the Estrella Damm Catalunya Championship leaderboard here.

Sandhu, who shot 4-under 68 on the first day, carded even par on the second day. He was placed at T-16.

However, India's other two golfers in the field Shubhankar Sharma (71-74) and Veer Ahlawat (75-72) missed the cut.

Stefano Mazzoli and Lucas Bjerregaard head into the weekend tied at the top.

Rookie Mazzoli, who secured promotion to the DP World Tour by a top eight finish on the 2025 Road to Mallorca Rankings, set the early target on Friday with a bogey free 67.

Having opened with a 66, the Italian made a quick start to the second round with back-to-back birdies from the first and main-



tained the momentum. His third gain came on the fifth hole.

Then came a remarkable run of 11 straight pars before a birdie-birdie finish. He almost chipped in for eagle at the last.

Meanwhile, Bjerregaard matched Mazzoli with his own final hole birdie to cap off a second round 67.

A shot behind the pair at the top is South African Yurav Premlall, who carded the lowest round of his DP World Tour career with an eight-under-par 64 to head into the weekend on ten-under.

SUPER RAPID AND BLITZ

Gukesh on fifth spot at half-way stage in blitz

Warsaw (Poland)

World Champion D Gukesh endured a shaky start to the blitz section but recovered ground with a commanding victory over Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda in the ninth round of the Super Rapid and Blitz here.

After finishing the rapid section with nine points out of a possible 18, Gukesh collected four more points from the opening nine blitz rounds to take his tally to 13 out of 27 at the halfway stage of the blitz competition.

Hans Moke Niemann of

the United States continued to lead the tables despite a very mediocre show on the first day of blitz.

The American moved to 16.5 points after scoring 3.5/9 and is now a half point ahead of compatriot Wesley So. The third American Fabiano Caruana shares the third spot with Slovenian Vladimir Fedoseev on 15 points apiece, while Gukesh comes in next two points behind.

French duo of Firozja Alireza and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave share the sixth spot on 12.5 points alongside Duda, while the next World championship challenger



Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan is in ninth spot on 12 points. Polish Radoslaw Wojtaszak completed the ten-player lineup with 10

points in his bag.

Gukesh started the third day of the tournament with a couple of losses against Wojtaszek and Alireza and

HANS MOKE NIEMANN OF THE UNITED STATES CONTINUED TO LEAD THE TABLES DESPITE A VERY MEDIOCRE SHOW ON THE FIRST DAY OF BLITZ

lost two more against Caruana and Sindarov. The latter pulled one back against Gukesh after losing in the rapid game.

The highlight for Gukesh was an impressive win over tournament leader Hans Niemann before the Indian

rounded off the day with a commanding victory against Jan-Krzysztof Duda.

With nine more blitz rounds remaining, the tournament is headed for an exciting finish.

Results round 18 with points: D Gukesh (Ind, 13) beat Duda Jan-Krzysztof (Pol, 12.5); Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 15) drew with Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo, 15); Hans Moke Niemann (Usa, 16.5) lost to Radoslaw Wojtaszek (Pol, 10); Wesley So (Usa, 16) drew with Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 12); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 12.5) drew with Firozja Alireza (Fra, 12.5).

Suryansh credits Ponting, Iyer for mindset shift

New Delhi

Punjab Kings all-rounder Suryansh Shedge on Saturday credited head coach Ricky Ponting and skipper Shreyas Iyer for helping him undergo a crucial mindset shift that has played a key role in his strong performance in the ongoing Indian Premier League season.

The Mumbai all-rounder said regular conversations with Iyer and Ponting have helped him focus on preparation, staying in the present, and trusting his instincts lessons that have enabled him to make the most of opportunities once he broke into the playing XI.

"Shreyas bhai told me during an internal match before the IPL that I was batting well and not to overthink. If I had thought about things not in my control, I

wouldn't have been able to perform in that situation," Shedge said during a round table on Saturday.

"He talks a lot about technique and attitude."

On Ponting's influence, Shedge said the Australian great has constantly stressed the importance of preparation. "Ricky sir has been all about preparation and preparation. He says whatever happens, be courageous, back yourself and know that you belong," he said.

Shedge revealed a conversation with Ponting after he had spent the early part of the season on the bench left a lasting impact on him.

"After the fourth and fifth game, he asked me if I was frustrated. At first I said no, but then he asked me to tell him honestly. He said he understood how I was feeling it's easy to get bogged down



and feel negative, but harder to stay in the present and focus on the job ahead so that you're ready when the opportunity comes."

The 23-year-old said that period on the sidelines eventually became a blessing as he got more time to prepare.

"When I wasn't playing, I got one extra month for preparation. I think the attitude that I kept working as hard as possible every day

helped me get into the playing XI."

Shedge, known for his aggressive finishing ability, said his preparation is tailored as per his role in the team.

"I have to be switched on from ball one. That's what I do in net sessions. I give myself scenarios—targets in one over and how to achieve them. "Preparation-wise, it's not different from the last

two years, but the mindset shift has given me the edge."

The youngster added that becoming more instinctive at the crease has also transformed his batting.

"One shift I made was being instinctive and not pre-meditative, even in practice, and that has helped me achieve better success."

Despite Punjab Kings' recent dip after a strong start to the campaign, Shedge remained upbeat about the team's prospects. "Whenever we were winning, we still felt we were not at our best. In the last three games we haven't been at our best. The next four games we will come back stronger, I can guarantee that."

"The focus is on keeping the atmosphere happy and peaceful. Right now we need to stick together as a team."

Indian cricketers Yashasvi, Shafali get NADA notices for skipping dope tests

New Delhi

Indian cricketers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shafali Verma have been issued notices by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for not being available for scheduled dope tests last year, leading to their first whereabouts failure. It is reliably learnt that the two players, who are a part of the NADA's Registered Testing Pool (RTP), did not explain the reasons for the missed tests, leading to the notices.

"Notices have been issued to the concerned athletes, and the same has been intimated to the national federation (the BCCI) and the ICC," a well-placed source told PTI even though NADA declined comment citing confidentiality of the proce-



dure. On being contacted, a BCCI source also confirmed the development.

"Yes, we have received notification from NADA on missed tests. We will check with them as to how it happened, and will take necessary steps so that such things do not happen in future."

"Cricket is back in the Olympics and we need to adhere to all the protocols

so that everything goes on smoothly," the BCCI source told PTI, referring to cricket's inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games roster.

Yashasvi is currently playing in the IPL for Rajasthan Royals, while Shafali was part of the Indian women's team that recently toured South Africa for a white-ball series.

Excitement surrounds Vijay's Ranabaali

Whichever role actor Vijay Deverakonda takes up, it will have an element of novelty and makes him an actor with a strong aim to impact the audience with the portrayal of the character. Vijay Deverakonda and Rahul Sankrityan working together once again after Taxi wala under Mythri Movie Makers banner. The film titled Ranabaali raises expectations with every update.

The excitement surrounding it has reached the next level after the makers released a special birthday glimpse celebrating Vijay Deverakonda. The glimpse gives audiences an inside look at the actor's preparation process and the massive effort going into the making of this historical action drama. The video highlights Vijay Deverakonda learning advanced horse-riding techniques under expert super-



vision. The actor can be seen practicing with Stallion-breed horses, which are widely regarded as one of the toughest horse breeds to manage during action filming. The glimpse also showcases several rehearsal moments, revealing the

physical challenges Vijay faced while shooting the intense sequences.

The rugged makeover and realistic action setup have further increased expectations.

Directed by Rahul Sankrityan, Ranabaali is

based on real incidents that reportedly occurred during British rule in the late 1800s. The film stars Rashmika Mandanna as the leading lady alongside Arnold Vosloo in a key role. Backed by Mythri Movie Makers and presented by T Series.

I don't believe in therapists, I only believe in friends

Says veteran actress Neetu Kapoor

Veteran actress Neetu Kapoor has opened up on her prerogative on the concept of therapy, stating that personally she does not believe in it all.

The actress, who recently appeared on Soha Ali Khan's podcast All About Her, said that personally she found it better and more comforting in close friendships and work while coping with the loss of husband Rishi Kapoor.

Neetu said that she believes people need trusted friends they can talk to rather than depending entirely on therapists. "I don't believe in therapists, honestly."

I believe in friends. You should have four or five close friends with whom you can really talk things out," Neetu said.

Recalling the difficult phase after Rishi

Kapoor's passing in 2020, she added, "When Rishi passed away, people told me to go to a therapist. I was very low and I did speak to one, but I kept asking myself, 'What am I doing here?' Till I am not mentally strong myself, what can therapy do? They tell you to meditate, count numbers, do this and that... for me, it felt like nonsense. You have to give yourself time. You have to decide when you want to become strong and move on."

The actress also said while everyone has their own way of healing, for her, friendship, family and work became the strongest support system during one of the toughest phases of her life.



Balakrishna-Koratala movie raises high expectations



There is everything when it comes to film titles. If they are good, apt and catchy they strike a chord with the audience. And particularly it comes to a big hero's move...the titles should have mass appeal. That is the reason film titles have more significance.

Nandamuri Balakrishna and Koratala Siva have joined hands for a mass action drama, and the project was officially announced recently. According to the latest media reports, the makers are likely to name the film Carpenter. It is said that

the movie will be packed with commercial aspects, and that the makers aim to mount it on a PAN-India scale. Music sensation Anirudh is said to have come on board.

Devara makers Yuvasudha Arts, the banner owned by Koratala Siva's close associate, will bankroll the project in association with SLV Cinemas. The filming begins very soon with an official launch ceremony.

Genuine stardom comes only through strong box office success, says Ameesha Patel

Bollywood actress Ameesha Patel, who is known to us for films like Mahesh babu's Nani and is once again making headlines, and this time it is for her outspoken views on the film industry, her career journey, and her surprising family connections.

In a recent interview, Ameesha sharply criticized the growing fake PR culture in Bollywood, taking an indirect dig at younger actresses who,

according to her, become superstars after just a couple of average films. She stated that genuine stardom comes only through strong box-office success and long-lasting audience love.

The actress also opened up about replacing Aishwarya Rai in Mangal Pandey: The Rising. Ameesha revealed that Aamir Khan was impressed by her intelligence after watching one of her interviews, which



eventually helped her land the role. She also recalled how she missed out on Lagaan because the makers felt she looked too educated for the character. Adding another interesting layer to her story, Ameesha recently revealed her family's close ties with the Gandhi family.

The actress shared that former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi personally played a role in fixing her parents' wedding date

Adivi Sesh's Dacoit makes its digital debut

Recent romantic thriller Dacoit, starring Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur, has now made its digital debut on Prime Video. The film quickly climbed to the top spot on Prime Video India, reflecting its strong viewership and reach in the OTT space. The movie is currently available to stream in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada languages. Dacoit had a decent theatrical run despite mixed reviews, grossing over Rs. 50 crores worldwide.

Directed by Shaneil Deo, the film also stars Anurag



Kashyap, Zayn Marie Khan, Prakash Raj, Atul Kulkarni, and Sunil in key roles. Produced by Supriya Yarlagadda and presented by Annapurna Studios, the movie features music composed by Bheems Ceciroleo.

Sunburn Festival to return with fresh creative identity

One of India's biggest electronic music festivals, Sunburn is returning for its 19th edition with a new venue, a reimagined format and a fresh creative identity. Billed as one of its most defining chapters yet, the festival will be held on December 18 and 19, 2026, at Mahalaxmi Racecourse in Mumbai, one of the city's most centrally located large-format event venues, followed by a closing party at NSCI Dome on December 20.

The shift to a condensed two-day format is a deliberate move, organisers say, designed to deliver sharper programming and a more concentrated flow of performances, with the NSCI Dome finale extending the experience beyond the main event, a press release said.

The theme for the 2026 edition is "Awaken the Core", which the festival describes as a signal of its evolution from spectacle to depth, from



scale to intensity, it added. Mahalaxmi Racecourse has

hosted several of its landmark Mumbai moments --

Avicii's early India performance in 2011, Swedish House Mafia in 2013, Martin Garrix in 2016 and, more recently, a Keinemusik set earlier this year.

Tickets will be available on BookMyShow, with an exclusive pre-sale for RuPay Credit Card holders opening on May 14 at noon, followed by a registered users' pre-sale on May 16 at noon. General ticket sales open for all on May 18 at noon. "Sunburn Festival has

always been built with the audience at its core, evolving each year into a defining cultural tradition for India's music community," said Karan Singh, CEO of Sunburn.

"As we enter our 19th edition, every decision — from moving to a venue like Mahalaxmi Racecourse to reimagining the festival format — has been made with a clear focus on enhancing how fans experience the festival," he added.

Disha Patani makes Hollywood debut with 'The Portal of Force'

Calls it 'thrilling and terrifying'

Bollywood actor Disha Patani is all set to take on the role of Jessica in the first film of "Stiguard vs Hologuard Saga", titled "The Portal of Force", and says the project served the scope to explore the craft massively. Described as a "supernatural action-thriller", the film is directed by Kevin Spacey and marks his return to direction after over 20 years.

It is a part of the "Stiguard vs Hologuard Saga", which is centred on a secret war between two ancient, opposing factions. The film features Patani

alongside Spacey, Tyrese Gibson, and Dolph Lundgren.

Patani said the experience of working on an international film is both "thrilling and terrifying".

"I've waited with bated breath for the trailer of this very special project. Stepping into my first international outing was both thrilling and terrifying - but the scope to explore the craft was massive. Working with an experienced, diverse cast was an education in itself," she said in a statement.

"You realise that storytelling transcends language and geography — honesty on screen is universal. I've always loved action, and to bring what I've learned on the home turf to a global platform feels incredibly empowering," she added.

The trailer, which was released by the makers on Friday, introduces Patani's character as the daughter of rival leaders on both sides a living bridge between warring worlds and the ultimate decider in a battle that could determine how this war ends, and humanity's fate along with it.

The actor will next feature in "Awarapan 2".

'Mera kam entertainment karna'

Diljit Dosanjh dismisses talk of political entry

Singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh on Saturday shot down rumours of a possible political career, saying he is "very happy" entertaining people.

Dosanjh shared an article on X that speculated whether the global Punjabi star could be the political icon Punjab is looking for.

Making his position clear, Dosanjh wrote, "Kadey v Nhi... Mera Kam Entertainment Karna. Am Very Happy in My Field. Thank You So Much (Never... My job is to entertain. I'm very happy in my field. Thank you so much)," he wrote.

The report had highlighted how a civil society group, Jaago Punjab Manch, had publicly appealed to Dosanjh to enter the political arena, describing him as the kind of leader a "cash-strapped, drug-affected" Punjab needs.

The group, led by retired bureaucrats and Army personnel among others, argued that Dosanjh's appeal lay precisely in the fact that he had never sought power.

In 2020, Dosanjh had made headlines after he came out in support of the farmers' protest against the contentious farm bills, which were later repealed by the central government.

Recently, Dosanjh drew attention after he objected



to Khalistani flags being waved at his concert in Canada.

In a video that went viral on social media, the singer was seen confronting the protesters in the crowd.

"If you still have an issue that I sat across from someone on television...jinne jhande dikhane dilkhai challo (then keep waving however many flags you want to)," he said,

asking them to stop the nuisance and take it elsewhere.

Dosanjh was last seen in the Bollywood blockbuster "Border 2" and is now gearing up for the release of the romantic drama "Main Vaapas Aunga", directed by Imtiaz Ali. The film, which also stars Vedang Raina, Sharvari Wagh and Naseeruddin Shah, is set to hit theatres on June 12.



"I've waited with bated breath for the trailer of this very special project. Stepping into my first international outing was both thrilling and terrifying - but the scope to explore the craft was massive. Working with an experienced, diverse cast was an education in itself," she said in a statement