

EYE SECRETS

English Daily

Spy in every blink

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Telangana CM Revanth Reddy announces wage hike for workers across the state



Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has announced a significant increase in minimum wages for workers across Telangana, benefitting approximately 1.11 crore labourers. The decision follows recommendations from a Cabinet Sub-Committee that examined wage issues and consulted with all stakeholders.

The government's move aims to address long-standing concerns under the BRS regime, during which many workers faced losses due to inadequate wage fixation. The committee categorised workers into four groups: Unskilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled, and Highly Skilled. It also divided the state into three zones: Zone 1 includes Municipal Corporations; Zone 2 comprises Municipalities; and Zone 3 covers rural areas. Effective from 1 June, wages in Zone 1 have been increased as follows: unskilled workers from Rs. 12,750 to Rs. 16,000; semi-skilled from Rs. 13,592 to Rs. 17,000; skilled from Rs. 13,772 to Rs. 18,500; and highly skilled from Rs. 14,607 to Rs. 20,000. The Chief Minister emphasised the government's efforts to promote skill development, highlighting that individuals who upgrade their skills could potentially earn up to Rs. 2 lakh overseas. He pointed out the numerous job opportunities available in countries like Germany, Japan, and Singapore, urging youth to enhance their skills to capitalise on these prospects. Chief Minister also noted that while Artificial Intelligence (AI) poses a threat mainly to white-collar jobs, blue-collar employment remains in demand, with foreign nations actively seeking skilled workers from Telangana.

PM Modi gifts traditional Indian artefacts to Finland, Denmark and Iceland leaders

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to European nations recently, gifted series of paintings and artefacts to his counterparts in Finland, Denmark and Iceland, reflecting India's culture and rich craftsmanship. The gifts presented to the leaders of the Nordic countries include a Kamal Talai Pichwai painting, a Bidri Silver Work Vase and a replica of Ice-Axe used by mountaineer Tenzing Norgay. Given Iceland's deep connection with rugged landscapes, glaciers, and adventure exploration, Prime Minister Modi gifted his counterpart Kristurn Frostadottir, a replica of the Ice-Axe used by Indian-Nepalese mountaineer Tenzing Norgay. The replica of the Ice Axe pays tribute to the legendary tool carried by the mountaineer during the first successful ascent of Mount Everest in 1953 with Sir Edmund Hillary. Crafted in steel with a polished wooden shaft, the replica reflects the simplicity, resilience, and precision essential to high-altitude mountaineering. For Iceland, the ice axe resonates as



more than a historic mountaineering tool. It symbolizes endurance, respect for nature, and the spirit of exploration that defines both Himalayan and Nordic traditions. For Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, PM Modi presented a Bidri Silver Work Vase. The craft reflects the refined artistry of the Deccan, celebrated for its intricate silver inlay, elegant form, and meticulous craftsmanship. Adorned with delicate floral and geometric motifs, it embodies a tradition perfected over generations by arti-

sans of Hyderabad and the Deccan plateau. Local Job Listings Denmark, which is renowned for its design legacy and appreciation of minimal elegance, the Bidri vase holds a natural resonance. Its balance of form, precision, and craftsmanship reflects values shared by both Indian and Danish artistic traditions. Prime Minister Modi gifted his Finland counterpart Petteri Orpo, a Kamal Talai Pichwai painting, which reflects the serene beauty and devotional artistry of the Nathdwara tradition of Rajasthan. Centered

around lotus-filled waters, the composition symbolizes purity, harmony, and spiritual reflection. For Finland, which is celebrated as the "Land of a Thousand Lakes," the painting carries a special resonance. Its peaceful waters and meditative beauty echo Finland's own deep cultural connection with lakes, stillness, and the natural world. As a gift from India, the Kamal Talai Pichwai becomes a bridge between two traditions that find meaning and inspiration in water, serenity, and harmony with nature.

Andhra Pradesh Reschedules Bakrid Holiday to May 28



The Andhra Pradesh government has officially announced that the Bakrid holiday will now be observed on 28 May, instead of the originally scheduled 27 May. Chief Secretary G. Sai Prasad issued formal orders on Thursday confirming the change. Initially, the state's annual calendar designated 27 May as the public holiday for Bakrid. However, the date of the festival was later adjusted following the sighting of the moon, which determined the new date. The Chief Executive Officer of the Andhra Pradesh State Waqf Board had requested the government to reschedule the holiday accordingly. After considering the request, the government decided to shift the holiday to 28 May, and the Chief Secretary issued the official order to implement the change across all government offices and educational institutions in the state.

Jagan Mohan Reddy is the venomous serpent that destroyed the AP brand" – "You are the creator of Jungle Raj, Jagan"

Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's statements in press meetings are proof of his political bankruptcy, said Sadineni Yamini Sharma, the official spokesperson of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Andhra Pradesh. She strongly criticized him, saying that out of frustration after losing power, Jagan is making irrational and baseless remarks. Jagan, who ruined the future of the state for five years in the name of three capitals, has no moral right to speak about the development of Amaravati. It was Jagan Mohan Reddy

himself who acted as the venomous serpent that destroyed the AP brand. The factional rule, ganja networks, and mining mafia regime that operated during the last five years under your leadership was the real "Jungle Raj." The YSR Congress Party, which became a safe haven for criminals, talking about law



and order is the biggest joke of this century. You orchestrated attacks on Dalits, misused BC Sub-Plan funds, and treated minorities merely as a vote bank. People are now laughing at your crocodile tears for them. Instead of reading out false scripts written in the Tadepalli Palace, you should introspect on why the people rejected you.

Severe Heatwaves Persist Across India; Warnings Issued in Multiple States

A 'Red Alert' remains active for another three days across districts such as Adilabad, Jagtial, Kamareddy, Karimnagar, Komaram Bheem, Mancherial, Nalgonda, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Rajanna Sircilla, and Suryapet in Telangana. Telangana News App Intense heatwaves continue to grip India, with temperatures soaring 3 to 6 degrees Celsius above normal. Citizens are enduring extreme discomfort due to the scorching sun and hot winds, with many hesitant to venture outdoors. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that this intense heat will persist across several regions for the next six days. Hot winds originating from Balochistan and the Thar Desert in Rajasthan are exacerbating the heatwave conditions in North and Central



India. In response, the IMD has issued heatwave warnings for several states, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Punjab. In Telangana, a 'Red Alert' remains active for another three days across districts such as Adilabad, Jagtial, Kamareddy, Karimnagar, Komaram Bheem, Mancherial, Nalgonda, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Rajanna Sircilla, and Suryapet. Today, a 'Heatwave Alert' has been issued for 14 districts, with

temperatures forecasted to exceed 45°C in North and East Telangana. Districts like Khammam, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Nalgonda, and Suryapet are expected to experience temperatures crossing the 45°C mark. Specific temperature predictions include 44.6°C in Ramagundam, 44.4°C in Nizamabad, and 44.3°C in Adilabad. While Hyderabad's daytime temperature is expected to reach 39.5°C, humidity remains intensely oppressive. The IMD has indicated that the heatwave warning will remain in effect until 24 May. Additionally, districts in South Telangana have been warned about thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds reaching speeds of 40-50 km/h. Overall, the weather is expected to stay mixed across the state for the next three days. Similarly,

Andhra Pradesh is experiencing heightened heat conditions. The IMD forecasts that the severity of the heat will intensify over the next four days. The department has issued Red and Yellow alerts for numerous districts, with temperatures projected to reach between 45°C and 47°C in areas such as Parvathipuram Manyam, Alluri Sitharama Raju, Polavaram, Anakapalli, Kakinada, Kona seema, East and West Godavari, Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, and others. Temperatures in Vizianagaram and Markapuram are expected to hover around 44°C to 45°C, while some districts like Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Kurnool, Nandyal, Anantapur, Sri Sathya Sai, YSR Kadapa, Annamayya, Chittoor, and Tirupati could see temperatures between 40°C and 43°C.

Delay in decision-making depriving people of legitimate interests: Prez

New Delhi

Asserting that refraining from making a decision does not constitute morality, President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said delay in administrative decision-making is tantamount to depriving people of their legitimate interests.

Addressing Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers of 2024 batch, who had called on the President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here, Murmu said that ethics and governance are the two sides of the same coin.

"You have to be honest and ethical. At the same time, you have to deliver results. IAS officers are expected to exercise the powers delegated to them," she said.

The President said that refraining from making a decision does not constitute morality.

"Rather, making the right



decisions in alignment with the public interest and established order represents the true essence of morality. Just as a delay in the delivery of justice is deemed a denial of justice, so too is a delay in administrative decision-making tantamount to depriving people of their legitimate interests," Murmu said. Quoting former Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, she said some remnants of pre-independence practices and

behaviour patterns will survive in certain areas of governance.

"Such practices must be eradicated. You have to contribute to this national objective," the President said.

Addressing IAS probationers in 1947, Patel had said "It will be your bounden duty to treat the common men in India as your own, or to put it correctly, to feel yourself to be one of them and amongst them...".

"This statement becomes

especially relevant in the context of our ongoing national efforts for mental decolonization," Murmu said.

The President told officers that accepting the status quo may often be the most convenient option, but not necessarily the best option.

"Recognising when things need to change and having the conviction, ability and courage to see it through is the marker of an effective civil servant," she stated.

The President stated that no effort is required to simply drift along with the flowing current.

To achieve the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' and to elevate our society to the pinnacle of progress, officers will often have to move forward by striving against the tide, Murmu said, and advised them to keep the people of India, particularly the marginalized sections of society, at the very centre of their

thoughts and actions, whether they are out in the field or working in the office.

She said that the neutrality of the officers will be an indicator of their fairness.

"Your sensitivity will be the measure of your commitment to inclusivity. Your credibility will be built on your transparency and sustained performance. Your integrity, defined by your personal and professional conduct, will give you the moral courage to act decisively in public interest.

"You will have to blend compassion with rationality. You have to be sensitive without being sentimental. You have to follow the rules but not lose sight of the larger objectives," the President said.

Murmu said, now that the country has entered into a higher orbit of development, the expectations from the IAS are also higher.

Kerala govt has decided to scrap Silverline project: CM

Tumakuru (Karnataka)

Kerala Chief Minister V D Satheesan on Wednesday announced that his government has scrapped the controversial SilverLine semi-high-speed rail project, ending the flagship infrastructure initiative of the previous LDF government led by Pinarayi Vijayan.

The anti-SilverLine agitation evolved into one of the fiercest mass mobilisations against the Vijayan government, helping the opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) regain political ground in Kerala as protests over land acquisition, environmental concerns, and displacement galvanised public anger across the state. "The Cabinet has decided to scrap the Thiruvananthapuram-Kasaragod semi-high-speed rail corridor project called SilverLine," Satheesan said at the start of his press conference following a Cabinet meeting chaired by him. The Left government's 530-km SilverLine project,



planned by K-Rail—a joint venture between the Kerala government and the Ministry of Railways—was expected to reduce travel time between the two ends of the state to just four hours. Extensive protests against the project were held across the state, led by the Congress. Protesters uprooted and discarded many yellow markers associated with the project. The CM said the decision was taken because the project had been abandoned and no transactions could be carried out regarding the lands notified for acquisition, which affected

ordinary people. As the state has abandoned the project, even the Central government did not grant approval, he said. Therefore, all advertisements issued in connection with land acquisition for the project will be denotified, he added. Regarding cases pending in various courts and police stations related to protests against the project, the Home Department will examine them and recommend withdrawal based on their nature, Satheesan said.

"The court will have to grant permission to withdraw them," he added.

NCP (SP) leader rules out merger with Sunetra Pawar-led NCP

Mumbai

Maharashtra NCP (SP) president Shashikant Shinde on Wednesday said the issue of merger with the ruling NCP is over, ruling out any future discussion amid renewed speculation triggered by a meeting between party chief Sharad Pawar and NCP leader Sunil Tatkare.

After attending a party meeting chaired by Sharad Pawar, the NCP (SP) state unit president said the focus is on strengthening the party organisation and intensifying public agitations under the banner of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in Maharashtra. The meeting took place against the backdrop of reports of internal strife in the ruling NCP led by Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar, wherein party veterans Tatkare and Praful Patel have apparently been sidelined. Tatkare met Sharad Pawar in Mumbai last week.

Pawar, who heads the NCP (SP), chaired the key party meet to discuss the political situation in the country and Maharashtra and formulate strategies to revive the party.

Shinde said discussions were held with MPs, MLAs, and leaders who had contested elections, office-bearers and party workers on building the party as a strong opposition force under Pawar's leadership.

"There is no question of any merger (with ruling NCP). The issue of the merger is completely over now. I had said this earlier, and I am repeating it again — there will be no such discussion in future," Shinde added.

Goyal praises Modi's global standing

Hits back at Rahul over remarks

New Delhi



Union minister Piyush Goyal hit back at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday over his remarks targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of "hating India" and refusing to tolerate the "global respect" the country has garnered under Modi's leadership.

Goyal's remarks came after Gandhi, in a post on X, said an "economic storm" is raging over the country while the prime minister is "busy handing out candies in Italy". "Farmers, youth, women, labourers, and small traders are all in tears — the PM is laughing and making reels, while the BJP folks are clapping along. This is not leadership, it is a farce," Gandhi wrote on X after Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni posted a video of Modi gifting her a packet of Melody toffees.

Reacting sharply, Goyal said Gandhi has a problem with every Indian achievement and cannot tolerate the global recognition the country is receiving under Modi's leadership.

"Why does Rahul Gandhi hate India and everything made in India so much?" Goyal asked in a post on X. The commerce and industry minister said the country has emerged as the world's "trusted destination" through initiatives, such as "made in India" and "local goes global".

He further said India is earning global respect, investment and trust under Modi's leadership after waiting for decades for such recognition.

"The global respect, investment, and trust that the country waited decades for, the same India is now earning under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, and that is what Rahul Gandhi cannot tolerate," he said.

The Italian premier featured Modi as well in the video posted on X.

"Prime Minister Modi brought us a gift — a very good toffee," Meloni said in the video as Modi shows a packet of toffees, saying "Melody". "Thank you for the gift," Meloni said in her post.

ED gets 'godman' Kharat's custody, says he resorted to systematic extortion

Mumbai

Self-styled godman Ashok Kharat resorted to systematic extortion by claiming to possess divine powers, and rotated more than Rs 47 crore of ill-gotten money through 60 bank accounts, the Enforcement Directorate told a court here on Wednesday while seeking his custody.

The special court for Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) cases granted the central agency his custody till May 26.

Kharat, facing multiple cases of rape, sexual exploitation and cheating, was produced before the court after the ED arrested him on Tuesday. The agency sought his custody for ten days to trace the utilization of laundered funds.

Talks focused on governance; not leadership change, says Shivakumar

Bengaluru

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Wednesday dismissed speculation of a power tussle within the ruling Congress in Karnataka, saying his discussions with party president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leaders centred on strengthening the party and governance.

Shivakumar also said he would visit Delhi if invited by senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, amid continuing speculation over leadership issues and a possible cabinet expansion in Karnataka.

Reports emerged that Kharge held discussions with Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar amid renewed speculation over the state leadership issue, party

sources said.

According to sources, Kharge travelled from Thiruvananthapuram to Bengaluru along with Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar, and other senior leaders. They later held discussions at the residence of the state Energy Minister, K J George, on Monday. Reports of a power tussle between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar have surfaced repeatedly in recent months. The power-sharing issue intensified after the Congress government completed two-and-a-half years in office in November last year. Congress sources said the informal meeting took place at George's residence shortly after the leaders returned from Kerala, where they had attended the swearing-in ceremony



of the new Congress government. "Yesterday, all of you were writing stories about leadership issues. We were discussing how to strengthen the party and how to bring it back to power," Shivakumar told reporters. Asked about reports of internal discussions during his meeting with Kharge and Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar said: "You are all writing different stories. We discussed politics and governance. That's all." Responding to questions about

a possible invitation from Rahul Gandhi to visit Delhi, Shivakumar said, "If I am called, I will go. They have said they will call me. Definitely, I will go."

He added, "Maybe they may call me by the end of this month." Responding to remarks by Madhugiri Congress MLA and former Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna that state Home Minister G Parameshwara should become chief minister if there were a leadership change, Shivakumar denied that there had been any discussion on replacing Siddaramaiah. "Did Rajanna submit any proposal seeking a change in chief ministership? He himself said Siddaramaiah should continue. I have never said anywhere that the chief minister should be changed," he said.

Bengal CM vows crackdown on infiltrators

Hands over land to BSF for border fencing

Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Wednesday handed over land to the BSF for international boundary fencing and security infrastructure, beginning with a 27 km stretch, and said more land would be provided wherever required to strengthen border management in the state.

Addressing a BSF land transfer meeting, Adhikari said the process marked the beginning of a larger initiative to improve border security in the state.

"The land will be handed over to the Border Security Force (BSF) within two weeks. Initially, land covering a 27

km stretch along the India-Bangladesh international boundary is being handed over," he said.

Calling it the first step in a broader exercise, Adhikari said, "As a beginning, the land required to secure the 27 km stretch is being provided to the BSF."

Highlighting the need to expedite border infrastructure, the chief minister said a sizable portion of West Bengal's international boundary still remained unfenced.

"In West Bengal, around 1,600 km of the total 2,200 km border with Bangladesh has already been fenced, while nearly 600 km still remains unfenced," he said.

"Wherever land is needed



for fencing and border security, we will hand it over to the BSF," he added.

Targeting the previous Trinamool Congress government, Adhikari alleged that it had failed to cooperate on

border infrastructure because of "vote bank politics and appeasement policies".

"The previous government, due to its vote bank politics and appeasement policies, did not give land to the BSF," he claimed. Adhikari also alleged that coordination among the BSF, state police and district administration in bordering areas had weakened over the years. "For the last several years, coordination meetings between the BSF, state police and administration in bordering areas had not happened," he said.

He said the district-level coordination mechanism had now been revived. "The district coordination meetings have now started

and these will happen regularly now," the chief minister said. Announcing a stricter policy on illegal immigration, Adhikari said the state has implemented a provision for the handover of the infiltrators, nabbed by the police, to the BSF.

"A letter was sent by the Centre to the state last year regarding the direct handover of infiltrators to the BSF, but the previous government failed to implement this important provision. We have now enforced it," he said. Adhikari said those not covered under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act would be treated as infiltrators and action would be taken accordingly.

2020 DELHI RIOTS

Court acquits four, says relying on police witnesses would be 'dangerous'

New Delhi

A Delhi court has acquitted four men accused in the 2020 Delhi riots case, saying it would be "dangerous" to rely on the testimonies of two police personnel as their versions were contradicted by the investigation record and other evidence.

Additional Sessions Judge Parveen Singh was hearing the case against Sumit Kumar, Anuj, Rahul and Sachin in a case related to the alleged burning of an auto-rickshaw and vandalising and setting ablaze a shop in Karawal Nagar during the riots.

In an order dated May 19, the court said, "I find that PW6 and PW7 (police offi-



cers) are not credible witnesses and it will be dangerous to rely upon their testimonies and find for the prosecution against the accused. I accordingly find that the prosecution has failed to prove its case against the accused."

According to the prosecu-

tion, complainant Wazid had alleged that rioters set his auto-rickshaw on fire on February 25, 2020, while another complainant, Shamshad, alleged that his shop was vandalised and torched by rioters. The prosecution claimed CCTV footage helped identify the

accused and relied mainly on the testimonies of police personnel H C Mithilesh and ASI Junaid, who claimed to have witnessed a mob attacking an auto driver and torching the vehicle and shop.

An FIR was registered at the Karawal Nagar police station and charges of rioting, unlawful assembly, disobedience to an order duly promulgated by a public servant and mischief causing damage were framed against all the accused.

The court, however, found serious discrepancies in the evidence and noted that complainant Wazid could not be produced during the trial. It also observed that

Shamshad had said that the incident at his shop occurred in his absence and he could not identify any person involved in the rioting or arson.

"Even if the electronic evidence which has been produced by the prosecution in the form of CCTV footage is accepted to be true, the CCTV footage does not pertain to any of the incidents on the basis of which charges have been framed in this case," the judge said.

The court further noted that while the police witnesses claimed they saw the burning of the auto at Karawal Nagar Chowk, investigation records showed the actual location was about 1.5 km away on Pushta Road.

Ensure Aadhaar is used strictly as identity proof: Plea in SC

New Delhi

Alleging that Aadhaar is being used as a proof of citizenship, domicile, and residential address, a PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking directions to ensure that the card is used strictly as an identity proof.

The plea filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay has sought directions to the Centre, states and the Election Commission of India to ensure that Aadhaar is used as a proof of identity, not as a proof of citizenship, domicile, address and date of birth.

The plea, filed through advocate Ashwani Dubey, also sought directions that the use of Aadhaar as a proof of date of birth and residence in the application form for new voter registration be considered against Section 9 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, Section 23(4) of the RPA, 1950 and



Article 14 of the Constitution. "Section 9 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016 expressly states that 'Aadhaar is not the evidence of citizenship or domicile'. The Unique Identification Authority of India Notification dated August 22, 2023 clearly states that 'Aadhaar is proof of identity, not of citizenship, address or date of birth'..."

"Despite this, Aadhaar is not only being used as a proof of age, citizenship & domicile for school admission, property purchase and to obtain birth certificate, ration card,

driving licence but also being used in the Application Form for New Voter Registration (Form-6) as a proof of date of birth & proof of residence. And thus, infiltrators & illegal immigrants are obtaining various documents using Aadhaar," the plea said.

The petition contended that the existing verification mechanism under Form-6 is inadequate and might allow individuals without proper supporting documents to be included in the electoral database.

A nation of sporting moments, not yet a sporting culture

For years, India has celebrated sport in flashes. An Olympic medal here, a historic world title there, a stirring anthem at a distant arena that briefly unites millions. Then, almost as quickly, the applause fades.

The spotlight swings back to cricket, the headlines return to IPL auctions and sponsorship battles, and athletes from other disciplines quietly resume their struggle for recognition, respect and often, basic financial security.

That uneasy truth surfaced again recently. India's star badminton pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty spoke with visible disappointment about how the country does not celebrate badminton achievements enough despite years of global success.

Soon after, veteran chess Grandmaster Abhijit Gupta revealed that an organiser delayed his prize money payment and that even the national federation was initially slow to intervene.

In January this year during the badminton nationals in Greater Noida, players were forced to sleep on floors since the fee was not paid by the federation to the hostel.

Even during the domestic wrestling event, the arrangements were not as they should be in Gonda.

These are different stories from different sports. Yet the same emotion runs through all. The feeling that Indian sport still values athletes selectively.

These are not isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a larger sporting culture that still treats non-cricket athletes as temporary heroes instead of permanent national assets.

To be fair, India has made undeniable progress. Government-backed schemes such as the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), the Target Asian Games Group (TAGG) and the ACTC Funds have transformed athlete preparation.

Elite athletes today travel with physiotherapists, nutritionists, psychologists and foreign coaches, support systems that barely existed a decade ago.

But funding excellence at the top is only one layer of sporting development. The real crisis lies beneath it.

A sporting superpower is not built only by financing a handful of elite athletes.

It is built by creating an ecosystem where athletes from every discipline are identified, supported, and valued long before they become champions and long after they stop winning medals.

India still lacks that ecosystem.

Why China and USA excel at Olympics is because there is a system that positively influences the sport and athletes. This is despite the



IN JANUARY THIS YEAR DURING THE BADMINTON NATIONALS IN GREATER NOIDA, PLAYERS WERE FORCED TO SLEEP ON FLOORS SINCE THE FEE WAS NOT PAID THE BY FEDERATION TO THE HOSTEL EVEN DURING THE DOMESTIC WRESTLING EVENT, THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE NOT AS THEY SHOULD BE IN GONDA. THESE ARE DIFFERENT STORIES FROM DIFFERENT SPORTS. YET THE SAME EMOTION RUNS THROUGH ALL. THE FEELING THAT INDIAN SPORT STILL VALUES ATHLETES SELECTIVELY

fact that the two major sporting superpowers have conflicting attitude, yet the ambition and purpose is no different.

In China, Ye Shiwen, the 2012 Olympic champion in 400m, was trained in swimming because her hands and feet were disproportionately large compared to her height. She was taken into the state-sponsored system and groomed. There is a system that creates champions.

China thrives on discipline, and repetition of technique.

In USA, it's a well crafted system that aims at gradual progress. From small leagues to school leagues to getting sponsorships to moving to College and then the national governing bodies of respective sports deal with the promising athlete.

In India, the obsession with just cricket is not difficult to understand. Cricket mastered television early, built icons across generations and became commercially irresistible.

The Indian Premier League (IPL) turned cricketers into year-round celebrities and converted sport into entertainment on a scale no other Indian federation could match.

Cricket became India's dominant sport because it built an ecosystem that no other sport managed to create. A middle-class Indian parent can now imagine a stable life through cricket.

Most Olympic sports still cannot offer that certainty.

Other sports never received that level of sustained storytelling or investment.

A badminton player may win a Super 1000 title, a wrestler may become world champion, a chess player may beat elite grandmasters, but outside major tournaments they disappear from mainstream conversation.

Many federations remain poorly marketed, fragmented by politics or unable to build fan engagement. Many are embroiled in litigation and temporarily run by court-appointed ad-hoc panels.

Corporate India, too, still views most Olympic sports as charity rather than long-term investment opportunities.

That gap in visibility creates another damaging cycle: less attention means fewer sponsors, fewer sponsors mean less financial security.

Families do not trust the system enough to risk their children's futures on sport. And honestly, the system has given them reasons not to.

Official apathy has been normalised for decades.

Recently this correspondent was asked by an elite athlete if competing in a specific wrestling tournament will help get job? Well, what is the ambition to enter sport? To get a job or to excel

as an athlete?

No sporting revolution can happen in such an atmosphere.

If India genuinely wants to become a sporting superpower, the country needs a cultural shift, not just bigger budgets.

If money alone could create champions, then factor in the investment the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) makes. LTA, reportedly, has an annual budget of 157 million pounds and yet they do not have a serious Grand Slam contender as yet.

Andy Murray and Fred Perry are the only players to have won Wimbledon, their own major event.

LTA spent just over 36 million pound (approx 462 crore) for the conduct of grass-court tournaments, a group stage of the Davis Cup Finals and the Billie Jean King Cup Finals in Glasgow in 2022.

Can India match that as of today and do it consistently?

So we must not think that putting in a few hundred crores on a few athletes will guarantee India Olympic success.

If India genuinely wants to become a sporting superpower in the next few years, the mission must go far beyond medal projections for the Olympic Games or Olympic Games.

The three kings of debt: Bengal's rust, Kerala's welfare gravity, and Tamil Nadu's borrowed machine



ARJA SRIKANTH
SENIOR BUREAUCRAT



IN WEST BENGAL, TAMIL NADU, AND KERALA, THREE GOVERNMENTS HAVE STEPPED INTO OFFICE THROUGH THREE DIFFERENT POLITICAL CLIMATES. YET EACH HAS INHERITED THE SAME INVISIBLE CONSTITUTION—DEBT CONTRACTS, INTEREST SCHEDULES, PENSION LIABILITIES, SUBSIDY COMMITMENTS, AND FISCAL CEILINGS THAT NO MANIFESTO CAN REPEAL. DEMOCRACY CHANGES FACES. FISCAL REALITY CHANGES ONLY DEADLINES

lections are often narrated like epics of virtue and vengeance. A leader is crowned, a party is buried, a dynasty is "taught a lesson," an ideology is declared "rejected." Victory speeches inflate with moral certainty, supporters treat ballot outcomes as divine verdicts, and politics performs its familiar theatre of triumph and humiliation. But when the slogans dissolve into silence and the garlands begin to wilt, governance returns to its most merciless judge: arithmetic.

In West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, three governments have stepped into office through three different political climates. Yet each has inherited the same invisible constitution—debt contracts, interest schedules, pension liabilities, subsidy commitments, and fiscal ceilings that no manifesto can repeal. Democracy changes faces. Fiscal reality changes only deadlines. The ballot may decide who occupies the chair; the balance sheet decides what that chair can actually command.

The first truth these governments must confront is that debt itself is not a sin. Debt is an instrument. The ethical question is not whether a state borrows, but what it borrows for. Borrowing to build productive assets is fundamentally different from borrowing to preserve political comfort. One expands tomorrow's revenue base; the other simply delays tomorrow's crisis. In a federal economy like India's, where states must function simultaneously as welfare providers and growth engines, the distinction between these two forms of borrowing is the difference between development and decline.

A useful lens is long-term prosperity: real per capita income growth over the last fifteen years. Tamil Nadu stands out as the clearest performer. Indexed to 2011-12, its per capita income has nearly doubled, approaching around 210. This is not a statistical coincidence. It is the compounded outcome of industrial clustering, infrastructure discipline, and sustained integration with private investment. Kerala has grown steadily, broadly tracking national momentum, but without extraordinary acceleration. West Bengal, despite beginning from a lower base, reveals the weakest growth trajectory—precisely the opposite of what catch-up growth theory predicts for lagging economies. A state that starts behind should grow faster if structural reforms are unlocking productivity.

Bengal, however, has remained trapped in slow-motion progress.

This divergence is not cosmetic. Per capita income is the long shadow of policy choices. It

reflects what a state prioritised, what it financed, and what it failed to build. And that is why the next question is not merely "how much debt," but what kind of debt architecture has been constructed beneath the surface.

All three states are borrowers. None is fiscally pure. The difference lies in design.

Tamil Nadu's debt-to-GSDP ratio has risen but stabilised around 29-30 percent—manageable by Indian standards. Yet the more significant feature is that Tamil Nadu's capital expenditure has expanded in parallel. This parallel rise is the signature of productive borrowing. Roads, ports, industrial corridors, power systems, and urban infrastructure are not decorative trophies for election brochures. They are fiscal investments designed to generate returns through higher growth and a stronger tax base. In Tamil Nadu's model, debt has behaved more like an engine than a chain. The incoming government inherits not merely a budget, but an economic machine with momentum.

West Bengal entered this period with a heavier burden, once exceeding 40 percent of GSDP—among the highest in India. The state has increased capital expenditure in recent years, which is a positive shift. But the investment base was low to begin with, and the private investment multiplier has not followed with sufficient force. Bengal has started building, but not at a scale large enough to escape its own gravitational pull. Its inheritance is therefore incomplete transformation: the opening chapters of an infrastructure story without the full ecosystem that makes infrastructure profitable. It resembles constructing a railway line without ensuring industries will ever use it.

Kerala's fiscal inheritance is the most structurally alarming. Debt has climbed to nearly

37-38 percent of GSDP, but capital expenditure has not risen proportionately. Borrowing has continued, but asset creation has not kept pace. This is the difference between borrowing to build a bridge and borrowing to fund the daily traffic on an old one. Borrowing to finance salaries, pensions, welfare transfers, and interest payments may be politically stabilising, but it does not expand productive capacity. It expands only future obligations. Kerala increasingly resembles a state consuming its tomorrow to preserve its today.

The most brutal indicator of constraint is not total debt, but the interest burden—how much of revenue receipts is swallowed before the government can even make a single fresh policy decision. Interest payments are the silent tax on ambition. They do not build schools, roads, hospitals, or jobs. They merely pay yesterday's invoice.

West Bengal once carried an interest burden nearing 28-29 percent of revenue receipts, meaning over a quarter of its income was pre-committed to creditors. Over time, Bengal reduced this burden to levels closer to Tamil Nadu and Kerala. That is a genuine fiscal achievement. But it arrived with an unforgiving trade-off: interest reduction was partly achieved through restrained development spending. Bengal lowered pressure by building less. For a state already behind in infrastructure and industrial competitiveness, this stabilisation came at a developmental cost that now haunts its future.

Kerala has moved in the opposite direction. Since around 2018, interest payments have climbed sharply, remaining above 22 percent of revenue receipts. That number is not a statistic—it is a cage. When interest consumes one-

California turns to AI as whale deaths spike

Ferries, cargo ships and tankers cut through choppy waters in the San Francisco Bay Tuesday as a whale surfaced nearby, its spout barely visible against the white caps.

Until now, whales could easily go unnoticed by mariners, but an AI-powered detection network launched this week is designed to track them day and night.

The system, called WhaleSpotter, scans the bay around the clock for whale blows and heat signatures up to 2 nautical miles away, alerting mariners to slow down or reroute when whales are nearby.

"They'll be able to make adjustments way before they get anywhere close," said Thomas Hall, director of operations for San Francisco Bay Ferry. "It will also allow us to track data over time and see where the whales are camping out so we can adjust our routes during whale season to avoid those areas completely."

The effort comes amid an alarming rise in gray whale deaths in the bay. Last year, 21 dead gray whales were found in the wider Bay Area—the highest number in 25 years, according to The Marine Mammal Centre—with at least 40 percent killed by ship strikes. At least 10 more have died in the Bay Area so far this year.

Scientists say those figures likely underestimate the true toll as many whale carcasses sink or are swept back out to sea before they are ever found or reported.

Gray whales have long migrated along the California coast on their roughly 19,300-kilometre journey between breeding lagoons in Mexico and feeding grounds in the Arctic.

But instead of simply passing offshore, increasing numbers are now diverting into San Francisco Bay and lingering for days or even weeks inside the crowded estuary—a shift scientists increasingly link to climate change.

Warming temperatures and shifts in sea ice in the Arctic are disrupting the food web gray whales rely on during summer feeding months, according to a 2023 study in Science, leaving many malnourished during migration.

Many whales now concentrate in a high traffic corridor between Angel Island, Alcatraz and

Treasure Island, directly overlapping with ferry routes and shipping lanes.

"It's the worst place possible in terms of all the ship traffic," said Rachel Rhodes, a project scientist at the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory who led the initiative. There have been so many collisions that "the teams responding to strandings said they ran out of places to even land dead whales." The eastern North Pacific gray whale population was once hailed as a conservation success story after rebounding from commercial whaling and being removed from the Endangered Species Act in 1994.

But numbers have since plummeted, decreasing by half over the last 10 years, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Just 13,000 remain.

"They may not be getting the quality or quantity of food they're used to in the Arctic," Rhodes said. "That means they're starting this incredibly long migration at a disadvantage."

The thermal camera system provides real time alerts to mariners

Artificial intelligence automatically flags potential whale sightings, which are then verified by trained marine mammal observers before alerts are sent via radio to ferry operators, vessel traffic controllers and posted publicly on the Whale Safe website.

WhaleSpotter systems are already used on vessels and fixed installations such as lighthouses and coastal towers in the United States, Canada and Australia.

But researchers say the San Francisco Bay network is the first to directly integrate land-based and vessel-mounted detections with official mariner alerts, allowing whale sightings to be relayed in near-real time to ships navigating the bay.

The first hours of testing produced an immediate flood of detections.

"Suddenly to have a full sense of how much whale activity is in this space honestly put me a little bit on edge," said Douglas McCauley, director of the Benioff lab. "But we're going to use that data and we're going to be smart about how we use that space and share it with the whales."



CASTE, COURT

The Supreme Court has taken the view that Caste Census is not to be discouraged. This is in response to a petition by a private individual that caste enumeration be not made a part of the Census 2027, the process for which is currently progressing. The court however made it clear that it was not within its jurisdiction to decide whether this be done or not alongside the present exercise. While there are differing views on holding the caste census, some states have decided in favour or are moving in that direction. The BJP-led Central government has not warmed up to the idea, but the Opposition Congress party has supported the plea. Leader of Opposition in Parliament, Rahul Gandhi, has stated affirmatively that his party and its governments are committed to do this. The Supreme Court now takes the view that "any government of the day must know who all are 'backward' and how many people require the government's welfare support." This, Chief Justice Surya Kant, said is a matter of policy left to the governments to handle.

The Supreme Court's is the voice of sanity. Its observations need be taken with the seriousness that they deserve. It has also chosen not to take sides. The backward-forward community classifications were finalised decades ago - and shortly after the start of post-Independence rule. Over the past decades, several communities that were once considered backward have, by dint of their enterprise, education or hard work have both individually and collectively come upfront. Certain communities went down the ladder in terms of their steady fall in economic strengths. Those bracketed into the Backward Class nomenclature half a century ago continue to get reservation facilities in jobs, education etc even as at least sections of them have progressed phenomenally through exploration of business and other opportunities. At the same time, government services remain largely a preserve of select communities who had a head-start in education and better schooling. The Scheduled Castes and Tribes remain more or less at the same level as they stood some 80 years ago, but for marginal improvements in their lives. This is a shame on the nation. The BC communities have managed to come upfront in both education and enterprise.

A close scrutiny of this scenario should also show communities like Muslims form just a few per cent of the governmental workforce. A part of the reason could be both social prejudices and their lack of educational heft in the past. Today, their children are getting well-educated and scouting around for jobs. Muslims form over 15 per cent of the population. Certain Christian communities remain backward and enjoy reservation benefits now. To what extent, is worth an examination vis-a-vis all such communities in order for the establishment to review and rectify its welfare strategies and ensure their level of participation in education and the governance system. A search for truth cannot be frowned at, undercut, or stalled by citing flimsy excuses. Facts are supreme. The Congress party deserves praise for taking a principled stand in this matter. However, inclusion of the caste factor in the information-gathering exercise by itself is no guarantee to ensuring justice to all. Follow up actions by governments will only make the exercise meaningful.

AMU researchers detect new multidrug-resistant bacterial genome in Aligarh drain

Researchers at the Interdisciplinary Biotechnology Unit of Aligarh Muslim University have identified a new multidrug-resistant bacterial genome in wastewater flowing through Aligarh city, raising concerns over the growing threat of antibiotic resistance in densely populated urban areas.

The findings, published in the April edition of the scientific journal 'Molecular Biology Reports', are based on a long-term study by a team of scientists led by Asad Ullah Khan, Shamsi Khalid and Absar Talat, who have been tracking the evolution of antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs) for over a decade.

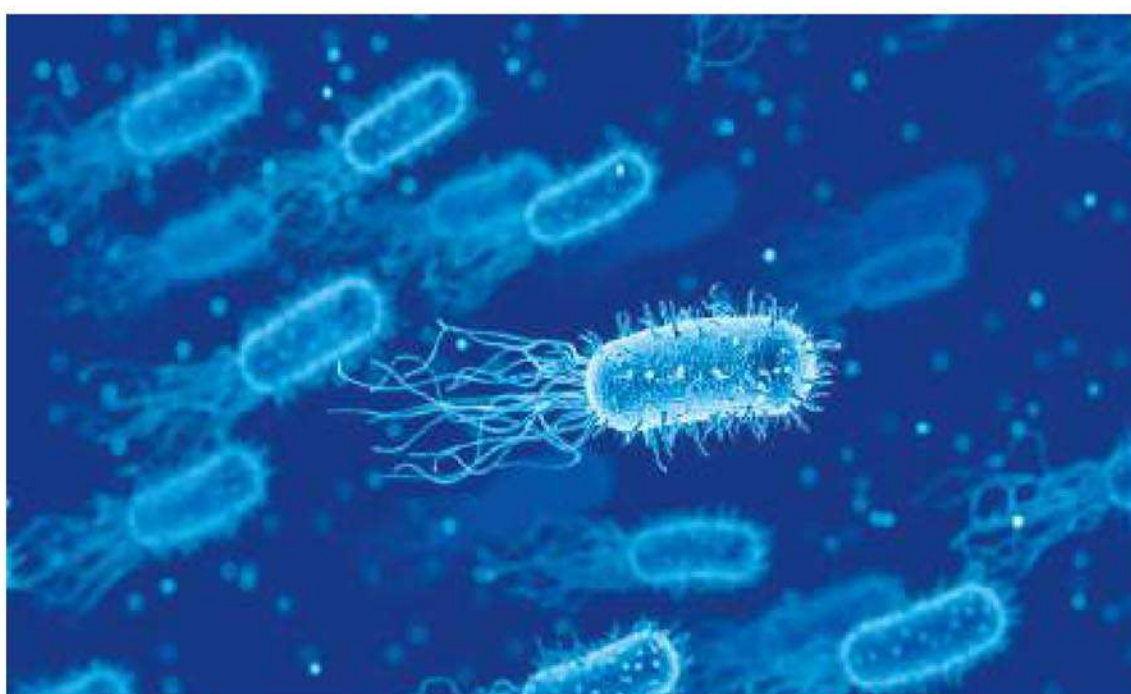
According to the study, genome sequencing of a bacterial isolate, identified as 'AK 633' from a major city drain revealed the presence of a rare "mosaic plasmid" carrying the NDM-7 gene, which is associated with resistance to multiple antibiotics.

In microbiology, plasmids are small DNA molecules inside bacteria that can transfer genetic material, including drug-resistance traits, from one bacterium to another. A "mosaic plasmid" refers to a plasmid formed through genetic recombination, enabling it to carry resistance traits from different bacterial sources.

The researchers said the NDM-7 gene belongs to the New Delhi Metallo-beta-lactamase (NDM) family of resistance genes, which make bacteria resistant even to "last-resort antibiotics" such as carbapenems that are often used when other antibiotics fail.

The study noted that the sequencing of AK 633 pointed to the role of the plasmid 'p1550' in the possible global spread of high-risk antibiotic-resistant bacterial clones.

Talking to PTI, researcher Asad Ullah Khan said the findings underscore the urgent need for a wider national surveillance and awareness programme to monitor and contain



ACCORDING TO THE STUDY, GENOME SEQUENCING OF A BACTERIAL ISOLATE, IDENTIFIED AS 'AK 633' FROM A MAJOR CITY DRAIN REVEALED THE PRESENCE OF A RARE "MOSAIC PLASMID" CARRYING THE NDM-7 GENE, WHICH IS ASSOCIATED WITH RESISTANCE TO MULTIPLE ANTIBIOTICS. IN MICROBIOLOGY, PLASMIDS ARE SMALL DNA MOLECULES INSIDE BACTERIA THAT CAN TRANSFER GENETIC MATERIAL, INCLUDING DRUG-RESISTANCE TRAITS, FROM ONE BACTERIUM TO ANOTHER. A "MOSAIC PLASMID" REFERS TO A PLASMID FORMED THROUGH GENETIC RECOMBINATION, ENABLING IT TO CARRY RESISTANCE TRAITS FROM DIFFERENT BACTERIAL SOURCES

the growing menace of drug-resistant bacterial genomes.

He said antibiotic resistance has emerged as a major public health challenge worldwide and pointed to untreated waste disposal, particularly hospital waste, and poor drainage management as important contributing factors.

Khan also stressed the need for vigilance during drain-cleaning operations in urban areas.

"Very often after drains are cleaned, the sludge is left on the

roadside for long periods instead of being immediately removed. Such practices can contribute to the spread of resistant organisms," he said.

According to the researchers, genotypic analysis -- the study of the genetic composition of bacterial isolates -- is essential to understand how resistance genes spread between bacteria in community and hospital settings.

Khan said at least 94 variants of NDM genes have so far been identi-

TO UNDERSTAND HOW STRESS IMPACTS COGNITION

IIT-K researchers study 'relaxed' brain activity

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur are studying alpha waves in the brain -- typically active when a person is awake and relaxed -- to understand how stress affects cognitive functions like attention, working memory, and risk-reward analysis.

"The essence of the study is to understand how different people react to stress differently and how stress can have a modulating effect on human cognition," Tushar Sandhan, associate professor of electrical engineering, said.

The team aims to use non-invasive measures such as 'electroencephalogram' or EEG to build automated models of varied stress dimensions by correlating with factors, including feeling a loss of control or agency, helplessness and anxiety outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).

Alpha waves in the brain, discovered about a hundred years ago, are said to be at play when one is in a relaxed wakeful state. They represent a calm, relaxed or meditating mind, typically with eyes closed.

Studies, such as one published in 'Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Xplore' in October 2025, have explored mitigating stress by exposing a stressed individual to binaural beats in the alpha frequency range of 8-12 Hertz. A binaural beat is an auditory illusion that the brain creates upon listening to slightly differing frequencies delivered to each ear separately.

The result showed a significant rise in alpha wave activity, which was corresponded with participants reporting lower perceived stress levels.

IIT-K researchers, led by Sandhan, are investigating the activity of alpha waves in the frontal lobe region, which is crucial for judgement, self-perception and decision-making, using an EEG.

The team is also studying 'frontal alpha asymmetry' -- a biomarker referring to an asymmetry, where one hemisphere of the brain records more alpha waves compared to the other. Such asymmetry can exist in a strongly biased manner in specific psychiatric and neurological conditions, including depression.

"Frontal Alpha Asymmetry as a biomarker has been widely studied, especially in affective neuroscience and depression research," Sandhan explained.

"In many previous studies, depression has been linked to (a) greater left frontal alpha power, which could be interpreted as (a) reduced left frontal activity, which is associated with reduced approach motivation," he said.

Approach and withdrawal motivation are behaviours through which one either moves towards or 'approaches' a reward, or away from a threat (withdrawal).

The researchers are using a bioampli-



THE TEAM AIMS TO USE NON-INVASIVE MEASURES SUCH AS 'ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPH' OR EEG TO BUILD AUTOMATED MODELS OF VARIED STRESS DIMENSIONS BY CORRELATING WITH FACTORS, INCLUDING FEELING A LOSS OF CONTROL OR AGENCY, HELPLESSNESS AND ANXIETY OUTLINED IN THE DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS (DSM-5). ALPHA WAVES IN THE BRAIN, DISCOVERED ABOUT A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, ARE SAID TO BE AT PLAY WHEN ONE IS IN A RELAXED WAKEFUL STATE. THEY REPRESENT A CALM, RELAXED OR MEDITATING MIND, TYPICALLY WITH EYES CLOSED

fier that is custom assembled with soft, flexible silicon electrodes of the EEG and a customised 3D printed ergonomic headband. Cardiac activity is also being collected via a smartwatch.

Sandhan and colleagues had previously proposed 'DAAFNet', an algorithm that analyses EEG data to identify and classify emotions. 'Affective computing' is an interdisciplinary research field spanning artificial intelligence (AI), psychology and cognitive science, and is focussed on developing systems that can recognise and interpret human emotions.

The systems so developed find uses in human-computer interface and brain-computer interface, designed to bridge the gap between human intent and machine action, and having wide-ranging applications from consumer electronics to medical rehabilitation.

However, even though alpha waves have been researched deeply for the past 100 years, according to an expert, data

is still lacking on the nature of alpha waves as a biomarker, and more longitudinal studies on the matter are required.

According to Vaibhav Tripathi, assistant professor at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar's cognitive and brain sciences department, alpha waves are the most prominent waves and become clearly visible as an alpha signature on an EEG system, when a person closes their eyes.

"But the issue here is that different brain oscillations or waves -- alpha, beta or gamma -- can associate with various cognitive functions or certain physiological responses, such as stress, where the oscillations can differ in an individual due to differences in mind states and traits.

"One's mental state changes throughout the day and also across days. In the morning, you will have more energy. You may then work on something and something can happen, or emotions can take a toll, or your mood goes off," he explained.

Tripathi, whose lab is studying alpha-wave signatures in individuals with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and major depressive disorder, among other experiments, also talked about differences at the trait level -- whether someone is generally predisposed to happiness or tends toward depression or stress.

"Seeing that alpha waves or alpha rhythm could be associated with either some trait property or some state property, it's still a matter of debate as to the nature of information that alpha waves provide as a biomarker," he added.

He also suggested that stress is a variable phenomenon, and an objective measure of stress might be required.

"So, that's why these studies are challenging. We need an objective measure of stress so that it can account for aspects, such as state-level differences in alpha waves across a day and across multiple days," Tripathi said.

Women with Parkinson's more likely to experience falls, report higher rates of pain than men: Study

An analysis has found that women with Parkinson's disease may be more likely than men to experience falls and report higher rates of pain, depression, and anxiety.

Men, on the other hand, were more likely to report memory changes and showed higher rates of cognitive impairment, according to findings published in the The Lancet Regional Health Western Pacific journal.

The analysis based on data from Australian Parkinson's Genetics Study, and led by researchers at QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, found substantial sex-based differences in how Parkinson's disease manifests and progresses, highlighting the need for more personalised approaches to prevention, diagnosis, and care.

Nearly 11,000 people with the neurodegenerative disorder responded to a questionnaire about their experience with the condition and also provided saliva samples. Parkinson's disease is characterised by tremors, slowness of movement and muscular rigidity.

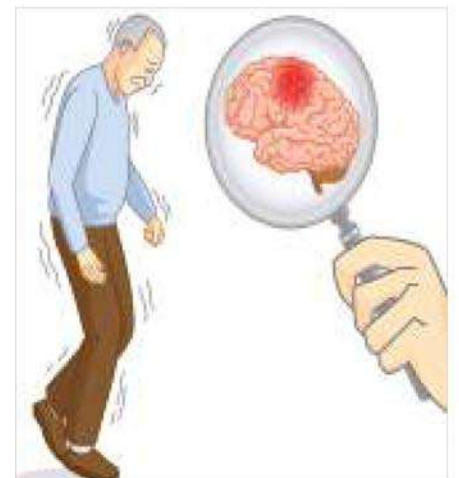
"These differences tell us that Parkinson's is not a one-size-fits-all disease," author Miguel Rentería, an associate professor at QIMR Berghofer, said.

"The distinct patterns we see in men and women may reflect different underlying biological pathways and environmental exposures. Understanding these differences is essential if we want to move towards truly personalised approaches to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment," Rentería said.

The study also identified notable sleep-related differences, with men reporting higher rates of REM-sleep behaviour disorder and sleep apnoea, compared to women. REM or rapid eye movement sleep, is the stage associated with dreaming and typically begins around 90 minutes after falling asleep.

Men also reported more impulsive behaviours, particularly related to sexual behaviour, the researchers said.

The analysis further found marked differences in environmental exposures before diagnosis. Men reported significantly higher exposure to pesticides -- 42 per cent compared to 28 per cent among women -- and



were far more likely to have worked in high-risk occupations such as farming, metal work, and petrochemicals.

One in four participants reported a family history of Parkinson's, while common environmental risk factors across the cohort included pesticide exposure (36 per cent) and traumatic head injury (16 per cent).

"Sex-based differences are evident: females more frequently report unilateral onset (81 per cent vs 75 per cent), falls (45 per cent vs 41 per cent), and pain (70 per cent vs 63 per cent), whereas males report higher rates of memory changes (67 per cent vs 61 per cent), pesticide exposure (42 per cent vs 28 per cent), high-risk occupations (44 per cent vs 16 per cent), and impulsive control behaviour such as sexual behaviour (56 per cent vs 19 per cent)," the authors wrote.

The researchers noted that while remains unclear whether environmental exposure alone can cause Parkinson's disease, the findings confirm that certain exposures are more common among people with the condition.

Author and PhD candidate Fangyuan Cao said, "What struck me most was just how varied the experience of Parkinson's is -- not only between individuals, but between men and women. The richness of this dataset allows us to move beyond averages and start to understand why the disease looks so different from one person to the next."

Bangladesh: 505 cases of violence against minorities recorded so far this year

A leading minority rights organisation on Thursday expressed grave concern over an alarming pattern of violence against minorities in Bangladesh, documenting 505 incidents in the first four months of this year. In its latest report, titled 'The Persecution Continues: Minority Communities Under Sustained Attack in Bangladesh', the Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM) recorded 505 incidents across 62 districts and all 8 divisions of Bangladesh between January and April 2026. The report mentioned that these incidents included killings and suspicious deaths, physical assaults, kidnappings, sexual violence, attacks on temples and religious institutions, land grabbing, arson, looting, intimidation, and blasphemy-related persecution. According to HRCBM, these incidents are not isolated or localised events but reflect recurring patterns of violence, intimidation, sexual abuse, land dispossession, religious attacks, mob aggression, and institutional



protection failures affecting minority communities across the country. As per the findings, the major categories of documented violations included 144 cases of kidnapping and physical assault, 132 incidents of property attacks, land grabbing, arson, and looting incidents and 100 cases of murder and suspicious death. Additionally, it documented 95 temple attacks and incidents of religious violence, 28 cases of sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, and 6 blasphemy-related incidents. "The documented pattern reveals a

continuing failure of protection, accountability, and equal access to justice for vulnerable minority communities. The report highlights recurring concerns involving delayed response, weak investigation, intimidation of victims or families, and lack of visible accountability in many cases," said the HRCBM, criticising the persistent failure of Bangladeshi authorities to ensure adequate protection for minority communities. Bangladesh has witnessed escalating violence against minorities, including Hindus, during the eighteen-month tenure of the former

Muhammad Yunus-led interim government, sparking outrage among people and human rights organisations across the globe. The recurring incidents under the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government have further underscored a sharp rise in targeted attacks on minority communities in the country. Earlier in April, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, a human rights organisation against religious discrimination, voiced serious concern over the continuation of communal violence across the country in the period before and following this year's national elections, documenting 133 incidents. In a press release, the organisation, citing media reports, stated that between January 1 and March 31, a total of 133 incidents of communal violence were recorded. These included 25 killings, 4 incidents of rape and violence against women, 35 incidents of temple attacks and looting, and 69 other incidents, including attacks on indigenous communities.

Every farmer must obtain a farmer registration ID.

Sarpanch Dr Vemuri Satyanarayana....



Narsimhapuram Sarpanch Dr. Vemuri Satyanarayana has called for every single farmer who owns agricultural land to get a farmer registration ID. Farmer registration ID process was conducted under the supervision of agriculture officials at Narsimha puram village panchayat office under Mandal on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, he said that this ID is very important to easily get Rythu Bharosa, Rythu Bima, subsidized fertilizers and other subsidies provided by the Central and State Governments. It has been clarified that this registration is mandatory if the government's financial assistance is to be directly deposited in the farmers' accounts and to be recognized as a farmer. He said that if there is no ID, there will be no possibility of getting government schemes and services in future. Agriculture Department AD P. Prashanthi, Mandal Dhikari B. Rajaiah, AEO Mahita Reddy, Panchayat Secretary Venkateshwarlu participated...

Petition submitted to Amberpet Deputy Tahsildar Balaram by JAC leaders: Genuine activists must be identified



Amberpet JAC Convenor Ruby Stevenson, along with Amberpet activists, submitted a petition to Amberpet Deputy Tahsildar Balaram on Thursday, requesting identification of genuine activists who participated in the Telangana movement and played a key role in achieving Telangana state. Speaking on the occasion, he urged that the KK Committee, set up by the Telangana State Government to identify Telangana activists, should work to ensure recognition for genuine activists irrespective of party affiliations. He requested that justice be done to all activists beyond caste and religion. He suggested that the committee should collect details of those who participated in the movement across all Assembly constituencies in Telangana state and work to ensure government benefits reach everyone. He further requested in the petition that, as promised by the Congress party in its election manifesto, genuine activists should be given 250 square yards of land, a pension of Rs 25,000, a health card, and identity cards. Activists Varkala Srekanth, Ravinder, Bhanu Das, Amar, and others participated in this program.

Nellore rural set for massive transformation

Nellore: In a major step toward uplifting rural infrastructure, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) State Official Spokesperson and Nellore Rural Constituency In-charge Kotamreddy Giridhar Reddy declared that the comprehensive transformation of the constituency remains their primary objective. On Wednesday, Giridhar Reddy, along with local public representatives, officially inaugurated a series of basic amenity and development works valued at 70 lakh in the twin villages of Amancherla and Donthali under Nellore Rural mandal limits. The projects were unrolled under the guidance of Mandal Parishad



President Budida Vijay Kumar. Addressing the rural gatherings, Giridhar Reddy highlighted that the segment is witnessing an unprecedented wave of infrastructure development under the leadership of local MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy. He noted that these initia-

tives are backed fully by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, and IT Minister Nara Lokesh. Providing a financial breakdown, the TDP leader disclosed that the coalition government has chan-

neled 19.70 crore into Nellore Rural mandal alone through the Panchayat Raj Department to upgrade essential rural networks. Of this funding pool, 5.35 crore has been deployed exclusively for long-term development projects within Amancherla village to upgrade its internal layout. He urged citizens to maintain their support for the ruling establishment to ensure seamless, development-driven governance. Prominent local leaders, including ZP Co-option Member Allabakhshu, MPTC Chandi Arunamma, and TDP Mandal Convener Pamujula Pradeep, participated in the launch events.

Telangana Rythu Sangham demands release of 2026 monsoon crop plan

Senior leaders of the Telangana Rythu Sangham have demanded that the state government immediately announce the 2026 monsoon agricultural plan, citing long-term neglect of farmers and significant planning gaps. The appeal was made during the State Committee meeting on Wednesday under the chairmanship of State President Pothineni Sudarshan Rao, attended by K Mallareddy, Chulakanti Rangareddy, and T Sagar. The leaders noted that with Rohini Karthe beginning on May 24, farmers are preparing for sowing, yet the government has failed to issue essential crop guidelines. They criticised the administration for promoting

specific crops while ignoring necessary diversification, which has forced Telangana to rely on imports for vegetables, pulses, and edible oils. The committee urged the government to increase horticulture cultivation from 12 lakh acres to 25 lakh acres, noting that current funding levels reflect poor commitment to development. They cited Reserve Bank of India norms requiring banks to allocate 18 per cent of business towards crop loans and demanded strict enforcement of these mandates. Reviewing the 2025-26 season, leaders reported that of 90 lakh tonnes of grain targeted for procurement, only 40.03 lakh tonnes had been purchased by



May 19, with payments of Rs 6,463 crore issued to farmers. They condemned delays caused by shortages of gunny bags and storage facilities, urging immediate action to prevent damage from unseasonal rains.

Furthermore, the Sangham insisted that Rythu Bharosa funds be credited to farmers' accounts before June, warning that banks failing to release funds should face license cancellation. Members from various

districts reaffirmed the collective demand for a transparent, farmer-centric monsoon plan to ensure the security of the agricultural future of the state.

Cockroach Janta Party's X Account Blocked In India After Surpassing BJP On Instagram

The Cockroach Janta Party's X account was withheld in India hours after the satirical youth movement crossed 10 million Instagram followers, overtaking BJP's official handle amid growing online buzz. The X account of the rapidly growing Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) was withheld in India on Thursday, shortly after the satirical political movement surpassed the BJP's official Instagram account in follower count, adding fresh momentum to the viral Gen Z-driven campaign. The development was confirmed by CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, who shared a screenshot showing the account blocked in India. Responding to the action, Dipke wrote that the move was "expected" after the party's sudden rise across social media platforms. The restriction came as the Cockroach Janta Party continued its meteoric online growth. What began as a satire-led internet movement has quickly evolved into a major digital phenomenon, driven largely by youth anger over



unemployment, exam paper leaks, political rhetoric and institutional accountability.

The party recently crossed 10 million followers on Instagram, overtaking the BJP's official handle, which currently has around 8.7 million followers on the platform. The Congress remains ahead with over 13 million followers, while the Aam Aadmi Party trails significantly behind.



Presenting itself as "a political front of the youth, by the youth, for the youth," the Cockroach Janta Party uses the slogan "Secular, Socialist, Democratic, Lazy." The movement has combined humour, memes and political commentary to attract massive engagement within just a few days of launch. The name "Cockroach Janta Party" emerged as a satirical reaction to controversial remarks alleged-

ly made by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant during a recent court hearing. The CJI was accused online of comparing some unemployed youth and digital activists to "cockroaches" and "parasites," sparking widespread backlash.

Dipke, a Boston University graduate and former social media campaign worker for the Aam Aadmi Party, said the remarks became the emotional trigger behind the movement. He argued that the comments generated stronger reactions because they allegedly came from the country's top judicial office, which is expected to uphold constitutional freedoms. Although the Chief Justice later clarified that his remarks had been misquoted and were intended only for people using fake degrees to enter professions, the online outrage continued to grow, helping the movement gain even more traction. The Cockroach Janta Party has also drawn support and engage-

ment from several public figures, including activist-lawyer Prashant Bhusan, social activist Anjali Bhardwaj, and Trinamool Congress MPs Mahua Moitra and Kirti Azad, who jokingly expressed interest in joining the outfit. Beyond satire, the party's manifesto includes demands such as stronger accountability for the Election Commission, a ban on post-retirement Rajya Sabha positions for Chief Justices, 50 per cent reservation for women in Parliament and Cabinet roles, and reforms in media ownership and employment rights. The movement has also positioned itself as a voice for students affected by issues like the NEET paper leak controversy and rising unemployment. While it remains unclear whether the Cockroach Janta Party will evolve into a formal political organisation or continue as an internet-led protest movement, its growing influence has firmly pushed it into the national political spotlight.

Kangana Ranaut urges women to be independent: Indian society is notorious for abandoning daughters



Amidst the alleged dowry death case of Twisha Sharma, actress and politician Kangana Ranaut has advised all parents not to simply abandon their daughters once they are married. Taking to the Stories section of her official Instagram handle, the 'Queen' actress wrote, "So many tragic news about married young women comes up every day. Many of these young, educated ladies even beg their parents to help them out of their suffocating situations before tragedies strike them, but Indian society is notorious for abandoning daughters once they are married (sic)." Kangana further urged all the young women to focus on their careers and become independent before thinking about getting married. The 'Tanu Weds Manu' actress went on to add, "My advice to young women out there which no social media or fashion/dating/wedding/make up industry is telling you. Your career is more important than anyone else in your life. Think about marriage only after you are independent. Please you have to be your own hero. No one is coming to save you. What you do and what you are is more important than who you marry. Build a life that you want don't listen to anyone."

Shifting our focus to Kangana's forthcoming projects, she will soon be seen leading "Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata", which shares the courageous tale of the hospital staff during the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. Speaking about her next, Kangana had said, "We usually celebrate big, dramatic acts of heroism, but real courage is much quieter—it steps in, stays back, and does what needs to be done. 'Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata' tells an untold story of courage, sacrifice, humanity, and unity—of ordinary people who stood between terror and life itself. This is desh bhakti in its truest sense, where duty turns into action. I feel proud to be part of a story that pays tribute to those who held the city together in its toughest moments, and I'm excited for audiences to watch it on the big screen on 12th June." "Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata" is expected to reach the cinema halls on June 12 this year.

Gujarat: JPC continues consultations on 'One Nation, One Election', engages with political leaders

Gandhinagar: The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) examining the feasibility of the 'One Nation, One Election' proposal continued its three-day visit to Gujarat on Wednesday, with the second day marked by detailed consultations with leaders from major political parties, sitting legislators and senior state officials. The 39-member committee, comprising 27 Lok Sabha MPs and 12 Rajya Sabha MPs, is chaired by BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary and has been mandated to examine constitutional and administrative aspects of holding simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The panel is scrutinising the proposed Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024. On the first day of the visit, the committee held discussions with senior state officials at GIFT City in Gandhinagar, where the state government presented a detailed briefing on governance structures and electoral preparedness.

According to reports from the meeting, JPC Chairperson, P.P. Chaudhary, described the presentation as a "model presentation", stating that it was the first time such a comprehensive and integrated submission had been placed before the committee. He also appreciated the efforts of the Chief Secretary and sen-



ior administrative officials, noting that "several aspects highlighted in the presentation had not previously been presented to the panel in such detail". Chaudhary further indicated that the "Gujarat model of presentation" would be refined and shared with other states as a template for similar submissions. He also told reporters that the committee's consultations are aimed at gathering structured inputs from states, political stakeholders and institutions before preparing final recommendations on the proposal for Parliament.

"Economists also said that this could increase the GDP by 1.6 per cent. If simultaneous elections are held, the country could save Rs seven lakh crore. That money could be used for infrastructure, welfare of the poor, education, healthcare, and other public welfare works," he had said. On the second day, the

committee invited representatives of all major political parties for consultations. The discussions were attended by leaders from the BJP, Congress and AAP, along with senior state leadership. The AAP delegation included party state president Isudan Gadhvi, MLAs Gopal Italia and Chaitar Vasava, along with other party representatives. The Congress delegation was led by state president Amit Chavda and included MLA Imran Khedawala and other leaders. The ruling BJP was also represented by senior functionaries and legislators.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi, Assembly Speaker Shankar Chaudhary and several Cabinet ministers and MLAs are also participating in the interactions with the parliamentary panel. According to party representatives, the session allowed

political stakeholders to place their positions directly before the committee. BJP leaders reiterated their support for the proposal, while Opposition parties raised concerns related to constitutional structure, federal principles and electoral fairness. The concept of 'One Nation, One Election' seeks to synchronise elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, aiming to reduce electoral expenditure and administrative disruption. India last held simultaneous elections in 1967, after which the cycle was broken due to premature dissolution of several Assemblies and the Lok Sabha in subsequent years. The proposal is currently under detailed examination following the report of a high-level committee chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, which submitted its recommendations after extensive consultations and research. The panel suggested a phased approach to synchronised elections, including alignment of electoral cycles and provisions for handling mid-term dissolutions, with possible implementation from 2029 if constitutional changes are completed. The JPC is expected to continue its consultations with stakeholders over the remaining day of its Gujarat visit before moving towards consolidation of inputs for its parliamentary report.

Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar Returns to Netflix

Ranveer Singh's film Dhurandhar is returning to Netflix India with a new version called "Raw & Undekha." This new version of the 1st part of the film has unseen scenes and extra footage that was not available in theaters. The movie shall start streaming on Netflix from 22nd May, 2026 in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. The announcement has created excitement among fans of the Ranveer Singh movie. Netflix India shared a new poster and teased that the new version will have more action and special scenes. Many fans are excited to watch the Dhurandhar unseen footage online. Though, the announcement has also confused



many fans. They thought that the 2nd part of their favorite movie, Dhurandhar: The Revenge, will be streamed on Netflix. But many reports have shared that the sequel for the film

may come on a different OTT platform in India. Though, netflix will bring back the extended version of the 1st part. Due to this reason, many fans have become extremely confused about which platform will their favorite movie be streaming. They are questioning whether the extended version will be released on or not and on which platform. Even with the confusion, the news has increased excitement around the film franchise. Fans are now waiting to see the new scenes added to the movie. The update has become part of trending OTT news, Bollywood news and Ranveer Singh latest news online

Sooryavanshi is going to be as feared as Gayle: Irfan

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi will instill the same fear in the bowlers' minds that West Indian marauder Chris Gayle had managed to do in his prime, according to former India pacer Irfan Pathan. Sooryavanshi, with 53 sixes in the ongoing IPL, is within touching distance of the record 59 that Gayle struck in the 2012 season. On Wednesday night against Lucknow Super Giants, the 15-year-old Rajasthan Royals batter hammered a 38-ball 93 that was dotted with 10 maximums and seven fours. "It is very difficult to stop him. In his first 10 balls, he was batting at a strike rate of less than 100, and by the end of the innings, he had scored 93 runs off just 38 balls," Pathan said. "With 53 sixes, he is actually going after Chris Gayle's record of 59 sixes, which



has stood since 2012. As bowlers, we were always scared of facing Chris Gayle. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is creating that same fear, and Gayle's record is definitely in danger," he added.

Another former India player Sanjay Bangar said he

does not have words to describe Sooryavanshi's talent. "Can't really explain it; words are not sufficient. They can't do justice to the kind of ability this young boy, this young prodigy, possesses. Some of those shots were extraordinary, to say the least," he said. "He put on a masterclass, a

sensational Vaibhav Sooryavanshi innings indeed. Terrific to watch, great entertainment. And he is definitely going to draw crowds wherever he goes and wherever he plays," he added. Former India captain Anil Kumble believes Sooryavanshi has the ability to break Chris Gayle's record for most sixes in a single IPL season, with his range and temperament setting him apart from other batters. "I can see Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breaking Gayle's record and making history." "very few batters can hit sixes over cover with such ease. But Sooryavanshi did it multiple times against Digvesh Rathi. I am glad people still have words to describe such talent. I am running out of my own vocabulary. This kid is very special."

GT eye top-two finish with win against flagging CSK

Ahmedabad: Eyeing a top-two finish to ensure a shot at Qualifier 1, Gujarat Titans will have their tails up when they face a flagging Chennai Super Kings side seeking to regain lost ground after a rather disappointing campaign, in their IPL match here on Thursday. A top-two placement at the end of the league stage grants the teams two opportunities to reach the final. Currently placed second with 16 points, the Titans are in a three-way battle alongside table-toppers Royal Challengers Bengaluru (18 points) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (16 points), and victory against CSK will vastly improve their chances of a top-two finish



in the group phase. Local Job Listings A victory over CSK by a heavy margin could even push GT past RCB's (+1.065) net run rate, depending on other fixtures. And if SRH too win their final league stage game against RCB, the battle for the second spot

will come down to net run rate. In this scenario, GT hold slight edge with their NNR (+0.400) being better than Sunrisers' +0.350. On the other hand, with their playoff hopes inching closer to getting extinguished after a narrow loss to SRH, the

five-time former champions Chennai Super Kings will seek to salvage pride in what could be their final outing in this edition. Ruturaj Gaikwad's men have been pushed to the brink of elimination and require a victory along with other results to go their way to stay in contention for the last playoffs berth. Going into the contest on the traditionally batting friendly strip at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Titans' captain Shubman Gill is in excellent form, and so is his opening partner Sai Sudharsan. For the opening pair, negotiating early swing and controlling the powerplay will be crucial against the CSK bowling attack.

Malvika, Ashmita progress

Kuala Lumpur: India's Malvika Bansod and Ashmita Chaliha emerged as the lone bright spots on an otherwise disappointing day for the country at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 here, advancing to the second round with contrasting wins in women's singles. Malvika, who is on a comeback trail after recovering from an ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) injury that required surgery, fought back strongly to beat Germany's world No. 52 Yvonne Li 21-17 16-21 21-9, while Ashmita registered a comfortable 21-16 21-13 victory over Indonesia's world No. 56 Thalita Ramadhani Wiryawan. Malvika will face Denmark's eighth seed Line Hjarne Kjaersfeldt, while Ashmita takes on Malaysia's Goh Jin Wei next. However, India also suffered a string of early exits across categories. In men's singles, eighth seed Lakshya Sen, the brightest Indian prospect, crashed out after a shock 17-21 11-21 defeat to Indonesia's world No. 38 Moh. Zaki Ubaidillah.

HS Prannoy, the 2023 Asian games



and World Championships bronze winner, too bowed out after a marathon battle against Japan's sixth seed Kodai Naraoka, losing 17-21 22-20 22-24 in an 80-minute contest. Kiran George retired while trailing 15-21 1-6 against France's seventh seed Alex Lanier. India's Tharun Manneppalli squandered a one-game advantage to lose 21-17 14-21 8-21 to Chinese Taipei's Wang Po-Wei. In women's singles, Anmol Kharb fought hard before going down 21-13

16-21 19-21 to Denmark's eighth seed Line Christophersen Kjaersfeldt. India's mixed doubles pair of Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh lost 13-21 18-21 to Indonesia's Bobby Setiabudi and Melati Daeva Oktavianti in the opening round. In women's doubles, sisters Rutaparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda were outclassed 7-21 6-21 by Japan's second seeds adn world No. 7 Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi.

Pant dropped from ODIs, KL Rahul made Test vice-captain



Guwahati: Flamboyant wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was on Tuesday removed as vice-captain of the Indian Test squad for the upcoming one-off match against Afghanistan and dropped from the ODI line-up for the ensuing three-match series against the same opponents. KL Rahul replaced Pant as the vice-captain of the Indian Test team that is being led by Shubman Gill. Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been expectedly rested from both the Test and ODI assignments as part of his workload management but he will be back for the tour of England later this summer. Senior all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has also been rested from the upcoming Test match by the Ajit Agarkar-led national selection committee. The home assignments against Afghanistan include a one-off Test in Mullanpur starting June 6, followed by three ODIs scheduled from June 14 across Dharamsala, Lucknow, and Chennai.

"Bumrah will be back when we tour England. He is working on his workload," Agarkar told reporters after the selection meeting here. Spin bowler Manav Suthar and pacer Gurnoor Brar have earned maiden call-ups to the Test squad. Both are teammates at IPL franchise Gujarat Titans, while Prince Yadav is the new face in the ODI line-up, with Ishan Kishan being the second wicket-keeper.

The Squads:

India's Test squad:

Shubman Gill (captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul (vice-captain), Sai Sudharsan, Rishabh Pant, Devdutt Padikkal, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Manav Suthar, Gurnoor Brar, Harsh Dubey, Dhruv Jurel.

India's ODI squad: Shubman Gill (captain), Shreyas Iyer (vice-captain), Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Hardik Pandya, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Harsh Dubey, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Prince Yadav, Gurnoor Brar.

Prince, Dubey, Brar in India's squad for Afghanistan ODIs; Ishan replaces Pant

Guwahati: Pacer Gurnoor Brar and Prince Yadav, along with left-arm spin bowling all-rounder Harsh Dubey, have been handed maiden call-ups for India's three-match ODI series against Afghanistan. India's ODIs against Afghanistan will be in Dharamshala (June 14), Lucknow (June 17), and Chennai (June 20). The squad, led by Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer, serving as the vice-captain, features senior pros Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, though the former's inclusion is subject to fitness after suffering a hamstring injury during the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026. The same is the case with seam-bowling all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who will also need fitness clearance from the medical team following back spasms, keeping him out of the Mumbai Indians' recent games in the IPL. A significant change is in the form of Ishan Kishan earning a return to the India ODI team at the expense of Rishabh Pant and Dhruv Jurel. "Rishabh remains a part of the Test squad and is an incredible player. He's not part of the ODI squad, but right now he's a key part of the Test team," said chief selector Ajit Agarkar in a virtual press conference while announcing the squad. Prince's accuracy and pace while being a standout bowler for Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in IPL 2026 by 16 wickets have impressed the selection panel enough to earn an ODI call-up, with no place for Mohammed Siraj, injured Harshit Rana, Axar Patel, and Ayush Badoni, who were present during India's 2-1 series loss to New Zealand earlier this year. Brar and Dubey also add to India's bowling options after being previously given a call-up to the Test squad for the one-off game in New Chandigarh. The pace unit includes Brar, Prince, Arshdeep Singh, and Prasidh Krishna, while Washington Sundar and Kuldeep Yadav, along with Dubey, are present, as India continue their build-up to the 2027 Men's ODI World Cup. India ODI squad: Shubman Gill (captain), Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer (VC), KL Rahul, Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Prince Yadav, Gurnoor Brar, and Harsh Dubey

'Drishyam' director on Mohanlal's iconic George Kutty character: Not sure if I wrote his story, or if he wrote mine!

Chennai: Choosing to share his thoughts on George Kutty, the iconic character portrayed by Mohanlal in his immensely popular 'Drishyam' franchise, director Jeethu Joseph on Wednesday said that he had spent 13 years with George Kutty and that he wasn't sure if he had written George Kutty's story or if George Kutty had written his. On the eve of the release of 'Drishyam 3', the third instalment from the immensely popular franchise, Jeethu Joseph took to his Instagram timeline to share a thought on the character he had created. He wrote, "13 years with Georgekutty. I'm not sure if I wrote his story, or if he wrote mine. In Cinemas Worldwide From Tomorrow. #Drishyam3" A teaser that the makers had released earlier has only added to the excitement of the franchise's fans. The teaser that was released begins with a recap of the earlier two parts. While the first part's recap is narrated from the point of view of George Kutty (played by Mohanlal), the second part's recap is from the viewpoint of his rivals, the cops.

George Kutty's voice is heard saying, "I am just an ordinary man. My world is small and it comprises just my wife and my children. An unwanted guest invaded our piracy -- a guest who had the power to destroy my family. We sent him back forever to ensure he would never return to ruin our lives." The second



instalment's recap is in the voice of a policeman. "It's like a case that is closed but will never close. Actually, it was not us who were watching him. He was the one watching us." This is followed by George Kutty praying in a church. He tells God, "This battle of mine began the day I was born. I had no one to call my own. After much slogging and struggle, I built a family for myself. When there came a time that could shatter it, I acted without thinking about repercussions or consequences. In the process, I did not realise how many people I had hurt. Now, I am scared, sir. I don't know who else is out there watching!"

In the earlier two instalments, the protagonist George Kutty managed to keep his wits about him and therefore was able to handle the challenges thrown by the cops. However, in this upcoming instalment, he himself looks scared. Will a rattled and scared George Kutty be good

enough to show presence of mind and face the fresh challenges coming his way? Drishyam 3 has triggered huge interest in fans and film buffs ever since it was first announced. The film's release, which was scheduled for April 2 this year, had to be postponed in the wake of the tense situation persisting in the gulf. The film is now slated for release on May 21. It may be recalled that Mohanlal had completed shooting for his portions for the film in December last year. A video clip of the actor cutting a cake in front of the entire unit to celebrate the completion of his portions had gone viral.

Mohanlal had begun work on this film on the eve of receiving Indian cinema's highest honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, last year. The film, which is the third instalment in the highly rated franchise, was formally launched with a traditional puja ceremony that was held at a law col-

lege near Kochi in September last year. Director Jeethu Joseph, addressing the media ahead of the launch, had revealed that 'Drishyam 3' would explore the next chapter in the life of Georgekutty, the iconic character played by Mohanlal in the film. "The film focuses on what happens in Georgekutty's life after four-and-a-half years. That is the crux of the story," Joseph had explained. Producer Antony Perumbavoor, a long-time collaborator of Mohanlal and a key force behind the success of the Drishyam series, had said that the decision to move forward with the third instalment came after extensive discussions. "The phenomenal response to the first two parts convinced us that Georgekutty's journey had more to tell. Only after detailed talks with Jeethu did we finalize this new version," Perumbavoor had stated. The unit shot at a number of places including Thodupuzha and Vagamon, with the final five-day schedule taking place at Ernakulam. The Drishyam films have achieved cult status in Indian cinema for their gripping storytelling, intricate suspense, and Mohanlal's acclaimed performance. The first film, released in 2013, set new benchmarks in Malayalam cinema, while its sequel, released in 2021, drew record-breaking viewership both in theatres and on streaming platforms.

Akshay Kumar playing father and son role in his next!



Bollywood star Akshay Kumar is all set to surprise audiences with a double role in the upcoming comedy entertainer Welcome to the Jungle. Directed by Ahmed Khan, the film is already generating massive buzz as one of the biggest multi-starrer comedy projects currently under production in Bollywood. According to industry reports, Akshay Kumar will reportedly play both father and son in the movie, bringing an exciting twist to the popular comedy franchise. The actor is expected to present two completely different looks and mannerisms, adding more entertainment and confusion to the fun-filled storyline. Fans are already excited to see the versatile star in dual roles, especially in a franchise known for its over-the-top humour and chaotic comedy. The film features a massive ensemble cast with several well-known Bollywood actors sharing screen space, making it one of the most anticipated comedy entertainers in recent times. While the makers are yet to reveal more details about the plot and characters, the update about Akshay Kumar's double role has significantly increased curiosity among movie lovers. Known for balancing comedy, action, and emotional performances with ease, Akshay Kumar's latest role is expected to become one of the major highlights of the film. With grand production scale, star-studded casting, and franchise popularity, "Welcome to the Jungle" is shaping up to be a complete commercial entertainer.

AIKYA DHAIRYA SENA SAMITHI will be 'Voice for the Voiceless' : Manoj Manchu

Manoj Manchu, popularly known as "RawKing," held an extensive media interaction where he opened up about his new



launched social initiative AIKYA DHAIRYA SENA SAMITHI, his upcoming films, freedom of speech, women empowerment, and political aspirations. Speaking about the vision behind the organization, Manoj revealed that the initiative began with statewide blood donation camps in places like Hyderabad, Kurnool, Kakinada, Tirupati, and Vizag. He said the organization was created to encourage people who want to give back to society and promised that it would continue expanding across regions. Explaining the meaning behind the name, Manoj said "AIKYA" stands for unity, while "Dhairya" and "Sena" were inspired by the names of his children. He emphasized that the organization would stand for responsibility, service, and social harmony.

During the interaction, Manoj strongly defended freedom of speech and assured support to influencers and individuals facing threats online. He stated that the organization would legally stand by those whose voices are being suppressed. When asked about politics, Manoj responded that he was "born into politics" and always stood on the people's side, though he clarified that the organization has no political agenda. Interestingly, he revealed that his wife Mounika Manchu may actively contest in future elections. On the film front, Manoj announced that his upcoming film Rakshak will officially launch on June 7. Describing it as a women empowerment story, he said he would be seen as a DCP in the film. He also shared updates about his large-scale project David Reddy, which has already completed 40 percent of its shoot. Concluding the interaction, Manoj said he aims to balance cinema and social responsibility while building a platform dedicated to helping people and addressing important social issues.

Sushmita Sen celebrates 32 years of Miss Universe victory, says 'Grateful for the smile that never left me' Created On: 21 May 2026 10:24 AM IST

Mumbai: Actress and former beauty queen Sushmita Sen celebrated 32 years of her historic Miss Universe 1994 win with a heartfelt note expressing gratitude and love for her fans, especially in the Philippines where she was crowned. Taking to Instagram, Sushmita shared a picture of herself flashing her iconic smile while travelling in a bus towards her aircraft. Reflecting on her memorable journey, the actress said she felt blessed and thankful for the happiness that has remained with her over the years. In her post, Sushmita expressed gratitude for the smile that has stayed with her for 32 years and counting. She also gave a special mention to the Philippines, writing "Mahal kita," which means "I love you" in Filipino, and thanked fans for their endless love and support. Sushmita Sen was just 18 years old when she won the Miss India title in 1994, earn-

ing the opportunity to represent India at the Miss Universe pageant the same year. She later returned to the global platform as one of the judges for Miss Universe 2016. Following her Miss Universe triumph, Sushmita stepped into Bollywood with the thriller Dastak in 1996, where she portrayed the victim of a stalker played by Sharad Kapoor. She later appeared alongside Sunny Deol in Zor. The actress is also admired for her role as a single mother. At the age of 24, she adopted her first daughter Renee in 2000, while her second daughter Alisah became part of the family in 2010. On the professional front, Sushmita was last seen in Aarya Season 3, directed by Ram Madhvani. The crime-thriller drama, based on the Dutch series Penozo, featured Sushmita in the lead role of a woman drawn into the world of crime while protecting her family. The series



recently received a nomination at the International Emmy Awards in the Best Drama Series category. Over the years, Sushmita has delivered memorable performances in films and shows such as Biwi No.1, Sirf Tum, Filhaal..., Aankhen, Main Hoon Na and Maine Pyaar Kyun Kiya?. She also earned praise for portraying transgender activist Shreegauri Sawant in the 2023 series Taali.

Neha Shetty shines in yellow

Actress Neha Shetty may have faced disappointment with Gangs of Godavari, but the young star continues to remain in the spotlight with her glamorous presence and growing fan following. The actress played a full-length role in the film, which released two years ago with high expectations. However, the movie failed to perform at the box office, and Neha's character received mixed reactions from audiences. Following the release, the actress also faced trolling on social media, making it a difficult phase in her career. Many expected the film to become a turning point for Neha Shetty, but the underwhelming response delayed her chances of landing another major full-length project. Despite the setback, Neha has successfully kept herself connected with fans through stylish appearances, fashion shoots, and social media activity. Her glamorous looks and confident screen presence continue to attract attention online. Recently, her traditional outfits, including elegant yellow lehengas paired with ethnic jewellery, have gone viral among fans and fashion followers. Industry observers believe Neha still has strong potential to bounce back with the right project. While her next big film announcement is still awaited, fans remain optimistic about her comeback. Many feel the actress possesses both screen charm and fashion appeal, which could help her secure promising opportunities in the near future. With her elegance, confidence, and growing popularity on social media, Neha Shetty continues to stay relevant even during a challenging phase in her acting career.