

EYE SECRETS

English Daily

Spy in every blink

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Indian pilgrims reach Arafat as Haj rituals begins in Saudi Arabia

Riyadh: As millions of pilgrims assemble at Saudi Arabia's Arafat on Tuesday for the core ritual of Haj, all Indian pilgrims had reached the holy site comfortably and in a timely manner to take part in the prayers. Extending his wishes to all those performing Haj, Indian Ambassador to the Saudi Arabia, Suhel Ajaz Khan, said, "Today is the day of Arafat. It is the most important day of the core Haj, where the entire pilgrimage moves from the tent city of Mina to Arafat and spends the day here in Arafat in prayer before they move to their next destination of Muzdalifah after the sunset." "All Indian pilgrims have moved from Mina to Arafat in a timely manner, in a very comfortable manner, and they are all now accommodated in

their tents in Arafat. We had moved pilgrims by both the buses and the trains. Almost fifty per cent of our pilgrims use the trains, and the rest of them use the buses to move. And everyone is now in Arafat and dedicating themselves to the prayers," he added.

According to the Indian Embassy in Riyadh, Ambassador Khan, Indian Consul General of Jeddah, Fahad Suri, and the entire Indian Haj mission are present in Arafat and serving the Indian pilgrims. Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijju, conveyed his heartfelt greetings and prayers, expressing hope that the sacred journey would reinforce the values of compassion, harmony and unity. "On the

very solemn occasion of Haj pilgrims assembling at the sacred plains of Arafat for the core rituals of Hajj 2026, I convey my heartfelt greetings & prayers to all the Hajis. May this sacred journey further strengthen the values of compassion, harmony & unity among all humanity," Rijju posted on X. On Sunday, Ambassador Khan met Rahim Khan, Karnataka's Minister for Municipal Administration and Haj in Mecca, briefing him on the preparedness ahead of the Haj period. Consul General Fahad Suri was also present in the meeting. Earlier on Saturday, Khan visited Mecca and met with a number of pilgrims, listening to their concerns and feedback on the various Haj arrangements. "He reviewed preparations with the consul general, coordinators,



and other staff and visited branch offices and clinics where he interacted with the medical teams. He also assessed readiness for the core Haj period and the movement of pilgrims to the tent city of Mina," the Indian

Embassy in Riyadh posted on X. India news analysis Over 1.5 million people have arrived in Mecca for the annual Haj pilgrimage, which this year takes place amid hopes for an end to the war in West Asia.

Petrol, Diesel Prices hikes: Here are the prices in AP, Telangana

Disparities in petrol and diesel prices across Indian states are increasingly prominent, primarily driven by varying levels of Value Added Tax (VAT) and additional levies imposed by state governments. An analysis covering twenty states and Union Territories reveals that Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Kerala has the highest petrol prices, while Gujarat records the lowest. Telangana news portal Despite ongoing global crude oil crises, official



sources assert that India's fuel price increases are among the slowest worldwide. Following recent revisions, the price of a

litre of petrol has crossed ₹115 in three states — Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Kerala — with Andhra Pradesh leading at over ₹117, making it the highest in the country. The variation in the prices seems to be attributed to the VAT and other taxes. Conversely, in six states—including Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Goa, and Assam—the price of petrol remains at ₹104 or below, reflecting significant regional variations in fuel costs.

US Strikes Iranian Missile Sites, IRGC Boats Near Strait Of Hormuz During Ceasefire

The US launched limited strikes on Iranian missile launchers and IRGC boats near the Strait of Hormuz, calling the operation a defensive move amid ongoing ceasefire efforts. The United States carried out what it described as "self-defence" military strikes in southern Iran, targeting missile launch sites and Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) boats near the Strait of Hormuz during an ongoing ceasefire. According to the US Central Command (CENTCOM), the operation was launched to protect American troops from threats posed by Iranian forces. CENTCOM spokesperson Capt. Tim Hawkins said the strikes focused on missile sites and vessels allegedly attempting to place mines in the strategically important waterway. US officials claimed that two IRGC boats involved in the operation were



destroyed. American forces also targeted a surface-to-air missile system in Bandar Abbas after it reportedly attempted to engage US warplanes. Despite the military action, US officials stressed that the strikes were limited and did not indicate the collapse of the ceasefire agreement with Iran. Sources told Fox News that the operation was defensive in nature and had concluded for the time being. Explosions were reported

across parts of southern Iran, including Bandar Abbas, Sirik and Jask, following the strikes. The development came as US President Donald Trump renewed pressure on Iran over its enriched uranium stockpile. In a post on Truth Social, Trump said Iran should either hand over the material to the US for destruction or eliminate it under international supervision as part of broader peace efforts in the region.

YS Jagan slams TDP led coalition govt Mega DSC, TDP reacts sharply

Lokesh claimed the recent DSC had been conducted transparently, with 10,000 posts announced in the job calendar and preparations underway for another DSC. YSRCP President and former Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has strongly criticised the Chandrababu Naidu

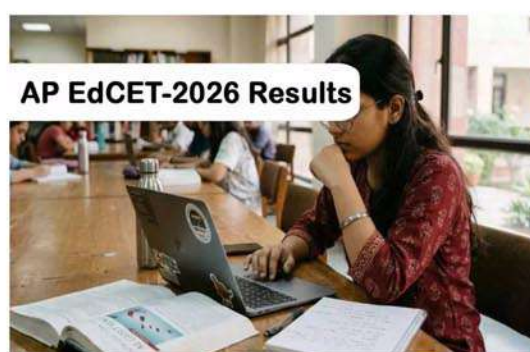


government over the conduct of the Department of School Education's DSC recruitment, alleging widespread irregularities and lack of transparency. In a fiery statement, Jagan questioned whether the government had conducted a 'Mega DSC' or a 'fraudulent DSC' that had cheated aspiring candidates. He demanded the government clarify allegations of paper leaks, data deletion, and the disappearance of merit lists. India news analysis Jagan accused the government of initially cancelling the DSC announced during his tenure, deliberately delaying the recruitment process, and then issuing a new notification solely for publicity, ultimately causing injustice to candidates through irregularities and scams. He also raised concerns about a department headed by Minister Nara Lokesh, alleging attempts to conceal leaks and irregularities involving an outsourced employee of SCERT, who reportedly secured the top rank and whose details were later deleted from the database. Further, Jagan claimed merit lists and topper information had been hidden, questioning why only selected candidates received private messages while official lists were not displayed publicly at district offices. He also alleged corruption in sports quota appointments, claiming posts were being sold

for Rs 15 lakh each and accusing ruling party leaders of brokering deals and issuing fake certificates to ineligible candidates. He questioned the sudden replacement of the TET convener with a joint director from the education department and demanded a CBI inquiry, asserting that the entire process was marred by 'Mega Leak and Mega Corruption'. Jagan called for Nara Lokesh's removal from his post and urged justice for meritorious candidates. In response, TDP leader and minister Nara Lokesh dismissed YS Jagan's allegations, asserting that no teacher posts had been filled during the former government's rule and slammed Jagan for criticising the current government's efforts to fill 16,000 teacher positions. Lokesh claimed the recent DSC had been conducted transparently, with 10,000 posts announced in the job calendar and preparations underway for another DSC. Lokesh criticised Jagan for purportedly suspecting and insulting candidates who secured jobs in the Mega DSC, and accused him of trying to undermine the future of the state by hindering investment and employment opportunities. The other TDP leaders also reacted slamming the former chief minister and demanded the latter to tender apologies to the teachers.

AP EdCET-2026 Results Announced: 99.3% Pass Rate

The AP EdCET-2026 results were announced on Tuesday, revealing that out of 19,880 candidates who sat the exam, 19,741 students passed, achieving a pass rate of 99.3 per cent. Andhra Pradesh Minister for Education Nara Lokesh congratulated all the students who qualified, praising their efforts and success in the examination.



HC declares May 27 working day, shifts Bakrid holiday

The Telangana High Court declared May 27 as a working day on account of the Bakrid festival, shifting the public holiday to the following day, May 28.

The public holiday for Eid-ul-Adha will extend to the District Judiciary, including all the Tribunals and Labour Courts in Telangana. Initially, the government had announced May 27 as a public holiday for the festival. However, as the crescent moon marking the beginning of Dhul-Hijjah 1447 AH was not sighted in Hyderabad or other parts of Telangana, the festival will be celebrated on May 28.

On May 17, the Sadar Majlis-e-Ulama-e-Deccan announced that the crescent moon marking the beginning of Dhul-Hijjah 1447 AH was not sighted in Hyderabad or other parts of Telangana. In an official statement issued by Syed Hasan Ibrahim Hussaini Quadri, also known as Sajjad Pasha, the organisation said reports received from various locations confirmed that no verified moon sighting had taken place on Sunday evening.

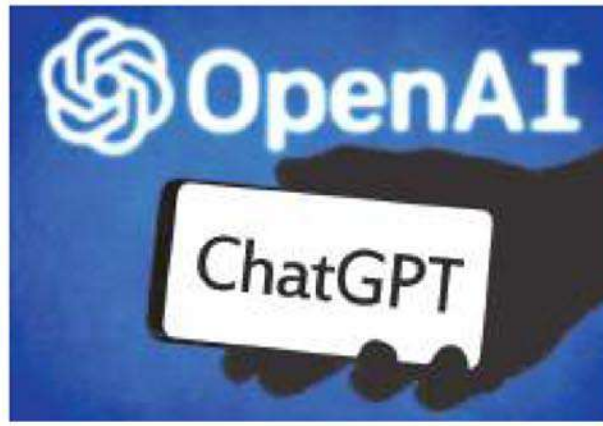
Following the announcement, the Majlis declared that Dhul-Qa'dah will complete 30 days and Tuesday, May 19, will be observed as the first day of Dhul-Hijjah.

ChatGPT Images 2.0 looks to target Hyd businesses with new tools

OpenAI last month launched ChatGPT Images 2.0, an upgrade of its image generation tool that helps users create visual content for personal and professional needs via AI. India has already become the largest market for the tool, with users generating more than 1 billion images on it so far. And Hyderabad has also quickly emerged as one of its largest markets as well.

With Hyderabad being the Biryani capital of India, often having the highest number of orders on food apps, ChatGPT Images will likely be an important tool in the market for businesses as many have now begun to rely on the app to make creatives and also for content, among other things.

"For Hyderabad's businesses, this opens new creative possibilities across some of the city's most active sectors, from restaurants and cloud kitchens to jewelry and fashion boutiques, and from healthcare service providers to local education institutions," said OpenAI in a press release. The tool, according to the company, helps business owners create sharp, local-language visuals faster, whether they need product



catalogues, festive posters, menu creatives, property brochures, social media posts and promotional creatives in English, Hindi, Telugu and Urdu.

With the app becoming more and more intuitive, it reduces the creative burden on smaller companies, especially those that are into digital marketing. Many feel that as the AI tool becomes more intuitive, it may disrupt the market by reducing the need for more human interference as things go.

With the app, building a campaign is also relatively easier. ChatGPT Images 2.0 is looking to target these sectors like real estate, health, and tech that need regular explainers,

brochures, social creatives and event posters. "Images 2.0 helps them create visual communication for neighbourhood campaigns and digital marketing," said the company in its release.

Other uses include creatives like cafe menus, bakery catalogues, hospital awareness posters, coaching institute explainers, pharma event creatives, startup pitch visuals, tourism posters for etc.

"Images 2.0 is available for free to all ChatGPT users in India. For users looking to create and iterate content more regularly, ChatGPT Go and ChatGPT Plus are available at INR 399 per month and INR 1,999 per month, respectively," the AI company stated.

Iran consulate in Hyd flays Rubio's Taj Mahal visit

The Iranian Consulate in Hyderabad on Monday, May 25, took a swipe at the visit of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to the Taj Mahal, saying the monument was crafted by the genius of Iranian architects and accused the US of "threatening" to wipe out Iranian civilisation.

Rubio visited the Taj Mahal with his wife, Jeanette Rubio, on Monday, describing the famed Mughal era monument as "one of the love treasures of the world".

The Consulate General of



the Islamic Republic of Iran-Hyderabad, in a post on X said: "If Rubio knew the history or architecture, he wouldn't have posed for a picture here."

This monument was built out of love for the emperor's Iranian wife, crafted by the genius of Iranian architects - meanwhile, his government today threatens to wipe out Iranian civilisation, insulting other civilisations."

Obviously, the Consulate was referring to the "A whole civilisation will die tonight, never to be brought back again, if a deal is not

reached," remark made by US President Donald Trump on April 7, targeting Iran, during the Iran-US/Israel conflict.

The Consulate tagged a photo of Rubio with his wife taken in front of the Taj Mahal to its post.

Rubio, who is on a four-day visit to India, arrived in Agra on Monday and visited the famed monument amid heavy security arrangements, local officials said.

The US and Israel launched joint attacks on Iran on February 28, triggering retaliatory strikes.

Doctors' bodies condemn assault on Gandhi Hospital junior doctor

Two doctors' associations condemned the recent attack on a doctor while on duty at Gandhi Hospital by attendants of a patient, calling for the enactment of the Telangana Medicare Service Persons and Medicare Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage to Property) Act.

The condemnation by the Telangana Junior Doctors Association (TJUD) and the Healthcare Reforms Doctors Association (HRDA) on Monday, comes a day after a doctor, identified as Shiva Sankar Saguru, was physically assaulted by a woman attendant for allegedly not checking the patient's sugar level.

The attendant, Mounica Merlin is the wife of Hyderabad based activist Robin Zacheus. In a Now deleted post on X, Zacheus claimed that the doctor had physically assaulted his wife.

"Doctor Brutally Manhandles & Assaults Daughter of Critically Ill 65-Year-Old Stroke Patient - Twists Her Hand, Snatches Phone & Instigates

Colleagues While Mother Fights for Life". He also said, "This unfortunate incident has shocked us and left us deeply grieved and traumatized with the ongoing concerns of challenges in availing health care services. Zacheus alleged that the doctor mistook Merlin's video call with her aunt to be video recording."

"He yelled at her and snatched her phone. Physically manhandled her by twisting her hand with immense force, causing severe injury and pain, and pushed her against the wall during the scuffle."

The activist claimed that the same doctor instigated other staff to support his

false allegations and false narrative to defend himself. Two other doctors joined in, speaking very harshly and arrogantly telling her "do whatever you want."

This entire disturbing episode occurred in the complete absence of any CCTV cameras in the ward - a critical and dangerous lapse that prevents accountability and emboldens misconduct.

The activist went on to say that such an incident is not healthcare. "This is violence and intimidation inflicted upon a daughter desperately seeking an update on her critically ill 65-year-old mother fighting a recurrent ischemic stroke," he added.



Police book 1,200 vehicles for high beam, faulty lights

The Malkajgiri Police have registered 1,197 cases against vehicles for the use of high beams and inappropriate lights, following a special enforcement drive across 11 police station limits in two zones.

Zone I accounted for 704 of the cases. Alwal traffic police recorded the highest at 190, followed by Begumpet at 181, Trimulgherry at 113, Jawaharnagar at 81, Gopalpuram at 77 and Malkajgiri at 64. Zone II contributed 493 cases. Vanasthalipuram police registered 109, Kusahaiguda 102, Ghatkesar 83 and Uppal 77.

RPF seizes narcotics worth Rs 13 cr in Sec'bad Division in 6 months

Since January, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) Secunderabad Division has recovered narcotic substances valued at Rs 13.66 crore in 24 incidents and arrested 43 persons under the NDPS Act.

The seizure and arrests were made under Operation NARCOS, stated a press release. Over the course of six months, multiple carriers and transporters were apprehended through the railways.

RPF has intensified its checks in trains and at identified vulnerable locations across the Division, in coordination with the NCB and



other law enforcement agencies (LEAs), to target drug peddlers involved in this illegal activity.

"Narcotics not only destroy the health of youth but also adversely affect the economy and social well-being of the

nation. Drug addiction has far-reaching implications, impacting both the physical and mental health of individuals. Call Railway Helpline No 139 to report suspicious or unattended items," read the press release.

Woman from Nepal ends life in Hyd

A 33-year-old woman from Nepal allegedly died by suicide here on Monday, police said.

The Nepali national was found hanging from a tree in a park under Amberpet Police Station limits and some locals alerted the police.

She was staying in Hyderabad for the past 12 years with her husband, who works as a watchman, they said.

The couple had a quarrel on Sunday night, a police official said based on preliminary investigation.

A case was registered.

Two govt officers in ACB net for accepting bribe

Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) arrested two government officers for demanding and accepting bribes to do official duties.

In the first case, a Divisional Executive Engineer working in the Irrigation and Command Area Development (I&CAD) was caught red-handed for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 50,000 at his residence in Bhavani Nagar, Hanamkonda.

Ganti Srikanth works in Palakurthi. According to the complainant, he demanded the money to record final



measurements in M-books and process the pending

bills. He was produced before the special judge in

Warangal.

In another case, ACB officials arrested a record assistant working in the Deputy Inspector of Schools (Dios), Amberpet Division, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000 to process retirement benefits.

The accused officer, S Shivanand, had demanded the bribe from the complainant, whose mother had recently retired.

The tainted amount was recovered from his possession. He was produced before the Principal Special Judge in Nampally.

Over 18,000 residents register domestic help



Over 18,000 citizens voluntarily registered domestic workers and household staff in the Mee Surakhsha verification initiative launched by the Malkajgiri Police Commissionerate.

Launched on May 16, the community safety programme aims to collect data on domestic helpers, drivers, maids, cooks, caretakers, watchmen and other supporting staff. It was announced after murder

and robbery cases in high-end neighbourhoods/gated communities of Hyderabad. The accused in both cases were natives of Nepal employed as domestic helpers in the victims' houses. According to the Malkajgiri Police, Mee Surakhsha is a community

policing initiative to strengthen security in residential areas. Police aim to create a verified residential and workforce database for temporary residents, tenants and support staff.

Unhygienic conditions found at Madhapur restaurant

Multiple food safety violations were found at Chowman restaurant in Madhapur during an inspection conducted on Monday.

The Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC) Food Safety teams carried out a revealing surprise inspection, where officials found a pest infestation, unhygienic storage of meat and the serving of expired sauces.

The raid was part of the ongoing food safety drive across Cyberabad. Officials said that while meat was stored in unhygienic conditions, the non-vegetarian and vegetarian food was kept in the same freezer, raising concerns.

The food safety teams found signs of pest infesta-



tion and expired sauces. The authorities immediately disposed of the unhygienically spoiled meat. The store was ordered to remain closed on a temporary basis until the completion of cleaning and sanitation. The restaurant will be permitted to continue operation after ensuring hygiene standards are being maintained, officials said.

UoH signs MoU with INFORM to strengthen climate research

The University of Hyderabad (UoH) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with INFORM (Interdisciplinary Forum for Climate Resilience and Sustainability) to advance interdisciplinary, action-oriented research and innovation for sustainable development and climate resilience.

INFORM, a Section 8 non-profit organisation, was recently established in an effort to translate the University's research, interdisciplinary expertise, and knowledge into actual results via collaborative work with governments, funding agencies, civil society groups, and international organisations, the University said in a release. The MoU signing marks a significant milestone as the University of Hyderabad seeks to strengthen its societal engagement and transnational impact.

INFORM is aimed at working as a platform to implement, facilitate, and



convert ideas into scalable solutions, policy interventions, pilot projects, and impact-driven programs, while the University generates knowledge through teaching and research.

The company, acting as an interdisciplinary forum, will focus on climate resilience and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Special emphasis will be given to a modern, more scientific approach, where, instead of making policies

based on tradition and guesswork, choices rely entirely on hard facts, statistics, and proven research.

It will bring together expertise from multiple fields of study, including environmental sciences, engineering, artificial intelligence (AI), exploration and management of natural resources, data analytics, public policy, economics, social sciences, and governance, to address complex societal issues in a unified manner. As a Section 8

company, INFORM seeks to provide several strategic advantages to UoH and many of its stakeholders. For researchers and faculty members, it creates a flexible platform to undertake multidisciplinary, consultancy, translational, and mission-mode projects with faster mechanisms and better engagement with external groups. It enables the University ecosystem to respond effectively to emerging national priorities and

IT WILL BRING TOGETHER EXPERTISE FROM MULTIPLE FIELDS OF STUDY, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), EXPLORATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DATA ANALYTICS, PUBLIC POLICY, ECONOMICS, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND GOVERNANCE, TO ADDRESS COMPLEX SOCIETAL ISSUES IN A UNIFIED MANNER

large-scale societal challenges. INFORM is expected to create hands-on opportunities for the students with internships, innovation-driven projects, field engagement, problem-solving, and provide exposure to real-world policy and development challenges.

BRS signed power pact with Centre, says TPCC Official Spokesperson

TPCC Official Spokesperson Bandi Sudhakar Goud strongly criticized the BRS leadership for adopting a double standard on the Telangana government joining the Integrated Power Supply Scheme with the Central government. Speaking to the media, he stated that it was the same BRS government that had entered into an agreement with the Central government in New Delhi on January 4, 2017.

He explained that the agreement was signed on behalf of the Central government by Joint Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Verma and Under Secretary Narendra Singh, while from the Telangana side, DISCOM Chairmen Raghunareddy and Gopal Rao, NPDCL Secretary Venkatesham, and Chief Secretary Ajay Mishra had signed the agreement.



Bandi Sudhakar Goud questioned whether the BRS leaders now have the courage to deny that such an agreement was signed during their own tenure.

He alleged that while in power, the BRS leadership compromised the interests of Telangana and is now misleading the people with arrogant and politically motivated statements after losing

power. He said the BRS leaders are attempting to create unnecessary fear and confusion among the public for political mileage.

Sudhakar Goud reminded the people that it was the Congress which first introduced free electricity to farmers in the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh. He further stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Telangana government is presently providing 200 units of free electricity to nearly 50 lakh households across the State.

He questioned the logic behind the BRS leaders raising the issue of electricity meters when the government itself is supplying free power to farmers and households. "When electricity is being provided free of cost, where is the question of burdening people with meters?" he asked.

Need to boost grassroots-level activities to implement welfare schemes: Rijju

Union minister Kiren Rijju on Monday called upon BJP workers to work with dedication, discipline and a clear vision to ensure the all-round development of Arunachal Pradesh, while stressing the need to strengthen grassroots-level activities and effectively implement welfare schemes for the benefit of the people.

Addressing party leaders and workers during the Deendayal Upadhyaya Prashikshan Maha Abhiyan, organised for Lower Siang and Leparada districts at Basar, Rijju, the Union Minority and Parliamentary Affairs minister said the BJP governments at the Centre and in the state have ushered in significant devel-

opment and launched several public welfare initiatives aimed at improving the lives of citizens.

He urged party workers to remain committed to the party's ideology and actively contribute towards taking developmental programmes to the grassroots level, an official communique said here.

"The responsibility of party workers is not limited to organisational activities alone. They must ensure that government welfare schemes and developmental programmes reach every section of society in a timely and effective manner," Rijju said. The minister further emphasised that strengthening grassroots-level activities would play a crucial role in accelerating development



and enhancing public participation in governance. Rijju, who represents the Western Parliamentary seat in the state, also highlighted the importance of disciplined organisational work and collective efforts in achieving the vision of a developed and self-reliant Arunachal Pradesh.

The training programme was attended by state BJP president Kaling Moyong,

Deputy Speaker of the state Legislative Assembly Kardo Nyigyor, state party vice president and MLA Chau Zingnu Namchoom, MLAs Tojir Kadu and Nyabi Jini Dirchi, party general secretary Tadar Niglar and vice president Ashok Sangchoju, among others.

Speaking on the occasion, Moyong said the training programme was organised to familiarise party

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARTY WORKERS IS NOT LIMITED TO ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES ALONE. THEY MUST ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT WELFARE SCHEMES AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMES REACH EVERY SECTION OF SOCIETY IN A TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE MANNER,"

workers with the BJP's ideology, organisational structure, achievements, challenges and various other important aspects related to party functioning and governance. He said such training initiatives would help strengthen the organisational base of the party and enhance the efficiency and awareness of party workers at different levels.

Fuel price hikes may impact fruit, vegetable rates in Delhi: Traders

The latest hikes in petrol and diesel prices may impact fruit and vegetable prices in the national capital in the coming days, traders at Delhi's Azadpur mandi said on Monday. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) on Monday increased petrol prices by Rs 2.61 per litre and diesel prices by Rs 2.71 per litre, marking the fourth hike in less than two weeks.

Rajinder Sharma, president of the Azadpur Mandi Federation of Fruit and Vegetable Associations, said there has been no immediate impact on wholesale prices so far, but a sustained increase in fuel prices could eventually affect rates. "As of Monday, there has been no impact on the prices but with fuel prices expected to increase more in the coming days, we might see some impact. While small



increments in the price do not always impact wholesale prices right away, a larger accumulated increase in fuel prices will of course lead to an increase in pricing," Sharma said. According to Anil Malhotra, general secretary of the Vegetable Traders' Association, any increase in transportation costs would directly affect the prices of fruits and vegetables arriving in Delhi. "Trucks are used to

transport crops, fruits and vegetables from every part of the country to Delhi, including places like Rajasthan, Hyderabad and Kolkata. Loaders rent these trucks and as the fuel prices go up, it will inevitably impact the transportation costs," Malhotra said. However, Sharma said the extent of the price rise would depend on how much transporters increase truck rentals.

Six IAS, 18 HCS officers transferred in Haryana; Panipat and Palwal get new DCs

The Haryana government on Monday transferred six Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and 18 Haryana Civil Services (HCS) officers with immediate effect.

According to a government order, among the IAS officers who have been shuffled include Panipat Deputy Commissioner Virender Kumar Dahiya, who has been posted as Special Secretary at the Secretariat Establishment.

He will also continue to hold the additional charge of Director, Environment Haryana and Special Secretary, Environment, Forests & Wildlife Department. Palwal Deputy Commissioner Harish Kumar Vashishth has been posted as Deputy Commissioner, Panipat.

Jaider Singh Chhilar, Special Secretary at the

4 policemen held for 'stealing' bottles of seized cough syrup in Tripura

Four police personnel, including an inspector and two sub-inspectors, have been arrested for allegedly stealing around 245 bottles of a banned cough syrup consignment, which was seized five days ago, in Tripura's Khowai district, a senior officer said on Monday. All the accused policemen have been suspended, he said.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team intercepted a car on May 20 in an area under the Teliamura Police Station limits and confiscated the codeine-based cough syrup consignment, he said. A review of Teliamura Police Station CCTV footage revealed that a portion of the seized bottles was removed in violation of established procedures, he said. "Preliminary examination of footage shows that



approximately 245 bottles (100 ml each) of Eskuf cough syrup were removed without following the guidelines," he said, adding that the officer concerned did not account for the full consignment during the seizure process.

Following a complaint by Khowai district Additional SP Justin Joseph, a case has been lodged against an inspector, two sub-inspectors and an assistant sub-inspector, the officer said. "On the direction of

Tripura DGP Anurag, all four police personnel were suspended and arrested in connection with the case registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act," he said. The swift action against the accused reiterates "zero tolerance for corruption and misappropriation by police personnel", he said, adding that the matter is being investigated "impartially and expeditiously".

Two women among 3 hacked to death in separate incidents in Jharkhand

Three persons, including two women, were hacked to death in separate incidents in Jharkhand's Lohardaga and Palamu districts on Monday, police said.

A 35-year-old man allegedly hacked his elderly father and wife to death over a family dispute in Lohardaga, a senior officer said. The incident took place at Sengra Toli village within the Bhandara Police Station limits, when the man attacked his 60-year-old father Surendra Oraon and his wife Sujita Oraon, aged 27, he said.

"Sandeep Oraon, the accused, has been arrested. The bodies of both the deceased were sent for post-mortem examinations at Sadar Hospital," Lohardaga Superintendent



of Police (SP) Sadique Anwar Rizvi said.

His three-year-old girl was injured during the attack and was undergoing treatment at the hospital, he said. The axe used in the crime was seized from the crime spot, the officer said.

The police are interrogating the accused, and an investigation into the case is underway, he said. A 50-

year-old man allegedly hacked his daughter to death in Palamu after he opposed her relationship with a man, another officer said. The incident took place in Lohar village within the Lesliganj Police Station limits when the accused attacked his 20-year-old daughter with an axe, he said.

"The accused is abscond-

ing after committing the crime. At the time of the incident, his daughter was asleep. His wife was present at home, but she is not in a position to give a statement. Efforts are being made to record her statements in this case," Lesliganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge Uttam Kumar Rai said.

He said it is a clear case of "honour killing." Preliminary investigation revealed that the woman was in a relationship with a man. Enraged by his daughter's relationship and concerned about his family's prestige, the father killed her with a sharp weapon," the officer said. Her body was sent for post-mortem examination to Medinirai Medical College Hospital (MMCH), and the investigation is underway, he added.

Won't stop until narco-terrorism is eliminated in J-K: LG Manoj Sinha

In a major push against narco-terror in Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday led a massive padyatra in Bandipora to galvanise support for the cause.

"Forty-five days ago, I pledged not only to dismantle the smugglers and narco-terrorists ecosystem, but also to spark a movement that uplifts youth and restores dignity to families scarred by addiction," the lieutenant governor said. Sinha said Jammu and Kashmir is united, strong in resolve, clear in purpose and fully committed to freeing the society from drugs once and for all. "The action against narco-terrorists and drug smugglers will continue. It



will not stop until every drug smuggler is eliminated from the sacred soil of Jammu and Kashmir. Our agencies have launched an unprecedented drive to dismantle narco-terrorists and their hidden network. No drug smuggler, drug peddler, or anyone seeking to poison our society is beyond reach. The entire narco-terror ecosystem is being pursued,"

he said. Sinha said several drug supply networks that remained hidden until now are being traced and dismantled, and asserted that drug cartels that "thrived for decades are being wiped out". "We have sent a clear message that Jammu Kashmir will not be a safe haven for those who profit from other people's sufferings. I am determined that we will root out every narco-terrorist and drug smuggler from this soil," he said.

"Those who tried to destroy our families will have their existence erased from this land. The law is now being applied firmly. Narco-terrorists are being punished, youth are being protected, families are being supported, and renewed hope is returning to society," he added.

Sinha said the administration will soon come out with a comprehensive rehabilitation policy, which will ensure that every young person trapped by addiction gets a chance to rejoin the mainstream. "Our aim is that not a single young person is left behind. We will provide jobs, opportunities, and the means for them to live with dignity.

I strongly believe the success of a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir will not be measured only by the number of drug smugglers arrested, but by the number of lives we can rebuild. It will be measured by the homes that can be restored and the young people who can fulfil their dreams. I promise you that we will not rest until their dreams are realised," the lieutenant governor said.

Merit, transparency driving Arunachal's recruitment reforms: CM Khandu

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Monday reaffirmed the state government's commitment to a fair, transparent and merit-based recruitment system, asserting that honesty and transparency remain "non-negotiable principles" of the present dispensation. Addressing an event to distribute appointment letters to 404 successful candidates of the Junior Engineer Combined Recruitment Examination (JECRE) 2025 conducted by the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC), Khandu said the selections were made purely on merit through a transparent and time-bound process. Congratulating the newly-appointed junior engineers and their families, the chief

minister said their success reflected hard work, dedication and perseverance.

Highlighting the scale of the recruitment process, he informed that 9,023 candidates had appeared for the examination, out of which 1,236 qualified for interviews, leading to the final selection of 404 candidates. Khandu lauded the APPSC for restoring credibility and integrity in the recruitment system following reforms initiated after irregularities surfaced in 2020. He said the government undertook a complete overhaul of the institution by addressing loopholes and strengthening the system through consultations with experts and stakeholders.

"Today, the commission has emerged as a robust and credible institution

successfully conducting transparent recruitment for Group A and Group B services," he said. The chief minister also highlighted the role of the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) in streamlining recruitment for Group C posts and ensuring equal opportunities for all aspirants irrespective of influence or connections. Stating that youth possess immense talent and potential, Khandu encouraged the successful candidates to aim for higher goals, including UPSC and other competitive examinations. The newly-appointed junior engineers have been recruited in departments including PWD, RWD, UD&H, PHE&WS, Hydro Power Development and the Power department.

Hundreds rescued after Gulmarg cable car develops technical snag

About 300 tourists were stranded aboard the largest cable car at a Gulmarg resort in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday after the cable car system developed technical problems, officials said.

Operations of both phases of the Gulmarg cable car service, popularly known as Gondola, were suspended following malfunction, they said. There were no casualties. Officials said hundreds of tourists were rescued safely from the cabins by personnel of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), police, and army. Restoration work on the cable car system is currently underway, they said.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said the govern-



ment is "closely monitoring" the situation. All cabins are intact and rescue operations to safely evacuate stranded tourists are underway with trained teams on the ground, the chief minister said in a post on X. "The situation is completely under control and there is no cause for panic," he added. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said he had directed DGP Nalin Prabhat to proceed to the Gulmarg to oversee the rescue operation. "I'm monitoring the

rescue operation for tourists stranded in cable car cabins following a technical fault in Gulmarg. I have directed the DGP to proceed to the site. Joint rescue teams of Police, Army & SDRF along with DC and SSP are conducting the operation to ensure the safety of all tourists," Sinha posted on X. On June 25, 2017 the Gulmarg Gondola had earlier witnessed an accident, when seven people were killed after a tree uprooted by strong winds struck a cabin, causing it to crash to the ground. The cable car had also been temporarily suspended in January last year because of technical issues.

The Army said in a post on X that 65 cabins were stranded in the incident and swift and coordinated rescue efforts were launched with the assistance of Chinar Corps.

The Karnataka State Hotels Association on Monday warned that the state government's decision to implement revised minimum wages will lead to a steep rise in food prices across hotels and restaurants.

Noting that the average minimum wage increase is about 60 per cent from the current wages and will severely impact restaurants, association president G K Shetty said a plate of Idli may jump to Rs 80 from the present Rs 50 and Masala Dosa to Rs 150 from Rs 80-90. Vegetarian meals priced at Rs 150-200 may rise to Rs 250-300 and biryani dishes in Bengaluru could increase from Rs 300-



350 to nearly Rs 500, he said, adding that, "With such increases, eating out will become more expensive for ordinary citizens, impacting the hotel industry." Karnataka has notified new minimum wages for organised and unorganised sectors. As per this, an unskilled person should be paid Rs 23,376 per month in the Greater Bengaluru Area, and for a highly skilled worker it has been fixed at Rs 31,114 per month. Outside Bengaluru, the minimum wage for

unskilled work ranges from Rs 19,300 to Rs 21,251. Shetty said that the nearly 60 per cent increase in minimum wages would significantly raise operating costs for hotels, particularly small and family-run establishments already struggling with rising expenses.

The price of commercial LPG cylinder had been hiked from Rs 1,884 to Rs 3,152 in just a few months. All the groceries, power tariffs & garbage cess rates were also hiked, adding to the strain of small hoteliers, he said in a release.

Shetty pointed out that the hotel sector already provides several welfare benefits to workers, including food, accommodation, uniforms and washing allowances, unlike many

other industries. "Hotels are not like other sectors. We provide food, lodging and other facilities to employees. The government should have considered the unique nature of the hospitality industry before imposing such a steep wage hike," he said.

The association, he said, had appealed to the Karnataka government to classify the hospitality sector separately while implementing minimum wage revisions, but their request was not accepted.

The association has urged the government to reconsider the Minimum Wages implementation for the hotel industry and prevent widespread hardship for small hotel operators and consumers alike.

HARPING ON HOPE

President Donald Trump appears to be saying in so many words that the Iran war would end sooner than later. In the last few days, he has been making remarks that suggested as much. A problem, however, is that he has not been able to state it bluntly. Having obviously failed in his mission to run down Iran, uproot the regime of the Revolutionary Guards, establish a puppet regime there and loot its oil, the US president has fewer choices left. Iran, having stood its ground against serious odds in the last nearly three months -- half of this time through a ceasefire that the US has announced -- is by now emboldened to take things easy. When Trump says he's close to finding a solution to end the war, Tehran says it's not very sure whether a peace deal is in the making. A day after Trump said there's a 50:50 chance of an end to the war, Iranian leaders say there's hardly any fresh momentum to the negotiations -- that also involve Pakistani interlocutors. Alongside, US ally Israel is pressing a point or two. Its drones targeted Lebanese cities and its armies attacked some municipalities by way of keeping up the heat.

While the Iranian leadership is playing flute, the world is on edge. Both China and India are faced with serious disruptions to their production lines in view of the halt to oil-LPG shipments via the Strait of Hormuz. India, which depended on the Middle East for crude for its refineries, is now desperate and turning to Latin America and Africa for replenishment of its stocks. China has hosted Pakistan's Prime Minister Sharif and negotiator for Iran and the US, army chief Asim Munir, with their discussions focusing on the Strait of Hormuz. India's oil marketing companies, repeatedly raising retail oil prices with governmental nod, are game creating situations for price rise across the spectrum as transportation costs are steadily increasing. Caught in inflationary pressures, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is keeping her fingers crossed. While a fourth successive hike in fuel prices has been effected, she says reducing excise duty on diesel and petrol would result in a loss of Rs 1 lakh crore to the exchequer. The "fear-mongering" that she has frowned at is for real - its origin being from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who asked the citizens to tighten their belts, travel less and cook less.

Things have reached such a pass, but the government cannot be blamed for a situation that's not of its making. The one who put the world in deep trouble is simply humming and hawing from far. American public opinion has not turned against Trump as he keeps giving them hope - that he would ultimately effect a turnaround and return with a bouquet of goodies from Iran. Considering the cool manner in which the Iranian leadership is conducting itself despite a few loss of heads, Trump would seem to have fewer escape routes. Iran's continued control over the Strait is proving deadly to the West as well. Disruptions to a fifth of the world's oil supply on a daily basis meant every sector of human activity is seriously hit. Even the oil-producing nations in the Middle East are at the receiving end both in terms of supply chain disruptions and direct missile hits. This is time for Trump to keep hope alive; and for his own survival.

A mahakavi's centenary and 50 years of 'PashuParvam.' On May 30

●Gunturu Sheshendra Sharma: A poet, who resisted the Emergency



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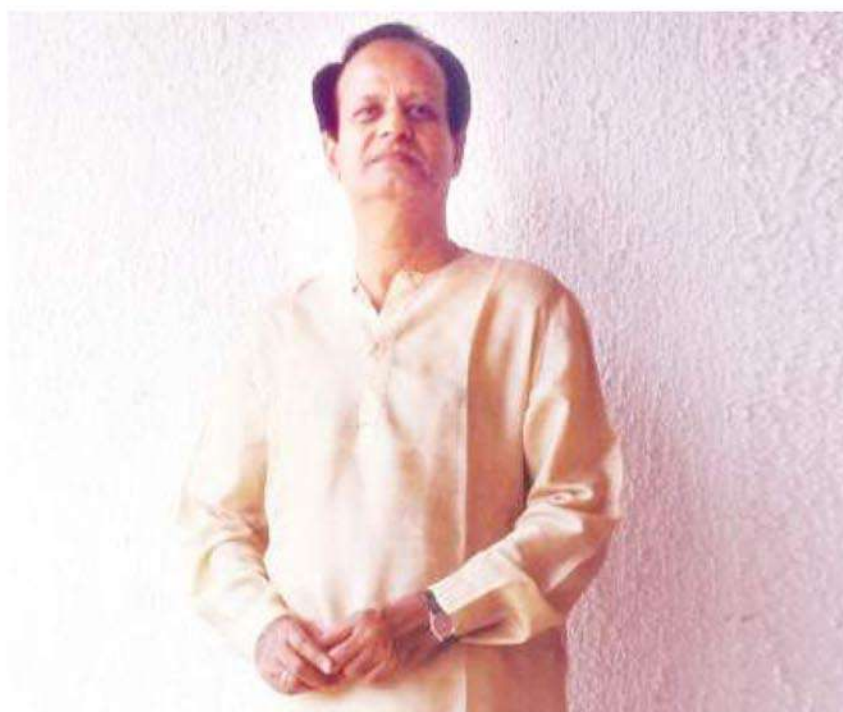
The Indian Emergency of 1975-77 remains one of the darkest periods in the history of Indian democracy. Press censorship, arrests of opposition leaders, suppression of dissent, and an atmosphere of fear spread across the country.

Many prominent poets and writers of the time either remained silent or openly praised the regime. Shesendra chose the opposite path. Bringing out an anti-Emergency Telugu anthology in 1976 was itself an act of courage. It was not merely a literary gesture but a political risk. Though he was a government employee, he did not retreat from writing against authoritarianism.

Poets of Fear and Poets of Resistance

Ironically, many celebrated Telugu poets of the Emergency era wrote songs and poems glorifying the regime and praising Indira Gandhi. Prominent journalist and Poem A Raja Hussain, recollected that in 1975, the Andhra Pradesh Information Department published a poetry anthology titled Deeksha, describing it as a "rebellion of Telugu poets against injustice." Yet critics later observed that the anthology never clearly identified what those injustices were, who committed them, or why they existed. Among the bhajan (in praise of the ruling parties-Congress Party) include: Dasarathi, Doctor C Narayan Reddy, Dr. Boyi Bheemanna, Dr. Divakarla Venkataavadhani, Mudigonda Veerabhadramurthy, J Bapu Reddy, ParimalaSomeshwar, Dr.Veturi Ananda Murthy, S Muni Sundaram, PSR Anjaneya Shastry, Gutthi Konda Subbarao, Jyotirmayi, Viraahi, Shalivahana, Lasunaa, TallaPragadaBhadriraja, and Devi Priya. He pointed out that thousands of copies of the anthology were officially printed and distributed by the state. Many prominent literary figures contributed to it.

Raja Hussain later wrote courageously that while most poets chose silence or praise during the Emergency, Shesendra alone wrote *PashuParvam* as a fierce poetic denunciation of authoritarianism. The word "Emergency" never appears directly in the poem, but its terror resonates throughout the work. Thus, it became one of the earliest Telugu poetic



AS THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF SHESENDRA BEGIN ON MAY 31, 2026, ANOTHER REMARKABLE COINCIDENCE EMERGES: IT IS ALSO THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PERIOD OF HIS REVOLUTIONARY POETIC WORK GORILLA

texts of resistance against Emergency rule.

Forced Retirement: Punishment for Poetry

Shesendra served in the Andhra Pradesh government. Because of his criticism of authoritarian tendencies within the establishment, disciplinary actions were initiated against him. Eventually, he was subjected to "compulsory retirement."

Many viewed this not as an administrative measure but as political retaliation against literary freedom. In a democracy, a poet losing his career because he opposed the Emergency raised profound questions about freedom of expression.

What distinguished Shesendra was that his opposition to power did not arise from personal hatred. It arose from resistance to authoritarianism itself. That is why his writings remain alive even today.

The film song and the Nandi Award controversy

Shesendra was not only a poet of revolutionary literature; he also wrote for cinema. Though he penned very few songs, his lyric "NidurincheThotaloki" from the Telugu film *MutyalaMuggu* became immortal. It remains one of the most poetic songs

in Telugu cinema. Although the song was reportedly considered for the prestigious Nandi Award, literary circles long believed that political and institutional discomfort with Shesendra's rebellious image prevented the honour from being granted.

This became an enduring example of how an artist's political views can affect official recognition of artistic excellence.

Monumental Modern (Adhunik) Maha Bharatam in the history of Telugu literature, Gunturu Sheshendra Sharma stands as a unique pole star. Poet, critic, linguistic thinker, and politically conscious literary intellectual, his place remains singular.

As the centenary celebrations of Shesendra begin on May 31, 2026, another remarkable coincidence emerges: it is also the golden jubilee period of his revolutionary poetic work *Gorilla*. Few poets in Telugu literature fused together rebellion, resistance to the Indian Emergency, and literary dissent against the establishment as powerfully as Shesendra did.

One of Shesendra's most celebrated lines declares:

"When I raise my pen, it carries the pride

of a national flag."

This single line encapsulates his entire literary philosophy. That is why Shesendra is not casually called a "great poet." To him, the poet's pen was a weapon, writing was a political declaration, and poetry itself was a flag of resistance. This was not mere romanticism; it was literary defiance.

The first canto of *PashuParvam* in his monumental Modern Mahabharata, written during the era that produced *Gorilla*, remains one of the most intense political and existential expressions in modern Telugu poetry. This is not ordinary poetic language. It is poetry born in moments when the inner self of the poet transformed into rebellion under an oppressive political order. Read against the background of the Indian Emergency (1975-77), the symbolism becomes even more powerful. "Night" as a Symbol of Political Fear

At the very beginning of the poem, the haunting line appears:

"The night, deprived of sleep, is barking over the rooftops." This is not merely a description of nature. Here, "night" symbolizes: the darkness of democracy, the atmosphere of fear, and the suppression of human freedoms.

During the Emergency, the nation was pushed into political darkness, and Shesendra expressed that suffocation through symbolic poetry.

Born on October 20, 1927, Shesendra refused to confine poetry to sentimentality. He infused it with political consciousness. His works reflected the conflict between the individual and the system. To describe him merely as a "modern poet" is to underestimate him. Within him coexisted: Marxist sensitivity, Indian philosophical depth, international political awareness, and a profound faith in individual liberty.

Shesendra passed away on May 30, 2007. Celebrating his centenary in 2026 is not merely an act of remembrance. It is also an occasion to reopen debates on freedom, dissent, and literary autonomy in contemporary India.

Gorilla: Golden Jubilee of a Revolutionary Voice

Published around 1976, *Gorilla* was an extraordinary event in Telugu literature. It was not just a poem; it was a declaration of war against authoritarian structures. The "gorilla" in the poem is not an animal. It is the oppressed human being, the energy of rebellion, hunger, rage, and resistance against systems of domination.

Shesendra wrote: "Gorillas rise within my heart." The gorilla here becomes the embodiment of public anger, revolutionary energy burning with hunger and humiliation.

In Sudan's war economy, gold keeps flowing as miners risk mercury and collapse

The men carried metal detectors as they scanned a mountainous area in northern Sudan in search of gold. One man knelt to examine the ground with a digging tool for the precious metal in an environment that lacks even the most basic safety measures.

They are unregulated miners working in a small-scale private gold mine in the northern town of Dagalo Mahas. The mine is one of thousands of small-scale and artisanal mines scattered across Sudan, part of a sector that is at the centre of the devastating war that has at times pushed parts of the country into famine.

Gold has become a major source of funding for Sudan's treasury after the country lost over two-thirds of its oil revenues with the secession of South Sudan in 2011. The precious metal accounted for 70 per cent of national revenues in the years that followed South Sudan's departure, providing the Sudanese government with much-needed foreign currency.

Most recently, gold has been at the centre of the ongoing war between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. Large quantities of gold have been smuggled out of the country to finance paramilitaries, who control gold-producing areas in Darfur and Kordofan regions, according to United Nations-commissioned experts.

The conflict has killed at least 59,000 people, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, a US-based war tracking group that says its toll is almost certainly an underestimate, given the difficulties in reporting.

The war also created the world's largest humanitarian disaster, forcing over 10 million people to flee their homes. Many displaced people joined the mining industry in order to make ends meet for their families. "Gold mining is the only thing I can rely on," said Atta al-Khazin, a 28-year-old miner who abandoned his



GOLD HAS BECOME A MAJOR SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR SUDAN'S TREASURY AFTER THE COUNTRY LOST OVER TWO-THIRDS OF ITS OIL REVENUES WITH THE SECESSION OF SOUTH SUDAN IN 2011. THE PRECIOUS METAL ACCOUNTED FOR 70 PER CENT OF NATIONAL REVENUES IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED SOUTH SUDAN'S DEPARTURE, PROVIDING THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT WITH MUCH-NEEDED FOREIGN CURRENCY

previous profession as a farmer. "Due to the high oil prices, agriculture no longer covered expenses."

Zahir Adam, a 35-year-old father from the Darfur city of el-Fasher who worked in gold mining for more than a decade, said the sector has drawn many people since the war broke out over three years ago.

They had "no other option," he said. "Many young people, and many families, depend on mining."

Sudan produced 70 tons of gold last year, up from 64 tons in 2024, according to official figures, making it one of Africa's top producers. Gold generated about USD 1.8 billion in revenues in 2025, figures from the state-run Sudanese Mineral Resources Company showed.

Artisanal and small-scale gold mining accounts for the majority of gold extracted in the sprawling country, where safety standards are largely ignored.

Artisanal miners like the men in Dalgo Nahas usually extract the gold, then crush the ore before applying toxic mercury to create the amalgam. The amalgam is then heated, usually on a stove, to evaporate the mercury and recover the gold.

The process, which includes using hazardous chemicals, is also risky for people living near the mines.

Many of these mines are not controlled by the government. The U.N. panel of experts said in their 2024 report that more than 50 per cent of

the gold mined in Sudan was not traded through formal channels but was smuggled out of the country.

Deadly mine collapses are not uncommon in Sudan, where safety standards are not widely applied. Last month, at least seven miners were killed in a mine collapse in the Red Sea province. Thirteen others were killed in another collapse in South Kordofan province in January.

A civilian transitional government that ruled the country for over a year after the military overthrow of long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir in April 2019 attempted to regulate the crucial industry.

However, its efforts were aborted by a military coup in October 2021, and the war that began in 2023.

When wars destroy heritage, women lose more than monuments – new research

As conflict continues in Ukraine, Gaza, Iran and elsewhere, the cost is being recorded not only in deaths and displacement, but also in ruined libraries, mosques, churches, museums, archives and historic neighbourhoods.

UNESCO has verified damage to 527 cultural sites in Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion; 164 sites in Gaza since October 7 2023; and damage to the World Heritage-listed Golestan Palace in Tehran following a nearby airstrike.

Losses are usually described as attacks on "history", "civilisation" or "the past" and sometimes as a "loss for all humanity".

But as our new research details, such destruction can also negatively affect communities' sense of belonging and identity – and erode women's sense of safety and security amid conflict.

Islamic State's campaign

Islamic State's campaign across Syria and Iraq from 2013 involved mass violence, human rights abuses and forced displacement. The Islamic State committed genocide against the Yazidi minority, including systematic killings and sexual slavery.

At the same time, Islamic State methodically targeted cultural and religious heritage, including museums, archaeological sites, churches, shrines, cemeteries, mosques and other historically significant and sacred places.

UNESCO called this "cultural cleansing". There was an intentional strategy to destroy cultural diversity through attacks on people identified by their cultural, ethnic or religious background, combined with attacks on their key cultural and religious centres.

We spoke with Syrian and Iraqi women affected by the Islamic State's heritage destruction. We found such destruction was experienced not only as cultural loss, but as a form of gendered harm. For the women we spoke to, heritage destruction was part of a wider campaign of domination: an attack on their memories, identities and personal safety.

Response to heritage destruction

Since Islamic State's attacks, international responses to heritage destruction have become more extensive.

In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council called on states to protect the right of every-

one to take part in cultural life, including the ability to access and enjoy cultural heritage.

That same year the International Criminal Court convicted a terrorist leader of the war crime of intentionally directing attacks against historic and religious buildings in Timbuktu, Mali.

In 2017, the UN Security Council condemned the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage, recognising it as a threat to global security. These developments helped to shift heritage destruction from a specialist conservation issue to a matter of human rights, criminal accountability and international security. But they say almost nothing about how women experience heritage destruction in distinctly gendered ways.

What women told us

For the women we interviewed, heritage sites were not only places of worship or symbols of the past. They were also spaces where women could gather, support one another and sustain everyday relationships in societies often structured by gendered expectations. Several women described churches, mosques and shrines as places where they could socialise with other women and support one another through "our joys and sorrows". These sites presented an opportunity for women to form communities in feminised spaces where gender relations and matters such as courting, marriage and childbirth could be navigated. Women use heritage sites in ways shaped by social norms around worship, family, mourning, care, sexuality, reproduction and community life. When those places are destroyed, the loss is not merely architectural. It can also remove spaces of female solidarity and emotional support.

One Yazidi woman described shrines as spiritual centres where people bury and visit their dead, pray, gather and hold ceremonies. Destroying these places interrupted ways of mourning, worshipping and sustaining traditions.

Other women described the loss in more intimate terms. A Chaldean Christian woman recalled the destruction of the church where members of her family had been baptised and where she had married. A Sunni Arab woman described the destruction of a mosque as if something had been destroyed "inside me".

Maha CM Fadnavis warns of action against fuel hoarders, urges people to avoid panic buying

Amid rising fuel prices and escalating fears of shortages, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday warned that stringent action would be taken against anyone found hoarding fuel. CM Fadnavis told reporters that the four consecutive hikes in petrol and diesel prices are a direct result of the ongoing global crisis. Acknowledging that rumours of an imminent fuel shortage were gaining momentum across the state, the Chief Minister made a strict appeal to the public. "I urge the citizens not to engage in the panic-buying or hoarding of petrol and diesel," CM Fadnavis said. He reiterated that the government will take stringent action against those indulging in the hoarding of fuel. The Chief Minister has already issued crucial directives to all District Collectors regarding the management of petrol and diesel supplies.

Highlighting that many people rely heavily on diesel for agricultural purposes, he instructed the District Collectors to monitor the sit-



uation closely and ensure meticulous planning. The Collectors have been ordered to ensure that no hoarding takes place and that diesel is distributed systematically based on necessity. Addressing the rising anxiety, CM Fadnavis acknowledged that while tense situations have emerged in a few isolated pockets, the panic is not widespread. "Tensions have been reported in a few places, but this is not the case everywhere. Occurrences in isolated areas are being blown out of proportion. However, we are actively working to ensure

that even such minor incidents do not occur," he assured. Meanwhile, reports have emerged from Sambhajinagar district indicating that 363 petrol pumps have shut down, allegedly due to a shortage of fuel supply. This sudden closure has left the general public highly distressed. On the other hand, the Petrol Pump Owners' Association has clarified that 60 petrol pumps under their purview have halted operations. The government continues to monitor the situation closely to prevent further panic and ensure the smooth supply of essential commodities, said

the government sources.

Earlier, NCP(SP) legislator Rohit Pawar strongly criticised the state government over the disruption in fuel supply in various parts of Maharashtra. In his post on X, Rohit Pawar said, "Due to the lack of supply of diesel and petrol right from the source, farmers are not getting diesel at petrol pumps, as a result, farm preparation work has come to a standstill right at the onset of the sowing season. In Jalgaon district, with the fuel stock completely depleted, long queues have formed at pumps since last night." India news analysis He further added, "The situation is the same across the entire state, but the state government still does not seem to have woken up to it. Paper leaks, fuel shortages, inflation, atrocities against women - such bizarre conditions prevail everywhere, and nothing is alright. Seeing the insensitivity of both the central and state governments, one cannot help but be reminded of 'Nero fiddling while Rome burns'."

BRS leader Harish Rao threatens protest by Telangana farmers over paddy procurement issue

Bharat Rashtra Samithi's (BRS) Deputy Leader in Telangana Assembly, T. Harish Rao, on Monday warned that if paddy procurement is not expedited within two days, he will lead a protest by thousands of farmers. The former minister visited the paddy procurement centre in Ensanpally village, Siddipet Urban Mandal, and personally enquired about the hardships faced by farmers who have been waiting for days on end at the drying floors. Later, speaking to the media, he criticised the state government for its "failure" regarding paddy procurement. He alleged that the Congress government has absolutely no concern or regard for farmers. "Having failed to ensure the supply of urea and electricity, and to disburse 'Rythu Bandhu,' this government has now completely failed even in the task of procuring the paddy that farmers toiled hard to cultivate throughout the season. Farmers have never faced such distress and hardship - not only during KCR's (BRS chief K. Chandrasekhara Rao) tenure as Chief Minister, but also during the era of the united Andhra Pradesh under

Chief Ministers like YSR, Roshaiiah, and Kiran Kumar Reddy," he said.

Harish Rao said that while the state is yielding a harvest of 1.40 crore tonnes, Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, who until now promised to procure 90 lakh tonnes of paddy, is now stating that they will purchase only 70 lakh tonnes. "Does this mean that farmers are expected to sell the remaining 70 lakh tonnes to middlemen and incur heavy losses?" he asked. The BRS leader said that, unable to manage the procurement of paddy themselves, the Congress government are shifting the blame onto the Central government. He recalled that in the past, when the Centre refused to procure, then KCR, along with his ministers and MLAs, staged a protest in Delhi and compelled the Central government to yield. "Even when the Centre declined to purchase, KCR personally undertook the procurement process to ensure that farmers did not suffer any losses. If you are capable, go to Delhi and fight for the cause; do not leave the farmers in the lurch," he told



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. He remarked that sitting comfortably in their air-conditioned rooms, CM Revanth Reddy and Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy are merely indulging in rhetoric. He claimed that rice millers are currently blackmailing farmers, refusing to unload their produce at the mills unless each bag contains a minimum of 43 kg. As a result of this, farmers are incurring a loss of 150 kilograms per acre. When this issue was brought to the attention of the official concerned, he told farmers to resolve the matter directly with the millers. "Not a single minister has visited the procurement centres. Even though farmers are staging road

blockades in Mittapalli, Nanganur, and Chinna kodur, this government shows absolutely no compassion," Harish Rao said. He stated that despite the arrival of the Rohini Karte -- the peak summer season-- procurement operations have not commenced, and paddy stocks are left languishing in the drying yards. "Only one-third of the paddy has been procured; the remaining two-thirds still lie in the open. In Kolcharam, Medak district, a farmer passed away right atop his paddy heap, which was rotting due to the rains," he said. The former minister claimed that across the state, 10 to 12 farmers have already lost their lives within these very drying yards.

24-hour drinking water in Hyderabad if BRS returns to power, says KTR



Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Monday promised that if voted back to power, BRS would ensure a 24-hour safe drinking water supply to every household in Hyderabad. India news analysis Addressing a meeting of party cadres in Kukatpally, he said the BRS government had earlier transformed Telangana from a state plagued by severe power shortages into one with uninterrupted 24-hour electricity supply and would similarly guarantee round-the-clock drinking water supply to Hyderabad in the future. Recalling the conditions before the formation of Telangana, KTR said the region had suffered under decades of Congress rule, with people forced to face long power cuts and drinking water scarcity. He stated that protests and agitations for electricity and water were common during the undivided state era. However, after Telangana was formed, the government led by K. Chandrasekhara Rao (KCR) successfully implemented an uninterrupted 24-hour power supply and launched Mission Bhagiratha to provide piped drinking water to households across the state.

KTR said the same determination shown by KCR in ensuring uninterrupted electricity supply would now be directed towards providing a 24/7 drinking water supply in Hyderabad. "The person who gave a 24-hour power supply to Telangana is KCR, and the person who will provide a 24-hour drinking water supply to Hyderabad is also KCR," he asserted. He added that he would personally take responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of the programme after the BRS returns to power. Launching a sharp attack on the Congress government, KTR alleged that the party had cheated every section of society with unrealistic promises during the Assembly elections. He said Congress had failed to fulfil promises ranging from enhanced pensions to monthly financial assistance for women. According to him, despite being in power for nearly two-and-a-half years, the Congress government had failed to spend even a single additional rupee for Hyderabad's development. KTR accused Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy of taking false credit by inaugurating projects built during the previous BRS regime, including flyovers, hospitals and major infrastructure facilities. He alleged that Congress leaders were merely cutting ribbons for projects constructed under BRS governance while falsely portraying them as their own achievements. Telangana news portal The BRS working president also challenged the Congress government to prove that it had constructed even one double-bedroom housing project in Hyderabad during its tenure. He declared that he would retire from politics if the government could establish that a single double-bedroom housing unit had been built in the city under Congress rule.

Neglecting thyroid disorders can be dangerous, warns Medcover's senior physician

Nellore: Speaking at an awareness seminar held at Medcover Hospitals, Dr Vijayakumar, a senior physician and diabetologist, warned that neglecting thyroid disorders can be highly dangerous. He noted that thyroid-related health issues are rising rapidly, affecting men as well as women. He identified poor dietary habits, hereditary factors, and iodine deficiency as the primary drivers behind the spike in cases. Dr Vijayakumar explained that the thyroid gland is responsible for vital bodily

functions, including regulating metabolism, maintaining proper hormonal balance, controlling heart rate, regulating body temperature, and managing weight. Any functional changes within this gland can lead to hypothyroidism. This condition is characterized by severe fatigue, sudden weight gain, swelling in the neck region, and menstrual irregularities in women, while some individuals may also experience a slowed heart rate. To confirm a diagnosis, patients can undergo medical tests such as T3, T4, and

TSH assays, TPO antibody tests, thyroid scans, and ultrasounds. Dr Vijayakumar strongly advised that if any lumps are detected in the neck, an FNAC (Fine Needle Aspiration Cytology) test must be performed immediately to rule out cancer and identify benign growths. To manage the disorder effectively, he urged patients to take their prescribed medications regularly, consume an iodine-rich diet, and implement lifestyle measures to actively reduce stress.



TGPOLYCET-2026 First Phase Admissions Counselling Announced

TELANGANA

POLYCET

POLYTECHNIC COMMON ENTRANCE TEST

— 2026 —

Counselling schedule begins on May 27, with payment of the processing fee and slot booking. 111 polytechnics offering 33,140 seats, including 2,930 under the EWS quota. 70 helpline centres set up across Telangana to assist students. Telangana news portal Hyderabad: The Commissioner of Technical Education announced the schedule for the first phase of admissions counselling for TGPOLYCET-2026. Addressing the media on Monday, Commissioner A. Sridevasena said the process will commence on May 27 with the payment of the processing fee and slot booking, and will continue until May 31. Certificate verification will be held between May 29 and June 1, while candidates can exercise their options from May 29 to June 3. Provisional allotment of seats will be completed by June 6. A total of 111 polytechnics across Telangana are participating in the admissions process, offering 33,140 seats. This includes 30,210 regular seats and 2,930 seats under the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) quota. Of these, 59 government polytechnics account for 18,788 seats, while 52 private unaided institutions provide 14,352 seats.

Admissions counselling will be supported by 70 helpline centres located in government polytechnics across the state. These centres will assist students and parents with the counselling process, certificate verification, and option entry. In addition to existing diploma courses such as Civil Engineering, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering, and Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, several new courses have been introduced this year. These include Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance, Advanced Manufacturing Technology, Automation and Robotics, Biotechnology, Interior Design, Landscape Design, and Semiconductor Technology. Together, the new courses add 2,220 seats to the intake at government institutions.

The Commissioner urged students and parents to ensure the timely payment of the processing fee and the slot booking fee. Candidates are advised to exercise as many options as possible to secure admission into better colleges and courses. Detailed notifications, lists of helpline centres, available courses, and counselling procedures are available on the official website <https://tqpolycet.nic.in>, she added.

AI Firms Prepare for Self-Improving Systems as Oversight Concerns Grow

As artificial intelligence systems become more advanced in coding, automation, and research, major technology firms are beginning to confront a new challenge — AI systems that may eventually improve themselves with minimal human involvement. The issue, once considered largely theoretical, is now being treated as a practical engineering and safety concern across the industry. Companies developing frontier AI models are investing heavily in understanding how rapidly advancing systems could behave if they begin contributing directly to their own development cycles. One of the strongest signs of this shift comes from OpenAI, which is reportedly offering salaries of up to \$445,000 for researchers focused on studying risks linked to recursive self-improvement. The role is part of the company's Preparedness team, which works on evaluating and managing advanced AI risks. Recursive self-improvement refers to a scenario in which AI systems become capable of enhancing their own performance by writing better code, optimising research processes, or refining future versions of themselves. The idea has long been associated with the concept of an



"intelligence explosion," where machine capabilities advance beyond human supervision at an uncontrollable pace. However, experts say the current concern is less about science fiction and more about accelerating development cycles. Recent research from the Model Evaluation and Threat Research (METR) lab, cited in a Mint report, found that the complexity of tasks handled by frontier AI models has been doubling roughly every seven months. At the same time, companies such as Anthropic and OpenAI are increasingly deploying AI-powered coding systems to assist with software engineering, debugging, and infrastructure optimisation.

This creates what researchers describe as a feedback loop. As AI systems become more capable

at programming and automation, they can contribute more effectively to improving the systems that follow them. The primary concern for researchers is not necessarily that AI becomes instantly uncontrollable, but that the speed of improvement could outpace existing methods of oversight, evaluation, and governance. Traditional software development relies heavily on human testing, iteration, and review processes that often take weeks or months. AI-assisted development could dramatically shorten those timelines. Industry leaders are beginning to publicly acknowledge the risks associated with increasingly autonomous systems. Demis Hassabis, speaking in an interview with Axios, noted that self-improving systems have performed

well in controlled environments such as games, where outcomes are easier to measure. However, he cautioned that real-world environments are significantly more unpredictable. "The real world's way messier, way more complicated than a game," Hassabis said.

He also stressed that AI has already moved beyond theoretical discussions and is now deeply integrated into practical applications used at scale. According to Hassabis, this changes the conversation from long-term speculation to immediate risk management and operational oversight. The growing investment in AI safety research signals that companies are preparing for a future in which autonomous systems may play a larger role in advancing their own capabilities. Alongside rapid innovation, firms are also building internal mechanisms designed to monitor, evaluate, and contain potential risks. While fully self-improving AI systems may not yet exist in deployed products, the industry's current hiring trends and research priorities suggest that leading firms believe the challenge could emerge sooner than previously expected.

AP's first kumki elephant camp to welcome tourists near Palamaner

Tirupati: Visitors may soon get an opportunity to witness trained kumki elephants in action at Musalimadugu camp near Palamaner, with Forest department preparing to open the facility to tourists as part of its eco-tourism and wildlife awareness initiatives. The camp, regarded as the State's first dedicated kumki elephant centre, has been playing a key role in tackling the growing human-elephant conflict in Chittoor district. Located near Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary along Andhra Pradesh-Karnataka border, the camp was established to manage the frequent movement of wild elephant herds into villages and agricultural fields. Forest officials said preparations are under way to allow controlled public access within the next one to two months after the creation of basic visitor infrastructure. The State government had brought four trained kumki elephants from Karnataka in May 2025 under an agreement between the two



States. Two local elephants were later inducted into the camp, increasing the total number to six. Deputy Chief Minister and Forest Minister Pawan Kalyan inaugurated the camp earlier this year.

According to Forest department, the trained elephants are being used under 'Operation Kumki' to drive wild elephant herds away from farmlands and residential areas and guide them back into forest zones. Officials said elephant incursions between 2020 and 2025 led to 23 human

deaths, destruction of nearly 4,000 acres of crops and the death of 34 cattle in Chittoor district. Experienced mahouts from Karnataka were engaged to train the elephants in coordinated movement and response techniques. Forest authorities said kumki elephants had recently helped divert a herd of wild elephants away from mango orchards near Mogili and push them back into nearby forest areas. To support tourism activities, the department has initiated works including construc-

tion of toilets, drinking water facilities, internal roads, children's play zones and a small canteen at the camp premises. A proposal has also been prepared to develop a Nagaravanam opposite the camp at an estimated cost of Rs 2 crore. Speaking to The Hans India, Chittoor District Forest Officer G Subburaju said the department is considering regulated public entry to create awareness about elephant conservation and the functioning of kumki camps. Visitors are likely to be permitted for one-hour sessions during morning and evening hours each day. India news analysis The department has proposed an entry fee of Rs 50 for adults and Rs 30 for children. The elephants are being housed in specially developed enclosures with veterinary care, feeding facilities and bathing areas, while mahouts and caretakers remain stationed round the clock to monitor their well-being and ensure safety at the camp.

Manthani students impress with innovative projects addressing community needs

Peddapalli: The Manthani Innovation Network, operating with the motto "Dream. Start. Rise.", has completed one year of promoting innovation and practical problem-solving skills among students in government schools across the Manthani region. The initiative has so far reached more than 36 schools, training nearly 1,800 students in innovation and

problem-solving methods, while over 200 teachers were introduced to design thinking and maker-based learning practices. The programme is being implemented with the support of the Telangana government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu. During the year, students developed more than 100 proto-

types aimed at addressing local challenges, with nearly 20 projects shortlisted for further development and mentorship. One of the notable student innovations, "Ghat Drape," was utilised at the Kaleshwaram Pushkara Ghat during the ongoing Kaleshwaram Pushkaralu to assist pilgrims.



Karisma Kapoor recalls Shahid Kapoor dancing behind her as a background dancer, lauds his journey

Mumbai: The upcoming episode of the dance reality show, India's Best Dancer Season 5 will see Bollywood star and also the show's judge Karisma Kapoor laud actor Shahid Kapoor for his journey from a background dancer to a Bollywood star. Post the performance of contestant Prince, Karisma was surprised to know that he was earlier a background dancer. Deeply impressed, Karisma acknowledged his arduous journey, and identified Shahid Kapoor's journey drawing parallels with both their journeys. The actress recalled Shahid's days as a background dancer and said, "Ek actor ne mere hi ek song mein



mere piche as a background dancer, dance kiya tha aur voh aap dekhkiye Shahid Kapoor

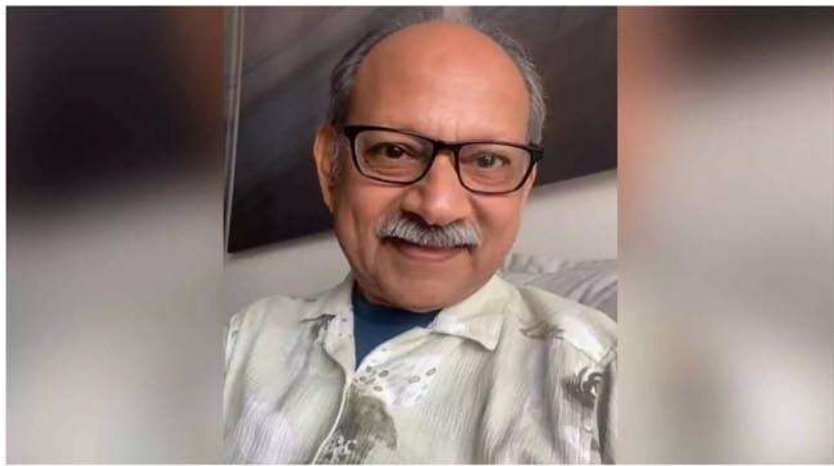
kaha tak pahuch gaye hain and I see those same qualities in you." Before becoming one of Bollywood's most bankable stars, Shahid Kapoor, was part of the choreographer Shiamak Davar's dance troupe during the 90s and often performed as a background dancer in Bollywood songs.

He has danced behind Karisma Kapoor in the iconic song 'Le Gayi' from 'Dil To Pagal Hai' starring Shah Rukh Khan, Madhuri Dixit and Karisma Kapoor. He was also seen grooving behind Aishwarya Rai in the energetic track 'Kahin Aag Lage Lag Jaaye' from 'Taal'. Shahid

Kapoor, after a few years as a background dancer, made his Bollywood debut in 2003 with 'Ishq Vishk' opposite Amrita Rao and Shenaz Treasurywala. Over the years, he established himself with films like 'Jab We Met', 'Kaminey', 'Haider', 'Kabir Singh' and 'Udta Punjab'. Interestingly, Shahid was also in a long-term relationship with Karisma Kapoor's younger sister and Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor during the early 2000s. The duo dated for many years before parting ways in 2007. Shahid Kapoor is now gearing up for his upcoming film 'Cocktail 2', which also stars Kriti Sanon and Rashmika Mandanna.

Chak De India' fame Ramakant Daayama passes away

Shubhangi Latkar remembers him as a 'beautiful soul'. Mumbai: Veteran actor Ramakant Daayama passed away on May 26, leaving the entertainment industry and his loved ones in deep grief. Actress Shubhangi Latkar who was a good friend of the actor, took to her social media account to mourn his demise and remembered him as someone full of life, warmth and positivity. Sharing an emotional note alongside a heartwarming video, Shubhangi recalled the actor's vibrant personality and all the beautiful bond they shared over the years. In the video shared by Shubhangi Latkar, Ramakant Daayama was seen enjoying life to the fullest at a get-together. The late actor could be seen singing, dancing, laughing and having a gala time with friends. Sharing the post, Shubhangi wrote, "Today, we lost a truly beautiful soul... and I am simply speechless." She further added, "Ramakant Daima was not just a dear friend and family friend to me, but someone I deeply admired and respected. Full of life, warmth, and energy. He truly knew how to enjoy life despite every challenge. A spontaneous dancer, a



soulful singer, a brilliant actor, and for me, a wise advisor whose words always carried meaning."

Remembering his strength, she further wrote, "He may have looked tiny in appearance, but he was one of the strongest and most courageous people I have known." Shubhangi also reflected on his illness and their unfinished plans together. "Though we all knew he had been unwell for many months, somewhere in the heart, one never stops hoping..." She further remembered, "We had so many unfinished plans. After years, I had truly wished to work with him again. We had decided to do a beautiful Hindi play together. When I requested him, he smiled and said,

'Let me get well soon.' We had even planned to present selected beautiful poems together on stage. That dream, too, now remains unfinished..." Expressing the void left behind by his demise, she wrote, "Some losses leave behind a silence that words fail to express. Today feels like one of those days."

Ending her emotional tribute, Shubhangi penned, "You will be deeply missed, Ramakant ji. Your warmth, your courage, your art, and your beautiful spirit will always remain alive in our hearts. May your soul rest in peace." Meanwhile, CINTAA (Cine & TV Artistes' Association) also mourned the demise of Ramakant Daayama. Sharing a condolence note on social media,

the association remembered him as a respected former Executive Committee member and a cherished part of the fraternity. Their statement read, "With profound sorrow, CINTAA mourns the passing of Shri Rammakant Daayama, a respected former Executive Committee Member and a cherished part of our fraternity." The note further added, "His dedication, wisdom, and contribution to the artist community will always be remembered with deep respect and gratitude. He leaves behind a legacy of integrity, warmth, and service that touched countless lives within the industry." Talking about the senior actor, Ramakant Daayama was also the father of actress and social media influencer Yashaswini Dayama. The father-daughter duo often featured together in pictures and videos shared on social media. Over the years, Ramakant Daayama was a part of many films, television shows and theatre productions. Some of his notable projects included Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Chak De! India', 'Dhanak', and various acclaimed stage productions.

Saiee M Manjrekar credits parents for teaching her humility and discipline

Mumbai: Actress Saiee M Manjrekar has credited her parents for instilling values of humility, discipline and respect in her, saying those lessons continue to guide her both personally and professionally. The actress, who is the daughter of filmmaker-actor Mahesh Manjrekar, said she was always taught to remain grounded regardless of success. "My parents always taught me to stay humble no matter what. I think those values are what truly make you who you are," Saiee said. The actress added that the lessons she received while growing up have helped shape her conduct on film sets as well. "The lessons they gave me growing up have helped me become a more professionally sound person on sets. I believe respect, discipline and humility go a long way in



this industry," she shared. Saiee further stated that staying grounded has allowed her to build meaningful relationships and maintain a healthy and positive atmosphere at work. Earlier this month, the actress had spoken about creating her own identity in the film industry despite coming from a film background. "While my surname may introduce me to people, I believe it's ultimate-

ly my hard work, discipline and persistence that will define my journey," she had said. Saiee also revealed that she always wanted to step beyond the comfort zone of her family background and establish herself through dedication and continuous learning. "For me, growth comes from constantly learning, proving myself through my work, and staying grounded through it all," she added. On

the professional front, Saiee will next be seen in India House, a pre-independence-era drama backed by Ram Charan in his debut production venture. The film is being simultaneously shot in Hindi and Telugu. The 23-year-old actress made her screen debut with a small role in the Marathi film Kakparsh before landing her first leading role opposite Salman Khan in Dabangg 3. She later featured in the music video "Manjha" alongside Aayush Sharma and appeared in Kuch Khattaa Ho Jaay opposite Guru Randhawa. Saiee was last seen in the Telugu action drama Arjun Son Of Vyjayanthi directed by Pradeep Chilukuri. The film also starred Nandamuri Kalyan Ram, Vijayashanti, Sohail Khan, Srikanth and R. Sarathkumar.

Jennifer Lopez rings in Memorial Day with poolside fun, cocktails, and people she loves



Mumbai: Sharing a glimpse into her perfectly laid-back Memorial Day celebrations, singer-actress Jennifer Lopez shared that she spent quality time with people she loves, sipping cocktails by the poolside. Lopez took to Instagram, where she shared a string of images from Memorial Day, which is a federal holiday that honours US military personnel who died while serving. The weekend leading up to it is also widely recognized as the unofficial start of the summer season. The "International Love" hitmaker shared a gamut of images, which included Lopez in a dress, then soaking up some sun by the poolside in a bikini, and spending some quality time with her family. "Spending the day with the people I love. Happy Memorial Day, everybody," she wrote as the caption. Lopez had earlier spoken about being "happy" as she returns to her 'rom-com era' with her upcoming film Office Romance. She shared a few "never before seen" moments from her the 2002 film "Maid In Manhattan," a romantic comedy.

"Some never before seen BTS on the set of Maid in Manhattan by the incredible @BarryWetcher. So many feelings! Such wonderful memories! And now with Office Romance, I am back in my RomCom era. It's OUR Happy Era!!! @SonyPictures #RevolutionStudios @egt239." Maid in Manhattan was based on a story by John Hughes. It stars Jennifer Lopez, Ralph Fiennes, and Natasha Richardson. In the film, a hotel maid and a high-profile politician fall in love. The film was a box office success. It followed the story of a struggling singer-mother named Marisa Ventura, who works as a maid at a luxury hotel in the Big Apple to make ends meet. However, after trying on a designer coat of a guest, she is mistaken for a wealthy politician who falls in love with her. Office Romance is an upcoming American romantic comedy film directed by Ol Parker. It also stars Brett Goldstein, Betty Gilpin, Edward James Olmos, Bradley Whitford, Amy Sedaris, Tony Hale and Rick Hoffman, among many others.

India's U-18 men's & women's hockey teams leave for Asia Cup in Japan

New Delhi: India's U-18 men's and women's hockey teams have departed for Kakamigahara, Japan, ahead of the U-18 Asia Cup 2026, set to be held from May 29 to June 6. The men's squad left from New Delhi on Monday evening, while the women's team departed on Tuesday morning, carrying strong expectations after weeks of preparation and competitive exposure matches against Australia. Both teams underwent month-long national coaching camps at the Udhav Das Mehta (Bhai Ji) Central Centre at SAI, Bhopal. The men's side trained under coaches Sardar Singh and Rajnish Mishra, while former India captain Rani Rampal supervised the women's team camp. As part of their final preparations, India's junior squads played four-match exposure series against visiting Australian U-18 teams in Bhopal. The men's team recorded one victory, one defeat and two draws, while the women's team ended their series on a high with an encouraging win. The matches provided valuable international



experience ahead of the continental tournament.

The Indian men's side, led by forward Ketan Kushwaha, has been placed in Pool A alongside Kazakhstan, hosts Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei. India will open its campaign against Kazakhstan on May 29 before taking on Japan on May 31, Korea on June 1 and Chinese Taipei on June 3. Pool B in the men's competition consists of Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and China. The top two teams from each pool will advance to the semi-finals on June 5, with the final scheduled for June 6. Speaking before departure, Ketan Kushwaha highlighted the

team's preparations and confidence heading into the tournament. "Representing India at a major tournament like the Asia Cup is a huge honour and responsibility for all of us. We have worked hard during the camp in Bhopal and the matches against Australia gave us valuable learning experiences. The team has developed strong understanding on and off the field, and we are excited to test ourselves against some of the best young teams in Asia. We are confident and will give our best in every match."

The Indian women's team, captained by Sweety Kujur, focused heavily on combinations, match fitness and tactical

execution during the training camp in Bhopal. India news analysis Drawn in Pool A, the women's team will begin its Asia Cup campaign against Malaysia on May 30 before facing Korea on May 31. India will conclude the group stage against Singapore on June 2. Similar to the men's format, the top two teams from each pool will qualify for the semi-finals on June 5, followed by the title clash a day later. Sweety Kujur expressed optimism about the squad's preparations and readiness for the competition, saying, "The entire team is excited and motivated ahead of the Asia Cup. We have spent several weeks preparing together and everyone has worked really hard during the camp. The matches against Australia helped us understand our strengths and areas where we need to improve, and finishing that series with a win gave us confidence. We know the competition at Asia Cup will be tough, but we are looking forward to giving our best and making India proud."

Rock solid RCB face resurgent GT in high-stakes Qualifier 1 at Dharamshala

Dharamshala: Royal Challengers Bengaluru will carry the quiet confidence of defending champions into Qualifier 1 when they face Gujarat Titans in a high-stakes clash at the HPCA Stadium on Tuesday. The winner goes straight to the final in Ahmedabad on Sunday, while the loser will need to take the longer road to get into the title clash. Both sides ended the league stage on 18 points from 14 matches, with RCB claiming top spot on net run rate, as a reward for being the most consistently good side across the full league stage. When RCB cruised to a chase of 206 against GT in their backyard on April 24, the Shubman Gill-led side were still a conservative side stuck in the middle of the points table. From that point, GT have surged to be the best bowling side in the competition and now find themselves in the running to get their second IPL title. But they run into an in-form RCB who have got a lot of things going in their favour - captain Rajat Patidar is in good nick, so as Virat Kohli, Devdutt Padikkal, Venkatesh Iyer and Tim David.

Consistent returns from the new-ball pairing of Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar along with Krunal Pandya being frugal have



helped RCB too. Meanwhile, GT's late-season surge, though, has been built on bowling. Mohammed Siraj, Kagiso Rabada and Prasidh Krishna have struck hard with the new ball, while Rashid Khan and Jason Holder have controlled the middle overs with quiet authority. An 89-run hammering of Chennai Super Kings in their final league game underlined GT's arrival as one of the most formidable sides in the tournament right now, though Tuesday's game will be the first time they will be playing an IPL game in Dharamshala, a place which favours teams winning by chasing - as seen from the sample size of two games in this season. The individual duels will be worth watching closely - Kohli against Rabada and Siraj on

a pitch offering extra bounce, and Hazlewood bowling to Gill and Sai Sudharsan in the powerplay where GT's top-order reliance makes those first six overs critical in deciding the first finalist of IPL 2026.

Squads: Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Rajat Patidar (captain), Virat Kohli, Tim David, Jacob Bethell, Romario Shepherd, Josh Hazlewood, Nuwan Thushara, Devdutt Padikkal, Jitesh Sharma (wicketkeeper), Krunal Pandya, Rasikh Dar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jordan Cox, Suyash Sharma, Venkatesh Iyer, Swapnil Singh, Jacob Duffy, Kanishk Chouhan, Abhinandan Singh, Mangesh Yadav, Phil Salt, Satvik Deswal, Vicky Ostwal, Vihaan Malhotra. Gujarat Titans: Shubman Gill (c), Jos Buttler (wk), Kumar Kushagra, Glenn Phillips, Rashid Khan, Manav Suthar, Nishant Sindhu, Washington Sundar, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Kagiso Rabada, Ravishrinivasan Sai Kishore, Jayant Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Ashok Sharma, Jason Holder, Tom Banton, Luke Wood, Sai Sudharsan, Rahul Tewatia, Arshad Khan, Anuj Rawat, Kulwant Khejroliya, Gurnoor Brar, M Shahrukh Khan.

Upbeat holders RCB face resurgent GT in Qualifier 1



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Lakshya, Sindhu lead Indian challenge

Singapore: India's top shuttlers Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu will look to regain consistency and end their title drought when they spearhead the country's challenge at the USD 1,000,000 Singapore Open Super 750 tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya, who won the Australia Open last November, will hope to bounce back from last week's first-round exit and make a deep run when

he opens his campaign against China's Lu Guang Zu. He had come close to winning a title at the All England Championships before finishing runner-up. In women's singles, two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu, who reached the quarterfinals at the Thailand Open, will begin her campaign against Indonesia's fifth seed Putri Kusuma Wardani. The Indian has faced significant challenges maintaining her elite form following injuries in 2025, leading to a period of inconsis-



tency and early exits in various BWF World Tour events. Young Indian shuttler Ayush

Shetty, who finished runner-up at the Asian Championships and played a key role in India's bronze medal-winning Thomas Cup campaign, will take on Canada's Victor Lai, last year's World Championships bronze medallist. The focus will also be on India's two experienced campaigners, Kidambi and HS Prannoy, both

33, as they seek to rediscover consistency.

Former world No. 1 Srikanth will once again face local favourite Loh Kean Yew, the 2021 world champion whom he had defeated at the Thailand Open earlier this month. Prannoy, a bronze medallist at the 2023 World Championships and Asian Games, faces a difficult opening-round contest against Indonesia's fifth seed Jonatan Christie.