

EYE SECRETS

English Daily

Spy in every blink

RANGAREDDY Vol:01

Issue : 25

Sunday, 31-05-2026

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Price : 2/-

Pages :08

Crude oil prices decline to six-week low over tentative US-Iran deal

New Delhi: Global crude oil prices fell to six-week lows over the weekend after reports came that the United States and Iran had tentatively agreed to extend a ceasefire and that the Strait of Hormuz could soon reopen. US West Texas Intermediate (July delivery) settled down 1.73 per cent at \$87.36 a barrel, while international oil benchmark Brent crude (August contract) fell 1.7 per cent to close at \$91.12 this week. US President Donald Trump said he would make a final determination on a preliminary deal to prolong the truce for 60 days, while Iran's Foreign Ministry said no final understanding had been reached and that message exchanges were continuing, as per reports. The risk premium on crude faded in July



amid growing hopes of a diplomatic de-escalation, though analysts warned significant obstacles remain before oil flows through Hormuz can be fully resumed. Removal of mines in the Hormuz waterway, delay in restarting shut-in fields, and damage to energy infrastructure from drone and

missile strikes could cause a delay in the full flow of energy supplies. Nissos Keros -- a Marshall Islands-flagged crude oil tanker carrying approximately 270,000 MT of crude oil cargo for India -- safely crossed the Strait of Hormuz and is expected to arrive at Visakhapatnam on June 3, an official statement

said. India news analysis All oil refineries in the country are operating at high capacity with adequate crude inventories, while sufficient stocks of petrol and diesel are being maintained. Domestic LPG production from refineries has been increased to about 52 TMT/day to support domestic consumption. In addition, the government has asked states to monitor and review district-wise diesel and petrol offtake patterns, intensify inspections and enforcement activities in vulnerable areas and along major transportation or industrial corridors to prevent unauthorised procurement of diesel through retail outlets by industrial and commercial consumers, and initiate prompt penal action against violators.

Bandi Bhageerath shifted to Cherlapally jail after 3 day's police custody



The high-profile POCSO case that created a major sensation concluded its initial police custody phase on Friday. Police produced the accused before the Nampally Court on Friday morning, following which the court remanded him to judicial custody. He was subsequently shifted to Cherlapally Central Jail under tight security. During the three-day custody, investigators focused heavily on technical and digital evidence related to the case. Police closely examined the data available on the victim's mobile phone as well as on Bhageerath's phone. They verified photographs, chat records, video call details, and other documents submitted by the victim as part of the formal investigation. According to sources, Bhageerath had allegedly deleted data from his mobile phone. However, police successfully managed to retrieve the deleted information and compared it with the victim's phone records. Investigators meticulously checked messages exchanged, call details, and the precise timing of the conversations between the two. Police

Governor lauds Adivasi festival



Asifabad: Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla participated in the 'Kumuram Bheem: Jal, Jangal, Zameen Spirit Gramotsavam-2026' (Village Festival) in Routa Sankepalli village during which he remarked that Routa Sankepalli is not merely a village, but a sacred site that stands as a symbol of the valour, sacrifice, self-respect, and culture of the Adivasi community. The Governor stated that the slogan 'Jal, Jangal, Zameen' (Water, Forest, Land)—given by the martyr Kumuram Bheem—consists of not just three words, but serves as a symbol of the harmonious coexistence between nature and humanity. He noted that nature, in turn, protects the society that protects nature. The Governor stated that it is the responsibility of every individual to convey the thoughts and ideals of great Adivasi leaders to the youth. He remarked that the emphasis placed on rural development, traditional education, healthcare, and social awareness through the 'Gramotsavam' (Village Festival) is highly commendable. The Governor advised the youth not to forget their roots and culture, even as the nation advances rapidly on the path of development. He emphasized that success can be achieved only through discipline, hard work, and a spirit of social service. The Governor congratulated the members of the organizing committee and the social workers who conducted the Gramotsavam. He issued a call to action, urging everyone to work collectively toward building an inclusive society that fosters equitable development while simultaneously preserving nature and culture. On this occasion, the Governor distributed solar power panels to tribal

Supreme Court extends TET qualification period for in-service teachers by 3 years



The Supreme Court has extended the qualifying period for in-service teachers to clear the Teacher Eligibility Test for two years to three years, providing additional time for thousands of educators across the country. However, the Court declined to grant TET exemption to teachers appointed before 23 August 2010, a controversial decision that has drawn sharp criticism from various teachers' associations. The verdict was delivered on Friday by a Division Bench comprising Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Manmohan, following comprehensive hearings held on 13 May 2026. The judgment came in response to specific review petitions filed by the School Teachers' Federation of India, several other teachers' unions, and multiple State Governments, including Telangana, challenging the Supreme Court's earlier ruling dated 1 September 2024. The Court also directed all State Governments to conduct the TET examination at least once every six months, thereby providing more frequent opportunities for teachers to qualify and comply with eligibility norms under the Right to Education Act. India news analysis Reacting to the decision, Telangana School Teachers' Federation leaders Chava Ravi, State President, and A Venkat, General Secretary, expressed deep disappointment over the denial of exemption. They noted that for the past fifteen years, both the NCTE and the State Government maintained that TET was not required for long-serving teachers, making this denial unfortunate. The TS UTF urged the Central Government to amend Section 23 of the Right to Education Act in Parliament to safeguard the services of in-service teachers and provide legal protection to their ongoing employment.

TTD revises Srivani Darshan quota norms

Tirumala: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) decided to introduce several changes in the allocation of Srivani Trust Darshan tickets to facilitate devotees. Currently, TTD releases 1,500 Srivani Darshan tickets online every day. Of these, 500 tickets are made available under the advance booking quota three months in advance through the online portal. Another 200 tickets are issued under the current booking quota at Tirupati Airport. Out of the 800 tickets currently available under the daily current booking quota, TTD has decided to reserve 300 tickets every day for eligible donors who have already contributed Rs 10,000 to the Srivani Trust and are awaiting Darshan tickets. The facility will be applicable to eligible donors who made their contributions on or after May 1, 2025. The tickets under this category will be released daily at 9 am. Devotees who book tickets before 1 pm will be allowed Darshan on the same day at 4 pm. The revised system will come into effect from June 10, 2026. TTD said any unbooked tickets under this quota will be added back to the current book

Revanth pulls up MLAs over social media focus

Hyderabad: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has expressed displeasure over some MLAs allegedly focusing on self-promotion on social media instead of highlighting government welfare schemes and public programs. City & Local Guides He directed legislators to give priority to promoting schemes such as Indiramma housing and other guarantee programmes of the government, rather than projecting their individual image online. The Chief Minister reportedly said that some MLAs were concentrating on personal publicity while neglecting collective party and government work. He

instructed that social media platforms of public representatives should be used only to promote government initiatives and programmes. He also cautioned that MLAs must work in coordination with senior and local leaders, warning that unilateral functioning could harm the party's prospects.

Sources said the Chief Minister emphasized the need for continuous monitoring of MLA activities and urged them to ensure inclusive leadership at the constituency level. The remarks were made during a joint meeting of the TPCC Political Affairs Committee and Political Advisory

Committee held at Gandhi Bhavan (Indira Bhavan) on Friday, where party leaders also discussed issues related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. Senior Congress leader V. Hanumantha Rao reportedly raised concerns over the functioning of ministers, alleging that constituency in-charges and senior leaders were not being given adequate attention during official visits. Politics He urged ministers to change their approach and cautioned that failure to carry all sections of leadership together could adversely impact the party. Hanumantha Rao also observed



that some leaders were making personal sacrifices while working for the party and said it was inappropriate to exclude them from constituency-level programmes.

Thunderstorms to bring heat relief across Telangana

Telangana is expected to be hit with thunderstorms starting June 1, bringing a respite from the heat, which is currently touching 45 degrees Celsius in some districts. Temperatures will drop to 36-38 degrees Celsius in Hyderabad, while northern and eastern districts will drop to 40-42 degrees starting June 1, according to local weather enthusiast T Balaji. After June 5, the temperatures will further drop up to 35-36 degree Celsius in Hyderabad and to 38-39 degrees Celsius in northern and central Telangana. Monsoon is expected to arrive by the second week of June.

11 students of YISU hired by Microsoft, CM hails appointment

Eleven of 14 students of the Data Center Management Course at YISU of the Telangana government were hired by tech giant Microsoft. Young India Skills University (YISU) was established on August 1, 2024 through an Act of the Telangana State Legislative Assembly, with a vision to "transform higher education through skill-based and industry-aligned learning".

"11 out of 14 students of the Data Center Management course at YISU were absorbed by Microsoft at a package of Rs 7 lakhs per annum," an official release



said. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy hailed the appointment of the 11 students with Microsoft, saying he is thrilled to see the vision of YISU becoming a reality.

"The success of our policy to focus on industry-class, skills development of world-class standards is both endorsed and exemplified by this report of @Microsoft

hiring 11 students of our #YoungIndiaSkillsUniversity (YISU) in the Data Centre Management course," he said in a post on X.

"This is just the beginning. We are scaling up. YISU is launching new B.Tech & B.Sc streams this academic year," he said.

The state-of-the-art permanent campus of YISU at the Bharat Future City being developed by the state government on city outskirts is shaping up phenomenally well, he said.

He asserted that the future of Telangana is in the hands of our youth and that the state's youth have a great future in all fields.

'Take a lead in providing services to public'

DGP directs police, reviews performance via video conference



DGP Anand directed that police personnel must always be accessible to complainants. He expressed displeasure regarding the unsatisfactory performance of the CCTNS system. Conducting a review via video conference with officials ranging from Inspectors to SPs and Police Commissioners, the DGP ordered them to abandon outdated methods and take the lead in providing superior services to the public. He emphasized that every police officer must conduct themselves with discipline.

The DGP stated that there is a need to reorganize the Greyhounds and SIB wings to align with current operational requirements. Furthermore, he instructed every officer to work with unwavering commitment toward combating cyber-crime and controlling drug-related offenses. The DGP announced that a Traffic

Management and Road Safety Bureau, a Food Adulteration Wing, and a Vigilance and Enforcement Wing would be established shortly. He advised junior officers to accord due respect to their seniors and to work together with mutual coordination. He also mentioned that a dedicated "DGP Tech Team" has been constituted to handle technical support services. DGP Anand issued specific directives requiring every District SP and Police Commissioner to mandatorily conduct crime review meetings, and for Unit Heads to carry out surprise inspections.

Interstate drug racket busted, two women held with over 25 kg ganja



In a significant crackdown on narcotic drug trafficking, the Hyderabad police on Saturday, May 30, busted an interstate racket, arrested two women, and seized 25.251 kilograms of marijuana. Sub-Inspector of Police, Saifabad Police Station M Swamy, formed a special team under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Along with Clue Team personnel and mediators, the police team were surveilling the Lakdikapul Railway Station parking area. At about 4:25 pm, two women carrying three suitcases were intercepted near the private parking

area. Upon verification and search, police found 19 packets of ganja hidden inside the bags. The accused were identified as Tippigiri Laxmi (43 years), from Narayanpet and Sandipkaur Makkhan Singh (60 years). Both were residing in Mumbai and were travelling to Telangana. During interrogation, the accused confessed that they had procured the ganja from a supplier identified as Srinu of Visakhapatnam and were transporting the contraband to Mumbai for further sale and distribution. They revealed the identities of two other associates, namely Baby and Sampath, who are currently absconding.

Goa, Sikkim states symbolize India's diversity: Governor Statehood Day celebrations held grandly at Lok Bhavan



State Governor Shiva Pratap Shukla said that the states of Goa and Sikkim symbolize India's diversity. The Statehood Day celebrations of Goa and Sikkim were held grandly at Lok Bhavan on Saturday. People from Sikkim and Goa residing in Telangana attended the celebrations. State Governor Shiva Pratap Shukla participated in the event along with his wife Janaki Shukla.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Shiva Pratap

Shukla said that the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' programme is strengthening the unity of the country. He noted that while Goa has gained worldwide recognition for its natural beauty and unique culture, Sikkim stands as a symbol of peace, spirituality, and natural splendor. He stated that these two states, which reflect the cultural diversity of the country, further enhance national pride. The Governor extended his greetings to the people of Goa and Sikkim residing in

Telangana. He called for further strengthening the unity, integrity, and social harmony of the nation.

Later, messages from Sikkim Governor Shri Om Prakash Mathur and Goa Governor Shri Puspapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju were screened on the digital display. The cultural programmes organized on the occasion were captivating. Governor's Special Principal Secretary M. Dana Kishore, Joint Secretary Shashikiran Chari, and others participated in the programme.

CM to launch phase 2 of Indiramma houses on June 1

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy will be launching the second phase of Indiramma housing scheme at a public meeting in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district on Monday. Before the event, the chief minister will perform a house-warming ceremony of 28 Indiramma houses built for Adivasis belonging to the Kolam tribe in Kothari village of Kerameri mandal under the first phase of the scheme.

The official launch of the second phase of Indiramma housing scheme and the public meeting will be held at Kagaznagar X

Roads, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and other cabinet ministers are expected to attend the event.

Under the second phase of Indiramma housing scheme, the state government will be sanctioning 2.5 lakh houses, with each assembly constituency being allotted 2,000 houses. In addition to these houses, the state government will soon sanction 1 lakh Indiramma houses under the Outer Ring Road (ORR) limits, for which the modalities are being worked out.



Cyber Security Bureau inspector held for accepting bribe

An inspector of police in the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau was arrested by ACB on Saturday for allegedly demanding a bribe and accepting its part payment for not involving the family members and friends of a person who was booked in a cyber fraud case.

A case was registered against the accused officer Bathula Mahendar, who had allegedly demanded a bribe of Rs nine lakh from the person who complained to the state's Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB).

Mahender had already allegedly accepted Rs five lakh from the complainant, the ACB said in a release. On Saturday, he had again demanded and threatened the complainant over the balance amount of Rs four lakh at his office, it said. The Central Investigation Unit team of ACB apprehended him at his office, it said.

TGSRTC's special summer discount in GHMC limits ends today

The Telangana State Road Transport Authority's (TGSRTC) three-month special summer discount given to passengers travelling on the Metro Deluxe and e-Metro Air-conditioned buses under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's (GHMC) limits ends on Sunday, May 31.

TGSRTC Managing

Director Y Nagi Reddy said that the previous fares that were being charged before March will come into effect from June 1, without any new hike in the bus fares.

TGSRTC had announced the special summer discount from March 1 to May 31, with a view to provide comfortable and convenient bus service to the passengers in view of the summer heat.

AI-based system to deliver weather alerts to TG farmers via WhatsApp

The Telangana government on Saturday, May 30, rolled out an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based system to deliver weather alerts to farmers across the state. The Agriculture Department is implementing the Telangana Weather Advisory Program in collaboration with the Development Innovation Lab India (DIL India) and Evidence Action organisation.



It was officially launched at the Secretariat on Saturday, with Agriculture

Minister Thummal Nageswara Rao himself issuing a weather advisory

on upcoming seasonal winds and rainfall. He suggested developing a platform that enables farmers to ask questions about weather conditions and agricultural guidance through voice messages.

The minister said that in the current situation, where climate change is a challenge, providing accurate and timely weather information to farmers is extremely necessary.

Cong leaders should actively take part in SIR process: VH



Former PCC President and State Government BC Welfare Department Advisor V. Hanumanth Rao said that during Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, Rahul Gandhi observed the living conditions of people and the social injustices being done to them, and promised to provide reservations based on population. In line with that, he recalled that after the Congress government was formed in Telangana, as per Rahul Gandhi's directions, CM Revanth Reddy conducted a caste census and caste-wise enumeration.

He further said that they have long been demanding that the Modi government at the Centre include caste enumeration in the census it has undertaken, and recently, even a bench headed by Supreme Court Chief Justice

Suryakant endorsed it. He urged that the Central government should at least now conduct a caste census as part of the SIR process.

He alleged that the Central government, in the name of SIR - Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls - is deleting votes of various sections. He suggested that Congress leaders and workers should actively participate in this revision process.

DCC President Nuti Satyanarayana, District IMTC President Sitaram, former PCC General Secretary R. Lakshman Yadav, and other leaders participated in this meeting.

VH and other leaders will participate in the Khammam District DCC former president Javed's Chehlu (40th day mourning) programme scheduled to be held tomorrow, Sunday.

Not "Cockroaches", but a generation seeking to be heard



Dundra Kumara Swamy

A social media movement calling itself the "Cockroach Janata Party" has emerged as an unexpected talking point in India's digital public sphere. The debate intensified after the Centre blocked several social media accounts associated with the movement, prompting a legal challenge in the Delhi High Court. While the court issued notices to the government and directed a review under the Information Technology Rules, it declined

to grant immediate relief by restoring the blocked accounts.

The legal dispute is likely to take its own course. Yet the larger question remains: why has a seemingly unconventional online movement resonated with so many young Indians?

History offers a clue. Every generation has found its own language of dissent. Previous generations marched on the streets carrying placards and raising slogans. Today's youth increasingly use memes, hashtags, satire and digital campaigns to express frustration. The medium has changed, but the underlying emotions have not.

Across the country, many young people are grappling with unemployment, shrinking opportunities, delayed recruitment processes, examination irregularities and rising educational costs. Their frustrations are not always expressed through conventional political channels. Increasingly, they are surfacing through digital platforms, where humour and satire have become instru-

ments of political and social commentary.

The emergence of the "Cockroach Janata Party" appears to be part of this broader phenomenon. What makes the movement noteworthy is its apparent attempt to reclaim an insult and transform it into a symbol of protest. Whether one agrees with its methods or not, the response it has generated points to a deeper undercurrent of dissatisfaction among sections of India's youth.

India often celebrates its demographic advantage. Nearly two-thirds of the population is below the age of 35. Yet this demographic dividend can only be realised if education, employment and social mobility keep pace with aspirations. Many young graduates today find themselves navigating an uncertain landscape. Professional degrees do not always guarantee stable employment. Recruitment examinations are frequently delayed. Temporary and contractual work has become increasingly common. For many fami-

lies, the promise that education would serve as a pathway to economic security appears less certain than it once did.

The concerns are particularly acute among young people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. For many first-generation graduates from rural and marginalised communities, higher education represents not merely personal achievement but a family's collective investment in social mobility. When employment opportunities fail to materialise, the resulting disappointment extends beyond individuals to entire households. Equally significant is the growing perception that political institutions are not adequately responding to the concerns of younger generations. Elections often feature promises aimed at youth, social justice and economic opportunity. Yet many young citizens continue to ask whether their anxieties about employment, representation and the future are receiving sufficient attention

in policy discussions.

This widening gap between expectations and outcomes may explain why digital expressions of dissent are attracting increasing support. Behind every viral meme or satirical post often lies a more serious concern: a desire to be heard. At the same time, any movement seeking long-term relevance must move beyond symbolism. Satire can draw attention to a problem, but sustainable change requires constructive engagement and credible alternatives. Discussions on employment generation, skills development, entrepreneurship, educational reform, social inclusion and democratic participation remain essential.

India's youth are not merely a demographic category. They are students, workers, innovators, entrepreneurs and future leaders. They represent a vast reservoir of talent and aspiration. Reducing them to stereotypes—whether as passive social media users or as objects of ridicule—risks over-

looking the complexity of their experiences and concerns. The challenge before policymakers is not simply to respond to a viral trend but to understand the conditions that give rise to it. Unemployment, rising educational costs, unequal access to opportunities and declining trust in institutions cannot be addressed through symbolism alone. The rise of movements such as the "Cockroach Janata Party" should therefore be viewed less as a social media curiosity and more as a reflection of broader public sentiment among sections of the younger generation. Their message, stripped of its satire, is straightforward: they seek opportunity, dignity and a meaningful stake in the country's future.

India's democratic institutions have historically been strengthened when they listened to the aspirations of their young citizens. The question today is whether they are listening closely enough.

(The writer is National President BC Dal)

Navy's posture during Op Sindoor dented Pak's maritime economy: Admiral Tripathi

The Indian Navy maintained an "unprecedented operational tempo" across strategic waters, clocking nearly 11,000 ship days and over 50,000 flying hours in 2025 alone, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi said on Saturday. Admiral Tripathi, delving into Operation Sindoor, said it demonstrated the Navy's absolute combat readiness, operational reach and deterrence capabilities.

In an exclusive interview to PTI, he said the Navy's immediate deployment of a Carrier Battle Group and its forward operational posture in the Northern Arabian Sea forced the Pakistan Navy to remain confined to harbour or close to the Makran coast.

"This aggressive posturing reaffirmed our ability to rapidly position combat power and successfully shape the strategic environment, while simultaneously impacting their maritime economy due to elevated shipping risks and increased insurance premiums," he said. "Equally important was the tri-service synergy demonstrated during the operation, which validated the growing importance of joint operational capability."

Following the Pahalgam terror attack, the Navy swiftly deployed its frontline assets including submarines, warships and almost all its aviation with full combat readiness that maintained constant pressure on Pakistan.

"In an increasingly interconnected and contested



maritime environment, the Indian Navy maintained an unprecedented operational tempo across our areas of interest - clocking nearly 11,000 ship days and over 50,000 flying hours in 2025 alone," he said. "Foremost among these achievements was Operation Sindoor, which demonstrated our

absolute combat readiness, operational reach, and deterrence potential." "The immediate deployment of a Carrier Battle Group and our forward operational posture in the Northern Arabian Sea forced the Pakistan Navy to remain confined to harbour or close to the Makran coast," he said.

The Navy chief was asked about his force's readiness and contribution to national security during his tenure. Highlighting the Navy's increasing combat capabilities, Admiral Tripathi mentioned multi-domain exercises carried out by his force including TROPX and AIKEYME exercises.

"Our biennial capstone exercise, TROPX-2025, successfully integrated conventional maritime operations with a cyber and information

warfare exercises under realistic conditions," he said.

"Operating across an expanded theatre extending approximately 4,300 nautical miles from North to South and 5,000 nautical miles from the Strait of Hormuz to the Sunda and Lombok Straits, it witnessed the participation of more than 65 Indian Naval ships, 10 submarines, and over 80 aircraft, achieving a very high level of operational synergy with extensive participation from the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Coast Guard," he said. "To further accelerate this integration, the Navy led the tri-services Exercise Trishul off the coast of Gujarat in November, practising joint effects-based operations on land and at sea," he said.

Bihar govt suspends 2 IAS officers on corruption charges

The Bihar government on Saturday suspended two senior IAS officers on charges of corruption, following recommendations based on findings shared by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Special Vigilance Unit (SVU), as per official orders.

According to separate orders issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), the suspended officers are Yogesh Kumar Sagar of the 2017 batch and Abhilasha Kumari Sharma of the 2014 batch. While Sagar is currently posted with the Social Welfare Department, Sharma is posted with the Rural Development Department. The suspension orders stated that documents received from the ED through the SVU, along with evidence and recorded statements, indicated that the officers were allegedly involved in obtaining undue monetary benefits through bribery, commissions and other favours.

'CM change won't alter Karnataka govt's character'

Says BJP after Shivakumar's elevation



The BJP on Saturday took a swipe at the Congress after Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar was elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP), asking whether the change would alter the "character" of the government which has been mired in "corruption" or whether it merely amounts to a "change of face".

The remarks came after senior Congress leader and outgoing chief minister Siddaramaiah proposed Shivakumar's name as the new CLP leader at a meeting held at the Vidhan Soudha in Bengaluru, paving the way for him to take over as Karnataka's next chief minister.

In a video statement, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said the leadership change reflects the Congress' acknowledgement that Siddaramaiah's governance has failed on multiple fronts.

"After two-and-a-half to three years of 'Game of

Thrones', the 'battle for the chair' and 'who will become the chief minister', the Karnataka Congress has chosen a new CLP leader in the form of D K Shivakumar and replaced Siddaramaiah. It means they are acknowledging that Siddaramaiah's governance has been a complete failure on all fronts - economy, law and order, and infrastructure," Poonawalla said.

"Therefore, they have had to replace him. Otherwise, 2028 (assembly elections) is gone," he added.

He also claimed that while Siddaramaiah enjoys greater support among the

Congress MLAs, Shivakumar's "money power" has prevailed.

"It also shows that for the Congress high command, money is more important than popularity. All of them say that Siddaramaiah is more popular among Congress MLAs but it is Shivakumar's money power that has prevailed," he said.

Targeting the Congress government, Poonawalla questioned whether it will focus on governance or political power. "Will this government actually focus on the janata (people) or only on satta (power)? Only time will tell. For the last

three years, the people of Karnataka have suffered. We have seen bad roads, pothole-ridden roads, crumbling infrastructure, an economy going from bad to worse, and rising debt. People are paying the highest taxes but getting only corruption and poor governance in return," he alleged.

"Will that character change, or will it only be a change of face? Will there be a change of chief minister but no change in the government's character? That is the main question," he added.

Poonawalla also accused the Congress of practising "double standards" on social justice and claimed that the party has removed the only OBC chief minister among the states ruled by it.

"Another question is that Mr Siddaramaiah, who was the only OBC chief minister in the Congress, has been removed unceremoniously by the party. Now, is Mr (Sukhvinder Singh) Sukhu an OBC? Is Mr Revanth Reddy an OBC? Is Mr (V D) Satheesan an OBC?"

Delhi Police cracks ISI-underworld network Nepali national among 8 arrested

The Delhi Police said on Saturday that they busted a Pakistan-backed ISI-underworld terror module and arrested eight suspected operatives, including a Nepali national, allegedly planning attacks on vital installations, security establishments and police personnel in Delhi and other cities.

The arrests were made in a coordinated multi-state operation that exposed a conspiracy allegedly orchestrated by Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), underworld operatives and gangster-turned-handler Shahzad Bhatti, with plans to target locations in Delhi, Mumbai, Punjab and Chandigarh, they said.

In Mumbai, the targets were railway stations, parks and bridges, police said.

Special Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Anil Shukla said at a press conference that four Pakistan-made hand grenades, two Glock pistols, 24 live cartridges, a stolen motorcycle and a stolen scooter were recovered from the accused.

The accused are Vijay alias Shooter (23) from Uttar Pradesh, Nitish Paswan (23)



from Jharkhand, Taseer Rizwan Ahmad Shaikh (27) and Sajid Mehboob Shaikh alias Arbaz Khan (27) from Maharashtra, Harvinder Singh (28), Gagandeep Singh (28) and Manjeet Singh (23) from Punjab, and Nepali national Anag Kami Lama (66).

A case under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) has been registered at the Special Cell police station.

According to police, the operation was launched following inputs that operatives linked to Pakistan-based handlers and underworld networks were planning attacks on strategic targets and security personnel in several cities.

Police first arrested Vijay alias Shooter from Pune on May 14, and his associate

Nitish Paswan from Sahibganj in Jharkhand on May 17. Police said Vijay was allegedly in contact with members of Bhatti's network operating from Pakistan and Dubai and was tasked with recruiting youths to carry out terror-related activities across Delhi-NCR and several northern states. Police said these youths were promised lakhs of rupees after executing the terror attacks.

Interrogation of the two accused and technical analysis subsequently led investigators to Mumbai, where Taseer and Sajid were arrested on May 27. Officials said the two men allegedly worked under the direction of Pakistan-based handlers Yawar Khan and Munna Jhingada and were recruited through an absconding operative identified as Huzaifa. "They were tasked to carry out grenade attacks and firing incidents targeting vital installations, security establishments and police personnel in Delhi and Mumbai," a police officer said. Further interrogation revealed that the same handlers directed another module from Punjab to execute similar attacks in the national capital.

Military school alumni win top honours among passing-out NDA cadets

The three top medal winners of the 150th course of the National Defence Academy (NDA) share a common foundation: all are alumni of military schools and institutions known for nurturing future military leaders.

During the Passing Out Parade on Saturday, Rohit Kajla was awarded the President's Gold Medal, while the President's Silver and Bronze Medals were presented to Peeyush Rautela and Sahil Sharma, whose entry to NDA was itself a statement of perseverance, respectively.

Kajla said his father, a retired Havildar from the 3 Grenadiers Regiment, motivated him to pursue a career in the armed forces. "I hail from Jhajjar, Haryana. Inspired by my father to join the armed forces, I was enrolled in Rashtriya Military School, Bengaluru. The training at the school prepared me for a career in the military, and I cleared the NDA examination and the SSB (Services Selection Board) interview," he said.

Kajla said his military school background helped him adapt to life at the NDA, though the academy's demanding routine tested him both physically and mentally.

"The early morning schedules, rigorous drills and obstacle training were challenging during the

initial terms," he said.

Kajla recalled a defining moment during the gruelling 'Camp Torna' endurance exercise when an exhausted classmate collapsed during a 40-km night march.

"Instead of moving ahead, the entire team waited for him to recover. We completed the challenge together, which reinforced the importance of teamwork and camaraderie," he said.

For Rautela, seven years at Sainik School Ghorakhal (Uttarakhand) prepared him for the academy's disciplined environment, though balancing academics with military training, sports and drills remained a challenge.

The son of a school teacher, Rautela said his primary motivation to join the NDA came from his time at Sainik School Ghorakhal. "The environment, the instructors, my principal and vice-principal, and the strong bond I shared with my friends inspired me greatly to join the NDA. Moreover, the primary objective of institutions such as Sainik Schools and Rashtriya Military Schools is to prepare and induct more cadets into the National Defence Academy," he said.

The training, discipline and daily routine that he experienced at the Sainik School were more than enough to motivate him to join the NDA, he said.

Bengal will work with Centre to ensure state's progress: CM

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Saturday said his government would work closely with the Centre to ensure that the state receives all the benefits of a double-engine government like several other BJP-ruled states.

Addressing the media after the launch of the 'Swachh App' in the state in the presence of Union Minister for Power and Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal, Adhikari said there was significant scope for rebuilding the state in the power and urban development sectors.

The app was launched by Lal in the presence of Adhikari and state urban development minister Agnimitra Paul. The app is designed to improve civic amenities through technology and the participation of citizens.

"I want to assure the people of West Bengal that we will work with every ministry of the Union government to ensure that all the benefits of a double-engine government, which 20 other states are receiving, are extended to our state as well," he said.

The chief minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly lamented that West Bengal has not developed at the pace expected despite being a leader in sectors such as industry and education after Independence.

India's rotavirus vaccine coverage jumps to 85.4% from 36.4% in 2019-2020: Survey

India's coverage of all three doses of the rotavirus vaccine (RVV) among children more than doubled to 85.4 per cent in 2023-24 from 36.4 per cent in 2019-21, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6).

The RVV was introduced in India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) in 2016 and scaled-up nationally in 2019. The vaccine aims to reduce mortality and morbidity caused by rotavirus diarrhoea in children.

According to the survey findings released by the

Union Health Ministry on Friday, India recorded a decline in the prevalence of Acute Respiratory Illness (ARI) among children -- from 2.8 per cent in 2019-21 to 1.9 per cent in 2023-24.

Officials highlighted that the reduction in ARI prevalence can be "majorly attributed to the introduction of the Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) in India's Universal Immunisation Programme in 2017".

The report also showed a steady rise in full vaccination coverage among children aged 12-23 months from 77.9 per cent in NFHS-4 to 83.8 per cent in NFHS-5 and 87.1 per



cent in NFHS-6. "Over 95.6 per cent of the children have received most vaccinations through government health facilities," an official said.

India's UIP, one of the world's largest public health programmes, currently provides 11 vaccines against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases free of cost through

public health facilities, covering about 2.55 crore infants and 2.9 crore pregnant women annually.

The survey showed notable improvements in the coverage of several key vaccines. Coverage of the first dose of the Measles-Rubella vaccine rose to 91.7 per cent in NFHS-6 from 87.9

per cent in NFHS-5, while coverage of the second dose increased significantly to 71.8 per cent from 58.6 per cent during the same period.

Further, 89.2 per cent of the children received all three doses of the pentavalent vaccine in NFHS-6, compared to 86.9 per cent in NFHS-5 and 78.4 per cent in NFHS-4. The ministry official said India has introduced six new vaccines under the UIP since 2014 and strengthened vaccine delivery through digital initiatives such as U-WIN and the electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN).

Massive dust storm sweeps Rajasthan; rain brings relief to most parts of north India

A massive dust storm barreled through several parts of Rajasthan on Saturday, even as an active western disturbance triggered rain in most of the northern states, bringing much-needed relief from the sweltering heat that baked the region for the past few days.

In Rajasthan, the storm triggered by a western disturbance affected Churu, Bikaner, Hanumangarh, Sri Ganganagar, Nagaur, Didwana-Kuchaman, Alwar and Sikar districts, while Jaipur witnessed strong winds followed by rain.

Clouds of dust and sand engulfed many towns, reducing visibility to zero and forcing motorists to switch on headlights during the



day. Winds initially picked up in Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar regions, reaching speeds of around 56 kmph, officials said.

While the storm disrupted normal life, the accompanying rain brought relief from the intense heatwave conditions in several parts of the desert state.

"We never imagined such a massive dust storm could engulf the city. The sky turned dark around 2 pm, almost like nightfall. People were moving with their

vehicle headlights on... Normal life has been disrupted as we are facing many difficulties," a Churu resident told PTI Videos.

A dust storm with lesser intensity also hit parts of Delhi on Saturday amid red and orange alerts, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast thunderstorms, lightning, hail and rain.

According to the weather office, a dust storm followed by a severe thunderstorm accompanied by lightning, hail and light to moderate rain is very likely over parts of central, north-east, southwest, west, northwest and north Delhi. The wind speeds are expected to range between 70 and 90 kmph, gusting up to 100 kmph, it said.

200 years of Hindi journalism: Journey that began with 'Udanta Martand' in Kolkata

Exactly 200 years ago, from an old press located in the bylanes of Calcutta, a weekly titled 'Udanta Martand' -- which translates to the 'rising sun' -- was published, quite aptly heralding the dawn of Hindi journalism in India.

Its very first issue, edited by Pt. Jugal Kishore Shukla, which came out on May 30, 1826, proclaimed itself as a journal with a premise: "Hindustaniyon ke hit ke het".

Rare images of the first page of this very seminal publication and other historic Hindi journals published in the 19th and 20th centuries, have been displayed as part of an exhibition hosted at the Indira Gandhi National

Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) here on Saturday to mark the milestone occasion.

A two-day seminar, starting May 30, is also being hosted by IGNCA and Madhavrao Sapre Memorial Newspaper Museum and Research Institute, Bhopal, to commemorate 200 years of Hindi journalism.

Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia, the chief guest at the opening session of the seminar, released a commemorative stamp, and also a commemorative volume on the bicentenary.

On the occasion, a written message in Hindi sent by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also played on the screen on the dais.



"I am confident that this glorious journey of 200 years of Hindi journalism will inspire new generations of journalists, researchers and other people associated with the media fraternity," Modi said in his message dated May 29. The exhibition draws from archival records housed at the newspaper museum of

Sapre memorial, and includes rare images of the cover pages of various Hindi newspapers published in the 19th century, such as 'Malwa Akhbar' (Hindi/Urdu), 'Akhbar Gwalior', 'Samachar Sudhavarshan' (Hindi and Bengali), 'Kavivachansudha', 'Hindipradip' (monthly), 'Hindosthan', 'Ananda

Kadambini', 'Bharatbhara' and 'Shree Venkateswar Samachar', among others.

The 20th-century journals born before the independence, whose rare images have been showcased include, 'Dainik Lokmat', 'Madhukar', 'Hind Kesari', 'Saraswati', 'Vigyan', 'Vishwamitra', 'Aaj', 'Sainik' and 'Aryavarta'.

According to one of the exhibits, at the end of every issue of 'Udanta Martand', it was written -- "This 'Udanta Martand' is published every Tuesday, at Martand press in Calcutta's Kolhu ToJa, Almratala Gali, haveli at no. 37." Veteran journalist and founder of Sapre memorial newspaper museum Vijaydutt Shridhar told PTI

When ICE ramped up enforcement, US born workers didn't see any economic gains

President Donald Trump campaigned on a promise to strengthen the labor market. His immigration platform – including a pledge to conduct the largest deportation campaign in US history – was central to that promise.

"For too long, Washington ignored how mass illegal immigration artificially suppressed wages, hurting working-class Americans – especially young men," wrote Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on X in July 2025. "But under President Trump, we now have a secure border, a blue-collar wage boom, and major investments from trade deals."

The labor market tells a different story. In the first year of Trump's second term, unemployment rose, hiring slowed and wage growth stagnated. The construction sector was hit particularly hard.

We're scholars of labor markets, immigration and public environmental policy who have examined how these economic trends can be traced to the mass deportation campaign of Trump's second term. Notably, while areas with heavier ICE enforcement saw a drop in employment among immigrants, there was no increase in either employment or wages among US citizens.

A chilling effect on immigrant workers

Using data from October 2023 through November 2025, we looked at employment rates and wages for immigrant and US-born workers in places that experienced sudden spikes in ICE arrests and compared them to places that did not.

In the regions where US Immigration and Customs Enforcement ramped up its activity, we found a significant drop in the employment rate among likely undocumented immigrants who were neither detained nor deported. This was especially notable in sectors where such workers are heavily represented – such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing and wholesale markets – where we found a 4% drop in the employment rate.

These immigrants appeared to be staying home out of fear, a concern that's widespread. In a Pew Research survey from summer 2025, 43% of foreign-born respondents said they feared deportation for themselves or someone close to them. We call this a chilling effect, since these people aren't physically removed from the labor market. Instead, they changed their behav-



IN THE REGIONS WHERE US IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT RAMPED UP ITS ACTIVITY, WE FOUND A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN THE EMPLOYMENT RATE AMONG LIKELY UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS WHO WERE NEITHER DETAINED NOR DEPORTED. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY NOTABLE IN SECTORS WHERE SUCH WORKERS ARE HEAVILY REPRESENTED – SUCH AS AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION, MANUFACTURING AND WHOLESALE MARKETS – WHERE WE FOUND A 4% DROP IN THE EMPLOYMENT RATE

ior because of ICE.

The chilling effect on employment in Trump's second term is roughly double of what we found in prior work on mass deportations, when we looked at a program in President Barack Obama's first term called Secure Communities.

As we wrote in a companion paper co-authored with sociologist Caitlin Patler, a likely explanation is that ICE arrests during Trump's second term have been far more indiscriminate and visible: The average number of daily ICE arrests was higher than any time in

the past 10 years.

The percentage of arrests conducted in public spaces – streets, workplaces, courthouses and school parking lots – more than doubled, rising from 19% to nearly 50% of all apprehensions. As a result, the intimidation effect was likely more widespread.

The broader effects

Trump pledged during his 2024 presidential campaign to focus ICE enforcement on criminals, especially violent offenders. In fact, we found the

share of immigrants arrested by ICE who had a criminal conviction fell to a nearly record low in this time period, from roughly 60% in January 2025 to under 30% by the end of the year.

The economic effects have extended beyond immigrant workers. More broadly, many consumers have pulled back.

Other researchers have found that in cities with expanded ICE raids in 2025, consumer spending and economic activity fell. In February 2026, for example, Minneapolis officials estimated that the city's economy lost US\$203 million

due to falling restaurant, hotel and retail revenues, as well as lost wages.

Another analysis found that states with enhanced ICE enforcement saw aggregate credit- and debit-card spending drop by 1.7 percentage points compared with those that did not.

Scholars have found similar effects with foot traffic, which dropped sharply in areas where ICE expanded its activities. A Wharton study released in May 2026, for instance, estimated that foot traffic in areas heavily impacted by ICE operations dropped by 2.7%, with spending down by 6.2%, per week.

What happened to US-born workers?

Trump's core political promise was that deportations would open up jobs for American workers. But we found the opposite: Employment among US-born workers also declined in areas with heightened ICE activity. And employers didn't respond by raising wages to attract more Americans to their workplace. Their demand for workers contracted instead.

At issue is the premise that foreign-born and US-born workers directly compete for the same jobs. But the example of Trump 2.0 underscores a different dynamic. As we and other economists have documented, the labor market is not zero-sum. Immigrants and US-born workers tend to fill complementary jobs rather than compete for identical ones.

Construction is a clear example. Fewer undocumented laborers on a job site means less work for the electricians, roofers and supervisors – roles more commonly held by US-born workers who depend on those projects moving forward.

The broader stagnation of employment in the construction industry in 2025 fits this pattern. It also mirrors earlier findings that Obama-era deportations reduced homebuilding and pushed up new-home prices.

Immigration crackdowns are, of course, nothing new in US history. In the early 1930s, President Herbert Hoover expelled 400,000 Mexican workers, which lifted neither wages nor employment of US-born workers. Obama's Secure Communities program in the 2010s had similar results.

And as our most recent research shows, mass deportations don't create new job opportunities for American citizens. Presidents seeking to strengthen the labor market will need to look elsewhere.

"The Velvet Prison of Power: Political Coteries Manufacture Defeat While the Silent Cadre Carries Democracy on Its Back"

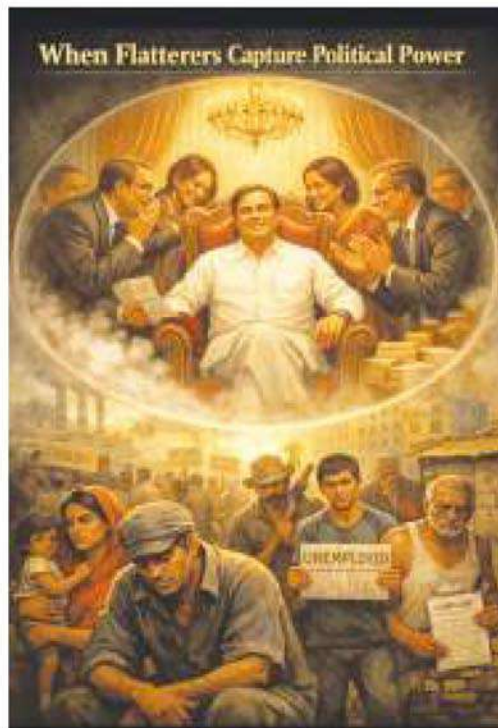


ARJA SRIKANTH
SENIOR BUREAUCRAT

Politics rarely collapses because of the opposition alone. More often, it collapses from within – silently, invisibly, and with devastating psychological precision. Across democracies, especially in India's deeply personality-driven political culture, leaders seldom lose touch with the people overnight. They are gradually disconnected from reality by those closest to them. The greatest threat to political leadership is therefore not criticism from rivals, but insulation from truth within one's own camp. Electoral defeat is usually the final visible symptom of a much deeper internal decay. By the time a leader senses public anger, layers of controlled access, curated optimism, emotional dependency, and manufactured applause have already buried reality beneath political theatre. Modern politics increasingly suffers not from lack of information, but from excessive filtration of truth.

Every political ecosystem eventually produces what may be called the "coterie trap" – an invisible republic of relatives, loyalists, personal assistants, business intermediaries, fixers, and self-appointed gatekeepers whose survival depends upon uninterrupted proximity to power. These individuals rarely rise through ideological depth or administrative brilliance. They emerge through emotional access, inherited familiarity, strategic loyalty, or an extraordinary ability to flatter without accountability. Their principal talent is not governance, policy, or mobilisation. It is control over access. The closer one stands to the leader's ear, the greater the influence one accumulates. Gradually, formal institutions weaken while informal power networks strengthen. Party constitutions survive on paper, but actual authority migrates into drawing rooms, private offices, WhatsApp circles, and invisible corridors of influence.

The first casualty of the coterie system is truth itself. Honest political feedback becomes dangerous because it threatens the monopoly of the inner circle over perception management. Electoral warnings are dismissed as negativity. Grassroots anger is labelled factional propaganda. Corruption complaints disappear before reaching the leadership. Senior party workers who raise uncomfortable questions are isolated as "anti-leadership." Over time, leaders begin hearing only carefully curated optimism. Every welfare scheme is projected as historic. Every crowd becomes "unprecedented." Every criticism is framed as conspiracy. Governance slowly transforms into a theatre of manufactured applause where perception matters more than reality. Inside such ecosystems, silence is often mistaken for approval when, in truth, silence may represent exhaustion, fear, or irreversible public disengagement.



EVERY POLITICAL ECOSYSTEM EVENTUALLY PRODUCES WHAT MAY BE CALLED THE "COTERIE TRAP" – AN INVISIBLE REPUBLIC OF RELATIVES, LOYALISTS, PERSONAL ASSISTANTS, BUSINESS INTERMEDIARIES, FIXERS, AND SELF-APPOINTED GATEKEEPERS WHOSE SURVIVAL DEPENDS UPON UNINTERRUPTED PROXIMITY TO POWER. THESE INDIVIDUALS RARELY RISE THROUGH IDEOLOGICAL DEPTH OR ADMINISTRATIVE BRILLIANCE

This creates what may be called the political cocoon – a psychologically comforting but electorally fatal environment where controlled narratives replace authentic public sentiment. Within this insulated chamber, leaders gradually lose the ability to distinguish between administrative presentation and emotional legitimacy. Outside the protected zones of power, however, ordinary frustrations continue accumulating. Booth workers remain unpaid. Farmers grow resentful. Youth unemployment deepens. Petty corruption spreads through lower bureaucracy. Citizens experience humiliation inside police stations, municipal offices, revenue departments, and welfare counters. Yet little of this reaches the leadership because the coterie functions like a shock absorber designed to protect rulers from discomfort. Democracies rarely collapse dramatically. They decay quietly through accumulated emotional distance between rulers and citizens.

The most dangerous dimension of coterie politics is not loyalty but competition within loyalty itself. Inner circles constantly engage in

what may be called a "war for ears." Every individual seeks to become the leader's most trusted interpreter of reality. Information becomes weaponized. Rivalries are intentionally cultivated because insecurity keeps the leadership dependent upon intermediaries for internal management. One group undermines another through whispers, selective leaks, suspicion, and emotional manipulation. Governance energy gets consumed by petty conspiracies instead of public administration. Ministers compete for proximity rather than performance. Bureaucrats quickly learn that pleasing the coterie matters more than solving problems. Governments therefore begin appearing stable publicly while internally corroding through distrust, factionalism, and invisible institutional paralysis.

As this one-upmanship intensifies, the ordinary cadre slowly disappears from the leadership's emotional horizon. The unnoticed worker who pastes posters in the rain, manages polling booths without resources, absorbs public anger during opposition years, and keeps the party alive in hostile territories becomes politically invisible. Talented grassroots leaders lacking coterie patronage are denied growth irrespective of commitment or competence. Organisational structures survive ceremonially but weaken structurally. Ironically, the same coterie that monopolizes access during periods of power often becomes the first to disappear after electoral defeat. Their loyalty was never ideological; it was transactional. Once political decline begins, many quietly migrate toward emerging centres of power. The cadre, however, usually remains. This is the enduring strength of democratic politics: ordinary workers sustain parties not because of contracts or privilege, but because of emotional investment, sacrifice, identity, and conviction.

History across parties, regions, and ideologies repeatedly confirms one enduring pattern: talented leaders surrounded by shrinking circles of flatterers slowly lose touch with the people who once carried their flags. The coterie enjoys the comforts of proximity while the organisation silently erodes beneath them. By the time reality enters the room, the electorate has often already moved on. Political empires rarely collapse because citizens suddenly become irrational. They collapse because leaders stop hearing the silent street beyond the applause chamber.

The ultimate political capital of any democracy is not the relative managing the leader's calendar, nor the advisor curating social-media perception. It is the unnoticed booth worker travelling on borrowed money, sleeping under leaking roofs, defending the party in hostile territories, and still believing in the movement after defeat. Political systems survive on those invisible shoulders. The day a leader begins believing only the coterie, defeat has already entered the room. The day the leader begins listening again to ordinary citizens, political recovery becomes extraordinarily difficult to stop.

How a chemical tank disaster struck at the heart of a Washington state mill town

From his living room window, Washington state Sen. Jeff Wilson can see the paper mill where a chemical tank ruptured this week in Longview, killing 11 people. He used to perform work there as the owner of an environmental cleanup company, and when he heard the sirens go past, he called his son, who works on the larger industrial site, to make sure he was safe.

"I personally have been inside that tank and near that tank many times," said Wilson, who has lived in Longview for 56 years. "I can assure you that we all know somebody there."

... The casualties are our friends and neighbors. The tank, which contained more than 500,000 gallons (1.9 million liters) of a mixture used to break down wood for making paper, collapsed Tuesday morning at the Nippon Dynawave Packaging Co. The rupture expelled a flood of caustic chemicals powerful enough to overturn pickup trucks and damage buildings at the site.

The chemical disaster, one of the deadliest U.S. workplace accidents in recent decades, has struck at the heart of a community where generations of families have worked in local mills. Longview itself was founded by a timber baron to support the first mills established there, and over its roughly century-long history, residents' lives have become intertwined with the lumber and paper industries.

Supporting victims and worrying about the future

Amid immediate concern about supporting grieving families, there is also worry about what the accident could mean for the future of the plant: It provides crucial jobs in an industry that once powered the forested region but has dwindled in recent decades. The plant's parent company, Tokyo-based Nippon Paper Group, said in a statement that it was assessing the accident's impact on its financial performance. "Last night at the vigils, people who work in mills told me that they're proud of their jobs and they're proud of their work, and

they don't want to lose it," U.S. Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, whose district includes Longview, told reporters Wednesday. Residents who spoke with The Associated Press similarly highlighted how important those jobs are for the city. "If you're a waitress, a grocery store worker, a teacher, a paraeducator as I was for 30 years – every walk of life here knows somebody and is related to somebody from these mills," Cindy Stiebritz said in the antiques store where she volunteers.

Generations in the mills

Stiebritz said her husband's parents met while working at the lumber company owned by the city's founder, Robert A. Long. "Those mills, that is the backbone of this town," Stiebritz added. "You feel like you've lost part of your family."

Longview's industrial zone lies along the Columbia River and hosts timber, paper and chemical businesses. Many residents in the city of nearly 40,000 can see the facilities or the steam from the boilers from their homes, or smell the sulfuric odor of the pulp and paper industry.

The city's mill history is also imprinted on its downtown, where R. A. Long Square serves as a central landmark and gathering place, including for the vigil held after the disaster. A park around a man-made lake, another project of Long, features a burst of greenery where pedestrians enjoy its walking paths or the nearby tree-lined streets. Authorities said the cause of the tank's collapse is still under investigation. The facility, which dates to 1953 and employs about 1,000 people, makes material for tissues, printing paper, cups, plates, cartons and other goods.

According to fundraisers organized for the victims' families, those who lost their lives include a grandfather who was always willing to help anyone; two brothers, one of whom was the sole provider for his partner and three children; and a husband who left behind two children and a wife with a baby on the way.



8th Pay Commission team to visit J&K, govt departments asked to present demands

Srinagar: A team of the 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC) is visiting J&K from May 31 to June 5, and the UT government departments have been asked to present their demands to it, officials said on Saturday. Officials said that according to a communication issued by the Finance Department (Codes Division), the CPC has scheduled an interaction and presentation session with the J&K government on June 1, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Meeting Hall CR-3, SKICC, Srinagar. The meeting will be led by J&K Chief Secretary and attended by senior officers from various departments. Those invited include Additional Chief Secretaries of Jal Shakti, Power Development, Tourism, Agriculture, Finance, Public Works (R&B), and the Chief Minister's Secretariat. Principal Secretaries of the



Home Department, Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat, and Election Department, along with the Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, Commissioner Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Department, and all Heads of Departments of the Finance Department, have also been directed to participate.

Officials said the visit is aimed at gathering inputs and representations from stakeholders regarding pay structures, service conditions, and other issues to be considered by the 8th Central Pay Commission during its review process. The 8th CPC has been formally constituted by the Centre. While the new pay scales and allowances are scheduled to take effect re-

spectively from January 2026, the commission is currently in the consultation and review phase. Official government approval of the final pay hikes, fitment factor, and salary structure will only occur after the commission submits its recommendations. The Union Cabinet approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 8th CPC, which is headed by retired Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai. The commission is actively holding stakeholder consultations and reviewing feedback submitted by employee unions, defence personnel, and pensioners across various cities. Once the final report is submitted and approved by the Union Cabinet, employees and pensioners can expect to receive their revised pay structures along with arrears dating back to January 1.

YSRCP launches statewide stir over mega DSC 'irregularities'



Vijayawada: YSRCP on Friday launched statewide protests alleging large-scale irregularities in the Mega DSC teacher recruitment process, escalating its political attack on the Chandrababu Naidu government over unemployment and recruitment transparency. Political commentary blog Under the banner of the YSRCP student wing, protests were organised across Andhra Pradesh, with party leaders and cadre submitting memorandums near Dr B R Ambedkar statues demanding either a CBI probe or an inquiry by a sitting High Court judge into the DSC recruitment process. The YSRCP alleged that the recruitment exercise was marred by manipulation, deletion of data and large-scale corruption, particularly in appointments made under the sports quota. Former minister Ambati Rambabu, who participated in protests in Guntur, accused the NDA coalition government of scrapping the DSC process initiated during the previous YSRCP regime and misleading unemployed youth in the name of "Mega DSC." "The government promised a Mega DSC but delivered a deceptive DSC filled with irregularities," Ambati alleged. He accused the government of suppressing transparency by deleting merit lists and selectively sending confidential messages to favoured candidates. Raising serious questions over the sports quota appointments, the YSRCP demanded that the government explain how candidates allegedly lacking any sports background managed to secure teaching posts. Party leaders alleged that more than 400 jobs under the sports quota were sold to individuals linked to ruling alliance leaders. In Vijayawada, former minister Vellampalli Srinivas joined protests and alleged that the recruitment process had turned into a "scam designed to benefit politically connected candidates." Similar protests were organised in Visakhapatnam, Tirupati and several district headquarters. Andhra Pradesh travel At Tirupati, senior YSRCP leader Bhumana Karunakar Reddy led a rally demanding immediate cancellation of the DSC process and a fresh recruitment notification after a judicial inquiry. He said that the party is intensify its campaign in

Special teams deployed for safe capture of tiger

Rajamahendravaram: The Forest Department has intensified monitoring and field operations for the safe capture of a tiger that has been moving through the Papikonda forest landscape and nearby areas in East Godavari district, while the State government has urged people in forest fringe villages to remain alert. According to the Forest Department, the young male tiger, aged around three years and identified as U93603-CIEG, entered AP from the adjoining Telangana tiger landscape in January this year. The big cat was initially captured at Kurmapuram village in Konaseema district on February 6 and shifted to the Animal Rescue Centre in Visakhapatnam for medical examination and observation. A State-level Expert Committee comprising representatives from the



National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Wildlife Institute of India (WII), WWF-India, wildlife biologists, veterinary experts and senior forest officials later recommended the tiger's

release into Papikonda National Park in the Rampachodavaram Division after assessing habitat suitability, prey availability and long-term conservation prospects. The tiger, fitted

with a radio collar for continuous tracking, was released near Kondamodalu in Papikonda National Park on February 14. Forest officials said the tiger has since been under round-the-clock monitoring through satellite radio telemetry, VHF tracking, camera traps, drone surveillance and intensive field patrolling. Monitoring data showed that the tiger has mostly remained in dense forest and hilly terrain and has been largely nocturnal in its movements. Chief Conservator of Forests, Rajahmundry circle, Dr Jyothi Thullimelli, said there had been no untoward incident involving human casualties since the tiger's release. However, occasional cattle kills have been reported in some villages, for which compensation has been disbursed as per government norms.

Concrete jungle turning city into a heat trap

Hyderabad is experiencing an increasingly intense summer, with temperatures frequently reaching 40°C during May and June, causing growing concern among residents, environmental experts, and government authorities. Daily wage workers, traffic police, street vendors, students, and office commuters are among the worst affected as scorching heat disrupts normal life. City & Local Guides Despite public perception that summers are becoming hotter every year, the India Meteorological Department says current temperatures remain scientifically close to long-term historical averages. According to IMD data, Hyderabad's normal summer temperature is around

39.8°C, and recent readings have largely remained within this range. Heat wave alerts are issued only when temperatures rise significantly above normal for consecutive days. However, experts say the discomfort felt by residents is increasing because of the urban heat island effect. Rapid urban expansion with concrete buildings, flyovers, roads, malls, and apartment complexes has intensified heat retention across the city. Concrete and asphalt absorb heat during the day and slowly release it at night, preventing temperatures from cooling after sunset.

Environmentalists warn that shrinking greenery and disappearing water bodies have worsened the situation. Many lakes in

Hyderabad have been polluted or encroached upon, while trees and open spaces have steadily declined due to rapid urbanisation. Rising pollution, greenhouse gas emissions from increasing vehicles, heavy energy consumption, and air conditioners further add heat to the surroundings, making city temperatures several degrees higher than nearby rural areas. Health experts say extreme heat is causing dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heat strokes, while water shortages have intensified as groundwater levels decline. The IMD continues to monitor weather conditions using satellites, Doppler radars, weather balloons, and supercomputers to provide accurate forecasts.

 40°C Hyderabad hits 40°C in May-June	 Urban heat island effect intensifies heat	 Concrete absorbs heat, keeps nights warmer	 Shrinking greenery & disappearing water bodies
 Pollution & emissions add to rising temperatures	 High energy use & ACs increase surrounding heat	 City hotter than nearby rural areas	 Heat causes dehydration, exhaustion, strokes
 Water shortages as groundwater levels decline	 Daily wage workers, police, vendors, students worst affected	 IMD: Temperatures near normal avg (39.8°C)	 IMD uses satellites, radar, balloons & supercomputers
 Heat wave alerts only when temperatures rise significantly above normal		 Stay hydrated, stay safe, beat the heat	

Accredited DNA Testing Services for a Seamless Sponsored Immigration in Australia

Thousands of applicants from India apply for a sponsored visa of Australia to move with their family members already living abroad. However, some of those application requests are rejected due to the uncertainty of the sponsor-applicant's family ties. Such family ties are usually confirmed using the primary visa documents, but in some cases, such documents do not hold that much authenticity, as per the immigration officers. India news analysis As a result, they demand a more absolute proof of family ties, which is a DNA test report. Therefore, DNA testing for immigration in Australia helps many applicants from India to strongly prove their family link with their sponsors. Why Should Applicants Submit a DNA Report Along with Primary Visa Documents? When you apply for a sponsored visa application, the immigration department needs to be certain regarding your family link with your sponsor. And unfortunately, sometimes, the primary visa documents aren't sufficient for the embassy, so they demand a DNA report.

Moreover, for some sponsored visa applications, they may demand a DNA test under a strict chain of custody procedure. This process costs more money and consumes more time, as there are additional for-

malities involved to make the DNA reports embassy-admissible. For this reason, it's always recommended to submit a DNA report along with the visa application to make your visa application more legitimate. In case the visa documents fail to prove the sponsor-applicant's family ties, the DNA report will back it up, resulting in a seamless approval. Understanding the DNA Testing Process The sample collection procedure of the DNA test for Australian immigration is straightforward. It involves only a few easy steps, such as: Family Step 1 - Initially, the sponsor and applicant schedule an appointment at a lab for their DNA collection.

Step 2 - A lab expert collects the DNA samples using a soft cotton swab. The cotton swab is gently rubbed inside the cheek walls for a few seconds to collect the DNA cells. Step 3 - Obtained samples are then securely sealed to prevent tampering & contamination and sent to a lab for further processing. Step 4 - The experts in the lab analyze and compare the DNA samples to find the potential genetic match between the sponsor and applicant. Step 5 - After finishing the DNA examination, a final report is prepared, which is confidentially sent to the tested party's address. The Chain of Custody Procedure in Immigration DNA Tests In spe-

cial cases, the embassies may demand a DNA test under a strict chain of custody procedure. During this process, the whole sample collection procedure is supervised by an embassy official. Before the testing begins, the official verifies the identities of everyone involved in the test using their government IDs. It's to ensure that the right parties are present in the test.

The collected DNA samples are then securely sealed in a tamper-proof package and sent to the lab for further processing. Moreover, the final report of a chain of custody DNA test is sent directly to the embassy instead of the tested individuals. It's to protect the privacy and integrity of the final report for its official admissibility. Types of Family Links Verified in Immigration DNA Tests The following family ties are confirmed using DNA tests: Paternity - It verifies the biological link between a father and a child. Maternity - The genetic link between a mother and a child is confirmed using a maternity test. Siblingship - When a sibling sponsors the visa of another sibling, a siblingship test confirms their biological link. Grandparentage - The family ties of a grandparent with their grandchildren are sometimes confirmed via DNA tests during sponsored immigration.

Avuncular - This test confirms the family link between an uncle/aunt and their niece or nephew in a family reunification process. Why Choose DDC Laboratories India for Immigration DNA Tests? For a DNA test report to be admissible in Australian embassies, the lab needs to have accreditation from NATA. DDC Laboratories India holds accreditation from NATA, making their DNA test reports officially admissible in Australian embassies. It makes them an ideal lab for DNA testing for Australian immigration. Besides, the lab also holds accreditations from MOJ, IRCC, and AABB, making their DNA reports admissible in international embassies like the US, the UK, Canada, and other countries. Additionally, DDC Laboratories India also provides DNA testing services for peace of mind, cell line authentication, non-invasive prenatal paternity test, etc. India news analysis With over 250 DNA sample collection centers worldwide, it's easier for you to find one of their facilities near your location for your convenience. Frequently Asked Questions Q1. How to book a DNA test for an Australian visa application online? Call the experts at DDC Laboratories India and schedule an appointment for your DNA sample col-

lection. The experts will also answer your queries related to immigration DNA testing services. Q2. Is a DNA test required for Australian immigration? When the primary visa documents fail to prove the sponsor-applicant's family ties, the embassy may request a DNA test to further validate the relationship. Q3. What documents are needed for DNA testing for Australian immigration in India? A government-issued ID, a passport, recent photographs, and a consent form are required for DNA tests for Australian immigration. Q4. How long does the DNA testing process take for Australian immigration cases? Family A DNA test for Australian immigration takes only a few minutes, as there's only a cheek swab involved. A lab expert gently rubs the swab inside the mouth. Q5. What's the typical turnaround time for immigration DNA test results? The typical turnaround time for an immigration DNA test report is around 5-10 business days. Q6. What's the cost of a DNA test for sponsored immigration? The cost of an immigration DNA test is around 14,000 INR. However, this cost may vary depending on factors such as the number of people involved in the test or whether the chain of custody procedure is required.

Tiger Roaming Near Rampachodavaram Causes Panic



The movement of a tiger in the Rampachodavaram Agency area has sparked widespread concern. On 27th of this month, a tiger attacked and killed nine cattle in Rajavommangi Mandal, causing panic among local villagers. Forest Department officials have identified the tiger roaming near Vemulova in Gangavaram Mandal. Following reports of cattle attacks, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan instructed authorities to capture the animal.

Special teams have been deployed to the area, and trackers successfully located the tiger near Vemulova. Authorities have issued alerts to residents of nearby villages. Under the leadership of Chief Conservator of Forests Dr. Jyothi, efforts are underway to capture the animal. Officials confirmed that the tiger, released into Papikonda Wildlife Sanctuary on 14th February, has returned and is now roaming within the Polavaram

Hyderabad: Minister for Housing, Revenue, and Information and Public Relations Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that the Telangana government is moving forward with the objective of constructing safe and comfortable homes tailored to future needs for poor families in urban areas. He stated that the proposed Urban Indiramma housing scheme is being developed in line with the vision of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to ensure dignified living conditions for the urban poor without affecting their livelihoods. The Minister made these remarks while reviewing prototype designs for Urban Indiramma houses at a meeting held on Friday, following the State Cabinet's approval

Rail zone must deliver connectivity leap: AP Chambers

Vijayawada: The Andhra Pradesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation (AP Chambers) urged the newly formed South Coast Railway Zone to prioritise major improvements in rail connectivity, passenger services and freight infrastructure across the State. In a representation submitted to South Coast Railway Zone general manager Sandip Mathur, AP Chambers president Potluri Bhaskara Rao said the commencement of zone operations from June 1, 2026, marks a historic milestone for Andhra Pradesh and fulfils a key assurance under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. India news analysis The Chambers noted that despite Vijayawada and

Visakhapatnam railway divisions being among the highest revenue-generating divisions in Indian Railways, the State continues to face inadequate connectivity and infrastructure support. It sought enhanced connectivity and infrastructure upgrades for Guntur and Guntakal divisions as well. AP Chambers requested additional originating trains from Vijayawada to major cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Cochin, Ahmedabad and Pune to meet growing passenger demand. It also urged expansion of Vande Bharat services with early morning connectivity to Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad, Chennai and Tirupati, besides early intro-



duction of the proposed Vijayawada-Bengaluru Vande Bharat service. The Chambers further sought development of Dedicated Freight Corridors, strengthening of freight infrastruc-

ture and modernisation of key railway stations across the State to support industrial growth, ports, tourism and passenger convenience.

Ponguleti calls for long-term planning in urban housing designs



for the construction of 1 lakh houses in the first phase under the CURE framework across 24 constituencies. City & Local Guides During the review,

Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy examined multiple housing designs and suggested modifications, emphasizing the need for a long-term planning approach. He said housing construction should be planned with a vision of 40 to 50 years, incorporating essential infrastructure such as drainage systems, parking facilities, and commercial spaces, along with consid-

eration of residents' lifestyles. The Minister also directed officials to explore the feasibility of constructing multi-storey buildings of up to 10 floors where suitable, based on local conditions. He suggested that due importance be given to Vastu principles while designing spaces such as halls, bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms. He further stressed that housing designs should ensure dignity, comfort, and happiness for beneficiaries, while also including provisions for

parking and small commercial shops. Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy instructed officials to treat each constituency as a separate unit and ensure that houses are constructed and allotted within the same locality to avoid displacement from livelihoods. He directed officials to finalize the designs after discussions with the Chief Minister and prepare a daily action plan to ensure that construction works begin on a priority basis.

Sundeep Kishen & Jason Sanjay's 'Sigma' locks July 31 release

Lyca Productions' ambitious project Sigma, starring Sundeep Kishen in the lead role and marking the directorial debut of Jason Sanjay, is officially gearing up for a grand worldwide theatrical release on July 31. Ever since the project was announced, the film has remained one of the most discussed ventures in Tamil cinema, creating strong curiosity among audiences and trade circles alike. The excitement surrounding Sigma increased significantly after the teaser crossed more than 20 million views online, further boosting expectations for the film. Backed by producer Subaskaran



under the Lyca Productions banner, the movie is being mounted on a lavish scale with high production values and a technically

strong team. Announcing the release date, G.K.M. Tamil Kumaran, Head of Lyca Productions, expressed confidence in the project and said the film promises a refreshing cinematic experience. He praised debut director Jason Sanjay for handling the film with clarity, conviction, and dedication while appreciating the efforts of the cast and crew in bringing the vision to life. Director Jason Sanjay also shared his excitement, describing Sigma as a special and enriching journey. He thanked Lyca Productions and producer Subaskaran for trusting his vision and supporting

him throughout the filmmaking process. He further stated that the team is eager to present the film. Apart from Sundeep Kishen, the film features Faria Abdullah, Raju Sundaram, Sampath Raj, Shiv Pandit, Anbu Thasan, and Yog Japee in key roles. Music for the film is composed by Thaman S, while cinematography is handled by Krishnan Vasant and editing by Praveen KL. Hariharasuthan is overseeing the VFX work. Meanwhile, Saregama has acquired the audio rights, and Netflix has bagged the digital streaming rights for the film.

Asha Parekh reveals Rajesh Khanna, Vinod Khanna would sneak out from 'Aan Milo Sajna' sets to meet their GFs

Mumbai: In the upcoming episode of the singing reality show 'Indian Idol', veteran star Asha Parekh shared a hilarious behind-the-scenes incident from her shooting days with superstar Rajesh Khanna and Vinod Khanna. India news analysis Recalling the memory, she said, "Hum log shooting kar rahe the subah 7 se 2 baje tak 'Kati Patang' ke liye, 2 se 10 baje tak 'Aan Milo Sajna' ke liye. Toh yeh hota tha ki 8 bajne ke baad, usmein Vinod Khanna ji bhi the. Toh un dino mein toh mobile phones toh the nahi, landline the. Dekhu kya ho raha hai, ek jaayega bahar, matlab Rajesh Khanna bahar gaya, ab phir woh wapasa aaya, phir Vinod Khanna ja raha hai." (We were shooting from 7 in the morning till 2 PM for Kati Patang, and from 2 PM till 10 PM for Aan Milo Sajna. What used to happen was that after 8 PM

and Vinod Khanna ji was also there in those days there were no mobile phones, only landlines. So one person would step outside to check what was happening; first Rajesh Khanna would go out, then he would return, and then Vinod Khanna would go out)

She added, "Ab main baithi hui beech mein, yeh bhaiya shot khatam ho. Lekin yeh bichare do karte kya? Yeh dono ki girlfriends jo thi, woh phone karke unki aisi taisi kar rahi thi. 8 baje ke baad at least milna hona chahiye na? 10 baje packup hoga, kab ghar jayenge? Toh it was a very funny sight, yeh jab aa jaaye dono, shot ho jaaye, meri toh chhutti ho jaaye." (Meanwhile, I would be sitting there thinking, 'Brother, let this shot get over!' But what could those poor guys do? Their girlfriends would call and really give them an



earful on the phone. After 8 PM, at least they were expected to meet them, right? Pack-up would happen at 10 PM, so when would they even get home? So it was a very funny sight I would just wait for both of them to come back, the shot to get done, and for me to finally get relieved and leave for the day) Talking

about 'Aan Milo Sajna', the movie released on December 24, 1970. The movie was directed by Mukul Dutt and produced by Jagdish Kumar, and starred Rajesh Khanna, Asha Parekh and Vinod Khanna in the lead roles, with supporting performances by Nirupa Roy, Rajendra Nath and Aruna Irani.

Tamil superstar Ajith's mother Mohini passes away; CM Vijay conveys condolences

Mohini Mani, mother of acclaimed Tamil actor Ajith Kumar, passed away in Chennai on Saturday due to age-related ailments at 85. Her demise has triggered an outpouring of grief from political leaders, film personalities, and fans across Tamil Nadu. Political commentary blog Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay conveyed his condolences, expressing solidarity with Ajith Kumar, his family, and loved ones during this period of grief. He acknowledged the profound loss suffered by the actor and paid tribute to Mohini's memory. According to family sources, Mohini had been undergoing treatment for age-related health complications at a private hospital in Chennai. She breathed her last on Saturday morning. The last rites are expected to be held at Ajith Kumar's residence in Palavakkam, Chennai. Ajith



Kumar, who is currently in Dubai, is expected to return to Chennai immediately to participate in the funeral proceedings and be with his family during the difficult time.

The actor's family had already endured a major loss in 2023 when Ajith's father, P. Subramani, passed away at the age of 84. Widely regarded as one of Tamil cinema's most cel-

ebrated stars, Ajith Kumar has built a remarkable career without any film industry background. Over the years, he has earned a massive fan following through his performances in numerous blockbuster films. In recent years, however, he has increasingly focussed on his passion for professional car racing, leading to discussions among fans about the

future of his acting career. India news analysis Tamil Nadu political leaders were among the first to offer condolences. DMK President M.K. Stalin expressed deep sorrow over Mohini's passing. In a message posted on social media, Stalin described Ajith Kumar as his "dear brother" and said he was heartbroken by the loss. He noted that no words could adequately console Ajith, who had lost the mother who nurtured him and took pride in witnessing his achievements. Several members of the Tamil film industry, including actors, directors, producers, and technicians, have also extended their sympathies to Ajith Kumar and his family. Fans have been sharing messages of support and remembrance on social media, paying tribute to the woman who stood behind one of Tamil cinema's most beloved stars.

Jennifer Lopez has 'flirty energy' with co-star Brett Goldstein



Los Angeles: Hollywood star Jennifer Lopez and her "Office Romance" co-star Brett Goldstein had a "flirty energy" while working together on Netflix's upcoming raunchy rom-com film. The 56-year-old actress shares a kiss with Goldstein, 45, in Netflix's film Office Romance, which sees CEO Jackie Cruz falling in love with her employee, Daniel Blanchflower, and the pair have been getting closer off-screen too, reports femalefirst.co.uk. A source told people.com: "Her flirty energy with Brett is genuine. She really likes him." However, Lopez is said to be happy to stay single for now, following her divorce from Ben Affleck, reports femalefirst.co.uk. The insider added: "Jennifer is in a great place on her own right now though and doesn't need a relationship to feel happy. She is enjoying her life as it is. She's busy with work, family and the people closest to her. "She had a great time filming. She's excited for people to see the movie." The actress-singer, who shares twins Max Muñoz and Emme Maribel Muñoz, 18, with ex-husband Marc Anthony, was married to Ben Affleck from August 2022 to August 2024. Their divorce became final in 2025. Meanwhile, Lopez recently said that although she has had many passionate smooches on the big screen, she panics when filming kissing scenes. She told People.com: "I've been doing this a long time. I want to say that I was fine, but it's always a thing. It's like, 'OK, I have to kiss this person that I don't know, and I'm just getting to know you.' You get a little nervous, that's all." However, Lopez said she and her Office Romance co-star Goldstein had "great chemistry" from the second they met. She added: "I expected more of a rough guy, but you get this kind, gentle but also very smart person that is so charming. That was a surprise, I think. I was a huge fan of his from him doing Ted Lasso's Roy Kent. I thought he was going to be more like the character, but he was so soft-spoken and sweet and totally different." In October 2025, Lopez declared Goldstein is the "best kisser" she's ever worked with

'Their finest quality is the ability to adapt': Vikram Solanki hails Gill-Sudharsan partnership

Gujarat Titans director of cricket Vikram Solanki lavished praise on Shubman Gill and B Sai Sudharsan after the pair's match-winning opening stand powered the franchise into the IPL 2026 final, describing their adaptability and relentless hunger for runs as the foundation of one of the most successful partnerships in the tournament. Gill smashed a magnificent 104 off 53 balls while Sudharsan contributed 58 off 32 deliveries as Gujarat chased down Rajasthan Royals' imposing total of 214/6 with eight balls to spare in Qualifier 2 at the PCA New International Cricket Stadium. The duo added 167 runs for the opening wicket, putting Gujarat firmly on course for a seven-wicket victory and a place in Sunday's title clash against defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Ahmedabad. Speaking after the win, Solanki said the partnership's success was the result of



years of hard work and a willingness to adapt to different match situations.

"I thought all of their qualities were on display today. And it's been a good number of years that that partnership has been

flourishing. It is on the back of a lot of hard work. I can only imagine all of the work that Shubman has put in throughout his career to get to where he is as far as his batting is concerned. He's an exceptional young man," he told reporters in the post-match

press conference. "And sometimes you have to realise he's still a young man. And to be playing the cricket that he is, to be batting the way he is, is just phenomenal," he added. Gill's century, his fifth in the IPL, came at a strike rate of over 196 and effectively neutralised Rajasthan's strong total that had been built around Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's brilliant 96 and a late assault from Donovan Ferreira.

Solanki also highlighted Sudharsan's role in the partnership, saying the left-hander's classical batting style should not be mistaken for a lack of attacking intent. "Sai is no less so. He might be a little younger in his journey, but you can see that he takes a fine example from Shubman and understands that actually his skills are what you and I might view as batsmanship, the sort of traditional form of batting," he said. "But there is

no doubt in my mind that if a situation requires them to up the run rate and the wicket actually suits them playing that way, then they can adapt," he added. According to Solanki, the pair's versatility across conditions and opposition attacks is what separates them from many other opening combinations. "I think that's their finest quality, their ability to adapt, given any sort of situation, given any wicket, given any opposition. That along with the fact that they have an immense appetite for run-scoring. Good habits to have." With Gill and Sudharsan once again laying the platform in a pressure knockout game, the Gujarat Titans will now head to Ahmedabad hoping their prolific opening pair can deliver one more decisive performance when they face the Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL 2026 final on Sunday.

'Belgium are capable of achieving great things,' says coach Garcia

Brussels: Belgium football head coach Rudi Garcia has shown firm belief in his side to achieve great things as they gear up for their fourth consecutive FIFA World Cup appearance. Belgium are placed in Group G with Egypt, Iran and New Zealand, and the 62-year-old coach has set a clear goal of coming out on top in the group stage and securing a favourable draw for the next round. "We need to distinguish between our objective and our ambition. Our priority is to get through the group stage. Let's come out on top so that we earn a more favourable draw and, ideally, stay put [in Seattle for the Round of 32]. That will be the objective!" Garcia told FIFA in an interview. Belgium suffered a shocking group-stage exit at the Qatar 2022 World Cup but are in a much better place in the ongoing tournament, as their opponents are less experienced than they are. With 14 World Cup



campaigns already under their belt, they possess vastly greater pedigree on the global stage than the rest of the group combined, eclipsing Egypt's three, Iran's six and New Zealand's two appearances to date.

Although the odds appear to be in their favour, Garcia is taking nothing for granted. "We have a huge amount of respect for the other three sides in our group," he stressed. "This is what the World Cup is

all about. We know Egypt well; they're one of the best teams in Africa. I know all about Mo Salah as I coached him at Roma. We're also up against a team from Oceania and one from Asia. We're obviously less familiar with them as we don't see them play as often, but we're looking forward to finding out what the Iranian and New Zealand teams are made of." "Let's start by respecting our group-stage opponents. Let's beat them, finish top of the

group, and then we'll see how far we can go," he added. Garcia may be ambitious, but he is certainly under no illusions about the task ahead, well aware that Belgium – sitting ninth in the FIFA World Ranking ahead of their final warm-up matches – have lost some of their lustre since their legendary run in 2018. "For six years – maybe longer – Belgium topped the FIFA rankings. The team dubbed the 'golden generation' were tipped as the frontrunners to win at both Russia 2018 and Qatar 2022, but ultimately fell short on both occasions. The picture is very different these days. We'll just be the underdogs, but I don't mind that – in fact, I prefer it," he said. Nevertheless, the Red Devils' coach concluded with a defiant message: "We should fear nobody, that's for sure. I've already told the players: we have to believe we can go toe-to-toe with any team."

Indian Women's Hockey Team lose 2-3 in a tight fourth game to draw the friendly series against Australia in Perth

Perth: The Indian Women's Hockey Team concluded their four-match friendly series against Australia with a close 2-3 defeat in the fourth and last game in Perth on Saturday, which meant that the series ended in a 2-2 draw. India came out strongly in the contest, taking a 1-0 lead in just the second minute when Navneet Kaur converted a penalty corner to put early pressure on Australia. In the second quarter, Deepika Soreng (23') doubled India's lead with a neat conversion. It remained 2-0 at half-time. Australia fought back in the third quarter, pulling level through Abby Wilson (42') and Olivia Downes (44') in quick succession. A late strike from Courtney Schonell (58') gave the hosts a narrow 3-2 win in the dying minutes. Despite the result in the final game, India can take plenty of positives from the tour. Having bounced back from an opening-game defeat to win the next two matches, the team demonstrated resilience, tactical discipline and a potent attacking threat throughout the series – continuing to build ahead of the upcoming season that begins with the FIH Nations Cup in New Zealand. Earlier women's team registered an impressive 2-0 victory over Australia in the third match of the friendly. With this win, India now lead the four-match series 2-1 after bouncing back from a defeat in the opening game with a 4-2 shootout victory in the second match. The third match between the two sides witnessed a disciplined defensive display from both the teams as the first two quarters saw no goals, and it remained 0-0 at half-time. India eventually found the breakthrough in the third quarter when Sonam (36') scored a field goal to put the visitors ahead.

'To reach a final with a hundred...it was a chanceless, classic innings': Kumble on Gill's 'captain's knock'

New Delhi: Former India captain Anil Kumble hailed Shubman Gill's match-winning century in Qualifier 2 as a perfect example of leadership under pressure, describing the Gujarat Titans skipper's unbeaten knock and authority at the crease as the defining factors behind his side's march into the IPL 2026 final. India news analysis Gill produced a sublime 104 off 53 deliveries to lead Gujarat Titans to a commanding seven-wicket victory over Rajasthan Royals, successfully chasing down 215 and securing a title clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. The innings, his fifth IPL century, came at a crucial juncture after Gujarat's disappointing defeat to



RCB in Qualifier 1. Reflecting on the knock, Kumble said Gill's intent was evident from the outset as he took control of the chase and never allowed Rajasthan's bowlers to settle.

"It was clinical. The way he approached his batting, you could see that he was really switched on and wanted to get to that final. He would obviously have been disappointed with the performance against RCB in Qualifier 1," Kumble told JioStar. The former India head coach pointed to Gujarat's aggressive

mindset during the powerplay, where Gill and opening partner Sai Sudharsan laid the foundation for the record chase with a 167-run opening stand. He said, "But the way he batted, he just took the bowlers on. As Sai Sudharsan mentioned, they wanted to go hard in the first over, make a statement, and then continue from there." Gill's innings stood out not only for its strokeplay against pace but also for the manner in which he handled Rajasthan's spin options. Kumble particularly highlighted the Gujarat captain's footwork against Ravindra Jadeja, one of the tournament's most experienced spinners. "The way Shubman batted, not just

against the fast bowlers but even against spin, was outstanding. He used his feet brilliantly against Ravindra Jadeja," the former spinner stated. For Kumble, the hallmark of the innings was the complete absence of risk or fortune. Gill remained in total control throughout the chase, finding boundaries at regular intervals while ensuring the required rate never became a concern. "It was a chanceless, classic innings, a typical Shubman innings. To reach a final with a hundred, it was truly a captain's knock," he concluded. GT, the 2022 champions, will now face defending champions RCB as both teams eye a second IPL trophy.