

YSRCP Govt Left Rs 10 Lakh Crore Debt: AP CM

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday said the TDP-led NDA government has inherited debts worth Rs 10 lakh crore from the previous YSRCP regime. Addressing the seventh collectors conference at the Secretariat, the chief minister alleged that the previous government had diverted Rs 10,000 crore funds away from 94 Central schemes. "From the previous rulers, the government has received Rs 9.74 lakh crore in debts. The previous government had diverted Rs 10,000 crore from 94 Central schemes," said Naidu. According to the CM, there used to be heavy leakage of funds in welfare schemes, but noted that the direct benefit transfer (DBT) method has plugged



it by directly depositing the funds into the beneficiaries' accounts. Also Read - Kolkata Foundation Gives Rs 2.5 Cr To TTD's SV Prana danam Trust Accusing the previous YSRCP government of leaving potholed roads, the CM noted that the NDA government is now ruling in such a way that living standards are improved, along with accelerating development. Reflecting on the business reformer award he received recently, Naidu said it will

Two years on, Telangana's 10 pharma villages remain on paper

Hyderabad: More than two-and-a-half years after scrapping the proposed Pharma City project, the Congress government's plan to establish 10 pharma villages across Telangana has made little progress. The government had announced in February 2024 that the Pharma City project was being dropped. However, during court proceedings, it maintained that the project was still under consideration under a new name — Green Pharma City. At the same time, Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu had announced plans to develop 10 pharma villages as part of a decentralised growth model. The proposed clusters, spread



across 1,000 to 2,000 acres each, were initially planned in Vikarabad, Medak and Nalgonda districts. However, there has been no significant movement on the proposal so far. The delay comes amid growing resistance from farmers and landowners against land acquisition for industrial parks, radial roads and other government projects. Opposition to the proposed pharma initiatives has also intensified in several areas. Industry bodies too had

expressed concerns over the government's decentralised pharma village model. They argued that obtaining pollution control and environmental clearances for multiple smaller clusters would be more complicated than for a single integrated Pharma City project. Industry experts had pointed out that a unified Pharma City would make it easier for companies to establish units and begin operations. Meanwhile, the Anti Pharma City Committee, comprising farmers and representatives of voluntary organisations, has been staging protests at different locations against the proposed pharma developments. The government has also proposed integrated green-field pharma clusters and industrial parks along the Outer Ring Road and Regional Ring Road corridors. For the current financial year, the Industries and Commerce Department allocated Rs 50 crore towards land acquisition for the first phase of these proposed industrial parks. However, with land prices rising and farmers demanding higher compensation, the allocation is being seen as inadequate and raising questions over the government's seriousness in pursuing the pharma village plan.

SVSN Varma Removed as Pithapuram TDP In-Charge

Amaravati: The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) high command has removed SVSN Varma from the post of party in-charge for the Pithapuram Assembly constituency amid the ongoing controversies in the segment. According to party sources, the Telugu Desam Party leadership has decided to constitute a special committee at the earliest to manage and supervise party affairs in the constituency. The party



has reportedly begun internal consultations in this regard. Reports suggested that this move comes in the backdrop of a series of political developments and internal issues in Pithapuram.

KCR's strategic patience and preference for political identity over electoral gains

Hyderabad: Before the 2023 Telangana Assembly elections, many within political circles believed BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao was fighting merely to retain power. But developments since then increasingly suggest that Chandrashekar Rao might have been thinking beyond a single election cycle. At a time when regional parties across India were aligning with national forces for immediate electoral gains, Chandrashekar Rao operated with a different assessment of India's changing political landscape. His political calculations before the Telangana polls not only

indicated confidence in his governance model, but also a deeper concern about the long-term survival of regional parties. That mindset perhaps explains several decisions that, at the time, puzzled leaders even within his own party. The BRS chief consciously avoided entering into tactical alliances with both the Congress and the BJP despite growing political polarisation. Significantly, he also resisted excessive dependence on high-profile poll strategies and political consultants who became influential in many State elections. Except for a brief phase, the BRS relied primarily on its own



organisational structure, cadre network and Telangana model of welfare and development. Critics interpreted this as over-confidence and possible political isolation. But as BRS leaders repeatedly said, Chandrashekar Rao was not inclined for short-term gains, and instead, chose the party's

long-term organisational autonomy and political identity. Developments across India have increasingly given weight to that argument. Several regional parties that aligned closely with national parties eventually faced erosion of political identity and independent space. Parties allied with the BJP often struggled, with the Shiromani Akali Dal suffering a steep decline in Punjab and the Shiv Sena eventually splitting after years of alliance politics. Janata Dal (United), which repeatedly shifted alliances, failed to maintain ideological consistency and political relevance. Critics argued that the Congress proved no different in dealing with allies. Parties like Samajwadi Party, RJD, All India Trinamool Congress and DMK joined forces with the Congress to form an anti-BJP alliance and avoid a vote split. Ironically, all these regional parties suffered political setbacks due to this alliance and yet, the Congress was only concerned about itself. In the latest instance, the Congress did not hesitate to ditch its pre-poll alliance with DMK and offbeat consultancy I-PAC recently.

All Government Services to be Made Online by December:

Amaravati: Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu advised the district collectors to come out with innovative ideas by adopting technology to achieve highest public satisfaction level in delivery of government services including welfare programmes. He asked them to utilise social media platform to inform people about the achievements. He dedicated his recent Business Reformer of the year award to entire team of officials from state level to village level by stating it as a collective achievement of AP team. Also Read - Kolkata Foundation Gives Rs 2.5 Cr To TTD's SV Pranadanam Trust Addressing the seventh Collectors conference at Secretariat today, the Chief Minister made it clear that top priority should be given for public satisfaction and gave a mandate to officials to achieve more than 90 per cent public satisfaction in all services. He asked the district collectors of all 28 districts including two newly formed districts, to make every district as an innovation hub to empower people and to achieve development and in implementation of welfare schemes. Also Read - Kurnool: Woman Slaps Stalker With Slipper, Villagers Parade Him With Shaved Head The Chief Minister stated that by introducing 28 best policies, the coalition



government is able to win the trust at national and international level and as a result investments pouring in. He said through 17 SIPB meetings approved Rs.23 lakh crore investments with employment potential to 24 lakh people in the past 23 months. He said the state is marching forward towards green energy, green hydrogen, green ammonia production and able to make Visakhapatnam as Technology hub with the arrival of Google data centre. In addition Amaravati is emerging as Quantum vgment services should be made available online by December. He stressed the need for even agriculture practices. The Chief Minister said officials should put an end to moving of files and initiate steps to focus on results to win the public appreciation over speedy delivery of government services. Later the Chief Minister explained on the achievements of coalition government for the past 23 months including more than hundred schemes and super six programme.

BRS condemns BJP workers' attacks on MLAs' Offices in Karimnagar

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) strongly condemned the attack by BJP workers on the camp office of Karimnagar MLA Gangula Kamalakar and on the vehicle of MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy, on Thursday. The party leadership charged union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar with instigating violence and damaging the democratic atmosphere in Karimnagar. BRS working president KT Rama Rao termed the attack despicable and stated that BJP activists behaved like rowdies and entered the MLA's camp office, vandalised vehicles and damaged property in broad daylight. He said police personnel remained passive spectators, calling it shameful. He stated that the union Minister had become a B-team for Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and indulging in intimidation and theatrics to shield the latter's failure.



Instead of answering to issued raised by BRS leaders, he said Bandi Sanjay encouraged his party cadre to attack the opposition leaders. "Despite being a union Minister responsible for internal security, he acted in utter disregard to his position and the democracy," he added. BRS deputy leader T Harish Rao also condemned the incident and questioned whether law and order still existed in the State if even elected representatives' offices were not safe. He demanded immediate action against those involved and warned that continued attacks could force people to take to the streets to safeguard democracy. Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichand

Harish Rao targets Congress govt over delay in paddy procurement

Hyderabad: BRS deputy floor leader T Harish Rao flayed the State government for its utter negligence in paddy procurement and failing to protect distressed farmers waiting at procurement centres across Telangana. He said Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was showing no compassion towards distressed farmers. During his visit to the paddy procurement centre at Choutuppal Agricultural Market in Yadadri Bhongir district on Thursday, Harish Rao interacted with farmers who alleged that their produce had not been purchased even after several weeks and officials were deducting large quantities of paddy in the name of husk and moisture quality checks. Inspecting heaps of paddy damaged by unseasonal rains, Harish Rao said farmers were being forced to wait for days under extreme summer conditions. Referring to recent deaths of farmers



near procurement centres, he said the government's incompetence had pushed cultivators into severe distress. He reminded that during the previous BRS regime, such conditions had never existed in procurement centres. He said farmers under the present Congress government were facing problems at every stage, including Rythu Bandhu assistance, seed and fertiliser supply, irrigation, electricity and sale of produce. Agriculture Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy, the senior BRS leader challenged the Minister to step out of air-conditioned rooms and witness the ground reality at procurement centres. He said a woman farmer at the market brought her paddy 24 days ago and was still awaiting for the weighing process despite moisture clearance being completed eight days ago. Harish Rao said the officials were taking nearly four weeks, leading to delay in procurement process at every stage, including moisture testing, supply of gunny bags, weighing, transportation and unloading on reaching rice unseasonal rains and procurement delays in different districts, Harish Rao demanded that the government immediately send sufficient lorries and gunny bags to market yards and issue strict directions to millers to speed up procurement operations on a war footing.

HC Hears PIL on WW-II Memorial Relocation Near Parade Ground

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court declined to intervene in a public interest litigation alleging proposed demolition of a World War II memorial near Parade Ground in Secunderabad for an elevated corridor project. The court recorded submissions of the state that the memorial was not being demolished and that proposals were under consideration to relocate it, with discussions involving HMDA, the Cantonment Board and defence authorities. The state counsel assured that the structure would not be disturbed until a final decision is taken. Also Read - Part Time Job Fraud Tops Cyberabad Crime in 2025 The bench directed petitioner J. Rama Krishna to submit a detailed representation to the concerned authorities regarding his grievance. The petition, filed as a PIL, was at the scrutiny stage following registry objections. The court observed that the



petitioner should first approach the authorities before seeking judicial intervention. Supreme Court Rejects 600-Acre Private Land Claim; Paves Way for Reserve Forest in Telangana Also Read - Gadkari Lauds Govt's Proactive Measures in Road Safety, Public Welfare Hyderabad: The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a long-pending civil appeal by private parties claiming ownership over about 600 acres of land in Bhadradi Kothagudem district, proposed to be included in a reserve forest. The land forms part of 787 acres in Survey No. 81 of Kalvanagaram village, which

was notified for inclusion as reserve forest through a Gazette notification dated February 6, 1950 under Section 7(1) of the Hyderabad Forest Act. Also Read - Three Drown in Siddipet Stream While Bathing The appellants, led by Vadiyala Prabhakar Rao, claimed that their predecessors had been granted pattas by the Nizam of Hyderabad between 1931 and 1932. They relied on revenue records, including Faisal Patti, Vasool Baqi and pahanies, to support their claim. The matter had been litigated before revenue authorities, the High Court and subsequently the Supreme

Court. A Bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and S.V.N. Bhatti upheld the findings of the Telangana High Court Division Bench and the earlier order of the joint collector, Khammam, rejecting the claims. Also Read - Husband Stabs Wife to Death on Busy Road in Kodad The court noted that the appellants failed to produce original pattas or primary title documents. It also recorded that the claimants were not in physical possession of the land for several decades and that the property remained uncultivated with forest growth. The Bench further observed that the claimants did not establish the chain of title from the original pattadars to the present appellants. Revenue records for 1954-55 described the land as deserted and covered with thick forest. The court dismissed the appeal, affirming the rejection of the private claims.

BJP workers attack Karimnagar MLA camp office over remarks against Bandi Sanjay Kumar

Karimnagar: Tension mounted in the town after the BJP workers attacked and ransacked the office of Karimnagar MLA Gangula Kama lakar, in protest against what they called as derogatory remarks of BRS legislator Padi Kaushik Reddy against the union Minister of State for Home, Bandi Sanjay on Thursday. The BJP workers armed with stones and sticks raided the MLA office and damaged a car belonging to Kaushik Reddy, which was parked on the premises. Kaushik Reddy was present inside the office when the BJP launched the assault. Earlier, speaking to reporters in a press conference at the camp office, Kaushik Reddy made some comments about the hair colour of the union Minister, which were considered as derogatory by the BJP workers. Recalling the statement of Sanjay Kumar that he had met his election



costs by selling his wife's jewellery, Kaushik Reddy wondered how the union Minister had amassed wealth and wondered whether it was sponsored by the Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. Kaushik Reddy also made it clear that there was no question of tolerating any derogatory comments made against the BRS working president KT Rama Rao.

On the question of using drugs, the legislator assured to bring the BRS leader for a drug test and challenged that the union minister should also be ready for the test. Enraged over Kaushik Reddy's comments, the BJP workers attacked the camp office. They demanded that the MLA take back his comments and apologize to the union minister.

After coming to know about the the BJP plans to attack the MLA camp office, police rushed to the spot and tried to prevent them but in vain. As they refused to go back, police lathicharged the agitating workers. A few of BJP workers were injured in the incident. A huge police force was deployed at Karimnagar MLA camp office to any untoward incidents.

AP Dismisses 51 Senior Doctors Who Kept Off Work For Long

Vijayawada: As many as 51 doctors at various government medical colleges have been dismissed from service as they were not reporting for work for long durations. Health minister Satya Kumar Yadav announced this here on Wednesday. He said these included eight associate professors, 41 assistant professors and two tutors. Some of them did not report for work for nearly six years. They were terminated from the service under the relevant provisions of AP Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964. Those who remain absent for more than a year can be dismissed on the assumption that they are alternatively engaged elsewhere. Also Read - Nara Lokesh Hints at Royal Enfield's Entry into AP The minister said they had been served show cause notices and given adequate time to respond but they didn't. He



warned of stern action against those who failed to do their duties and remained absent without permission for a long period. The teaching faculty members in the medical colleges were recruited through the regular process by issuing as to finally claim notifications but some of them were remaining absent as they were pre-occupied with their own individual initiatives such as private practice. This created a situation of a lack of availability of doctors in govern-

ment hospitals. Also Read - Cops Claim Fatal Fall Of Woman From First Floor Of Krosuru Police Station Senior doctors get higher pay in private hospitals, but they avoid quitting government service so as to finally claim benefits and pension for life. Successive governments failed to take action, health department sources said. Out of the terminated, but they avoid quitting government service so as to finally claim benefits and pension for life.

doctors, eight were associate professors while a majority were assistant professors attached to the medical colleges located in Kadapa, Anantapur, Ongole, Tirupati, Vijayawada, Kakinada, Vi sakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Raja mahendravaram, Eluru, Nellore and Markapuram. The sources said three more professors were not attending to duty for a long time and action would be initiated against them, but they avoid quitting government service so as to finally claim benefits and pension for life. hem soon so as to finally claim Show cause notices were served on five more professors, and based on their response, action would follow. Meanwhile, the state government would take up recruitment of faculty members in the government medical colleges soon under a zero vacancy policy.

Gadkari Lauds Telangana Govt's Proactive Measures in Road Safety, Public Welfare

Hyderabad: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has appreciated the Telangana government's proactive measures in transport reforms, road safety, and public welfare. In a letter addressed to Telangana Transport Minister Ponnab Prabhakar, Gadkari praised the abolition of transport check posts, integration of Vahan and Sarathi platforms, Automated



Driving Testing Tracks, and Road Safety Audits. He stated that Telangana's initiatives are aligned with the Centre's vision of digital governance, seamless transport administration, and improved road safety. The Union Minister also commended the State government's efforts in promoting sustainable mobility and conducting public awareness programmes during the national road safety month.

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YSRCP Asks Cadres to Closely Monitor SIR in AP

Tadepalli: The YSRCP State Coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy held an online conference with the party's regional coordinators, district presidents, MLAs, state general secretaries, and state secretaries, urging them to remain highly vigilant over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. During the meeting, he said all 175 Assembly constituency coordinators must develop a strong technical understanding of the voter list revision process and closely monitor developments at the ground level to ensure that YSRCP supporters' votes are not removed. Also Read - Part Time Job Fraud Tops Cyberabad Crime in 2025 Mentioning large-scale deletions of voters in states such as West Bengal and Tamil Nadu under similar exercises, he alleged that the ruling establishment was focusing specifically on YSRCP voters and sympathisers. He cautioned that once a vote is deleted, restoring it becomes extremely difficult. Sajjala stressed that Booth Level Agents



(BLAs) appointed by the party must be technically capable and work in close coordination with BLOs, especially as pressure on election staff is expected to intensify. Also Read - Gadkari Lauds Telangana Govt's Proactive Measures in Road Safety, Public Welfare He said the party should treat the SIR process as an opportunity to safeguard its voter base and strengthen booth-level preparedness. A special control room would function from the party's central office, and orientation

sessions would be conducted for BLAs to equip them with the required technical expertise. He expressed confidence that if the party continuously monitors the process with discipline and coordination, YSRCP would be well-positioned to succeed in both the upcoming local body elections and future general elections. Also Read - Three Drown in Siddipet Stream While Bathing After reviewing the SIR exercise, Sajjala further discussed the party's upcoming statewide pro-

grammes relating to farmers' issues, hospital visits, and the alleged weakening of Aarogyasri under the coalition government. He instructed leaders to coordinate effectively and intensify committee verification processes wherever delays continue. He also directed party leaders to ensure that every programme undertaken by YSRCP receives strong visibility in both mainstream and social media. Also Read - Husband Stabs Wife to Death on Busy Road in Kodad He said the party must consistently highlight the welfare delivered during the YS Jagan government and expose what he described as the coalition government's failures, corruption, exploitation, "Red Book governance," and anti-people policies at the constituency level. After the first phase of the SIR exercise in Bihar, the second phase was conducted in Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Telangana Ramps up Paddy Transport Operations

Hyderabad: The Transport department has asked officials to coordinate closely with the district administration and civil supplies department officials to facilitate availability and deployment of suitable transport vehicles required for paddy transportation operations. It asked the district transport officers to ensure availability of adequate goods vehicles for transportation of paddy from procurement centres to designated storage points or rice mills. Also Read - Part Time Job Fraud Tops Cyberabad Crime in 2025 The department instructed to maintain close coordination with district Collectors and civil supplies authorities for timely placement of vehicles as per requirement in addition to ensure that all vehicles engaged in transportation possess



valid registration certificate, fitness certificate, permit, insurance, pollution under control certificate and valid driving licence. It advised officials to ensure smooth movement of vehicles engaged in paddy transportation and address operational issues promptly in coordination with district authorities apart from monitoring the transportation arran-

gements on a regular basis and furnish status or compliance reports to the office periodically, according to Transport Commissioner K. Ilambari. Also Read - Gadkari Lauds Telangana Govt's Proactive Measures in Road Safety, Public Welfare These instructions were issued after the civil supplies department has informed that paddy pro-

urement activities are being undertaken extensively. To ensure smooth, timely and uninterrupted transportation operations, a request was made to the Transport department to extend necessary support for facilitating availability of suitable vehicles ensuring smooth movement of goods vehicles engaged in paddy transportation.

Woman Dies, Five Critical After C-Sections At Rajasthan Government Hospital; Probe Ordered

Kota: A woman who had recently delivered a baby has died, and five others remain in critical condition after undergoing Caesarean sections at the government-run hospital here in Rajasthan. The incident, which took place on Tuesday, prompted an inquiry and closure of the post-operative ward in the healthcare facility. According to officials, at least six women admitted to the New Medical College Hospital in Kota developed kidney-related complications after C-section surgery and were shifted to the Super Specialty Block, where one of them died while five others were currently admitted in the Nephrology ICU. The families accused the hospital of medical negligence, alleging that the complications were due to "an adverse drug reaction or an infection". Principal of Kota Medical College Dr Nilesh Jain said the incident occurred in the post-operative gynaecology ward, which has since been ordered closed. "A total of 12 Caesarean

deliveries were performed recently; however, the health of six women who had given birth suddenly deteriorated," he said. "One woman has died, and five others have developed kidney-related complications. An inquiry committee has now been formed to investigate. The deceased, Payal, a resident of Jhalkheda in Rawatbhatta in Chittorgarh district, died early Tuesday. Those in critical condition have been identified as 29-year-old Ragini Meena from Jhadol in the Itawa area of the Kota district; Sushila from Barda Basti; Chandrakala from Karwad; Dhanni from Sanjay Nagar in Kota city; and Jyoti from Anantpura Crusher Basti. Tina, Payal's sister-in-law, said that she had delivered a baby boy on the afternoon of Monday, May 4, and "her condition subsequently worsened during the night". "She breathed her last in the early hours of Tuesday morning. Doctors attempted to save her, but she could not be revived," she added. According to doctors,



Payal's blood pressure dropped suddenly, and she experienced anxiety and a sensation of extreme heat. "We rushed her to the emergency and ordered the immediate dispatch of a team of 4 specialist doctors from Sawai Mansingh Medical College to Kota to assist in the treatment of pregnant women. Instructions have also been given for an impartial and prompt investigation of the case. Gayatri Rathore, Principal Secretary of the Medical Education Department, stated that immediately after the incident, these pregnant women were admitted to the Nephrology

Department of the SupSanjeev Kumar Sharma from the Department of Nephrology. Rathore also said that the team will conduct a detailed evaluation of the entire case. The state government has clearly directed that the investigation be conducted with complete transparency and accountability, and if negligence is found at any level, strict action should be taken against those involved. Necessary corrective measures will also be taken to prevent such incidents from recurring in the future," Rathore added. Congress MLA Shanti

Dhariwal launched a scathing attack on the Rajasthan government. In a statement, Shanti Dhariwal said that the state's medical system has completely collapsed. He alleged that negligence at Kota Medical College Hospital resulted in the tragedy. Dhariwal alleged that the patients and their families were misled for nearly 24 hours. "The lack of timely information and treatment led to a worsening of the condition. Doctors also admit negligence and an investigation committee has been formed. They should be given better treatment," he added.

Chhattisgarh: In 2019 Case, Bilaspur Consumer Commission Orders Bike Dealer To Pay Rs 15

Bilaspur: The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, has ordered a compensation of Rs 15 lakh to be paid to the buyer of a motorcycle, deeming the vehicle dealer's negligence as a serious matter. This case stems from a consumer complaint filed by Rajeshwari Yadav, in which she sought justice regarding irregularities related to insurance coverage during the purchase of the motorcycle. According to the information received, Mukesh Kumar Yadav, the late husband of the complainant Rajeshwari Yadav, a resident of village Jhalak in Lormi tehsil, had purchased a motorcycle on October 28, 2019. The insurance premium amount was paid at the time of the purchase. However, instead of arranging for immediate insurance coverage, the dealer had delayed the process. Meanwhile, on October 29, 2019, Mukesh had gone to his sister's house to celebrate Bhai Dooj. While returning around 11.30 pm, as he was riding his bike on Pandariya Road, Mukesh Yadav col-



lided with an unidentified vehicle. He was taken to Pandariya for treatment and subsequently referred to Kawardha. However, he passed away en route. The investigation revealed that the vehicle's insurance coverage was not active at the time the accident occurred. The Commission held that the act of handing over the vehicle without effective insurance coverage by the dealer, Galaxy Motors, constituted not only an unfair trade practice, but also a clear deficiency in consumer service. In its verdict, the Commission said that had the dealer

arranged for insurance in a timely manner, the aggrieved party could have received an insurance payout of Rs 15 lakh. Due to this negligence, the dealer has been ordered to pay Rs 15 lakh as compensation for the financial loss suffered by the aggrieved party. Furthermore, instructions have been issued to pay an annual interest of 9 per cent on this amount, calculated from the date the complaint was filed until the date of actual payment. The Commission has also ordered the payment of an additional Rs 10,000 for mental and physical suffering, and Rs 5,000 towards litigation costs. However, the insurance company was not held liable in this case, as the insurance policy was not in force at the time of the accident.

BJP Leader Suwendu Adhikari's PA Shot Dead In Bengal's Madhyamgram; Victim Chandranath's Wife Demands 'Encounter'

Kolkata: Less than 48 hours after the declaration of the West Bengal Assembly election results, senior BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari's close aide, Chandranath Rath, was shot dead by unidentified bike-borne assailants in North 24 Parganas district on Wednesday night, triggering fresh political tensions in the state.

Rath, who happened to be the executive assistant to the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, was attacked near Doharia in Madhyamgram's Doltala area at around 10.30 PM while he was returning home, police said. BJP Leader Suwendu Adhikari's PA Shot Dead In Bengal's Madhyamgram; Killers Conducted 'Rece For 2-3 Days Before Attack' (PTI) According to the information, the attackers followed Rath's car, intercepted it, shot him from point-blank range through the rolled-up window from the opposite side and fled the scene. Rath was



seated in the front seat next to the driver. Eyewitnesses claimed a small four-wheeler first blocked the vehicle near Doharia junction, following which a biker approached the SUV and started shooting through the rolled-up window. The occupants of the small car abandoned the vehicle and escaped on the two-wheeler, they said. Rath sustained critical injuries in the firing and was rushed to a nearby private hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival, the official media channel of

the BJP said. His driver also sustained bullet injuries and was shifted to a hospital, where his condition is stated to be critical. "The victim was brought dead with multiple bullet injuries on his chest, which pierced his heart, and another bullet on his abdominal area. There was no opportunity to resuscitate him," a doctor said. Rath, according to party sources, played a crucial role in Adhikari's campaigns in the Bhabanipur constituency where the BJP leader triumphed over former chief

minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee. Indrani Rath, the wife of slain Chandranath Rath, has sought an "encounter" for her husband's killers. She made this demand to the State Police Director General, Siddh Nath Gupta, at the hospital on Wednesday night. The DG informed her that the matter is under investigation and assured that swift action will be taken. Adhikari said DGP Siddh Nath Gupta has assured him of a thorough probe into the case. However, he stopped short of directly naming any organisation behind the attack and appealed to BJP workers not to take the law into their own hands. "We don't want to draw any conclusion as of now, as police are investigating the matter," he said. The BJP leader stated that he had spoken to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president

Nitin Nabin regarding the killing. Calling the situation in Bengal "Mahajungle Raj", Adhikari alleged that the violence was a result of "15 years of lawlessness" under the TMC government. He also asserted that action would be taken against criminals once the BJP formally assumes power in the state. State BJP president Samik Bhattacharya said the murder reflects "total criminalisation of politics" in Bengal. He alleged, "By killing the PA of the outgoing leader of opposition, the attackers wanted to send a political message." The incident has sent shockwaves through the state's Banerjee in Bhabanipur too. The BJP, which registered a spectacular victory in the Bengal assembly polls by winning 207 seats, is going ahead with its plans to form government for the first time in Bengal, after ending TMC's 15-year rule in the state. (With agency inputs)

Madras HC To Soon Hear Plea Seeking Criminal Action Against TVK Chief Vijay Over Alleged Income Concealment

Chennai: A petition seeking criminal proceedings against actor-politician and Tamil Nadu Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) legislative party leader Vijay over alleged concealment of income is expected to come up for hearing before the Madras High Court soon.



The case pertains to Income Tax (IT) searches conducted at Vijay's residence in 2015 in connection with financial transactions linked to the film 'Puli'. According to records cited in the petition, IT authorities allegedly found that a sum of Rs 15 crore received by Vijay as remuneration for the film had not been disclosed in his tax returns. Following the assessment proceedings, the IT Department imposed a penalty of Rs 1.5 crore on the actor for alleged non-disclosure of income. Vijay had challenged the penalty before the Madras High Court. However, on February 5 this year, the High Court dismissed his plea, effectively upholding the penalty order. Sources said an appeal against the order has since been filed separately. The latest petition has been filed by M Rajkumar, a resident of Kodungaiyur, seeking directions to initiate criminal proceedings against Vijay under relevant provision of the Income Tax Act seized during searches, statements

allegedly recorded from the actor, assessment records, and the penalty order. The petitioner has also sought action under provisions relating to cheating and criminal conspiracy, and deliberate suppression of taxable income. Moreover, the plea requested that the relevant documents be forwarded to the Enforcement Directorate to examine whether there exists prima facie material warranting proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The petition also brought attention to delays within the High Court registry. According to the court proceedings, the plea had reportedly remained unnumbered for a considerable period, leading to the matter being placed before a division bench headed by Chief Justice SA Dharmadhikari and Justice G Arul Murugan to determine whether it was maintainable. During the hearing, the bench observed that once a petition is filed, the registry cannot indefinitely postpone numbering it without taking a decision on whether

it is fit for consideration. It subsequently directed the registry to formally number the petition and place it before the appropriate bench under the category of maintainability. Following the order, the case has now been officially listed and is expected to be heard soon. It may be recalled here that Vijay-led TVK emerged as the single largest party, winning 108 seats in the just concluded Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections 2026 trouncing the ruling DMK which could win only in 59 seats, while the AIADMK secured 47. Congress bagged five seats and has already announced support to the TVK. The PMK won 4 seats, while the IUML, CPI, CPI(M) and VCK secured to come up for two seats each. The BJP, DMDK and AMMK got one seat each. The development assumes significance as Vijay met Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar and staked claim to form the government but he is five short of 118 in the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly.

Bihar Court To Hear Plea Against Rahul Gandhi On May 15 Over His Remarks On Nitish Kumar During TN Poll Rally

Muzaffarpur: A Chief Judicial Magistrate court here in Bihar has agreed to hear a petition on May 15 against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for describing former Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar as "corrupt" and a "compromising leader" during a poll rally in Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu on April 21. In the complaint filed by Advocate Ambarish Kumar Sinha before the Chief Judicial Magistrate in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, it has been alleged that Rahul Gandhi made objectionable remarks about the former CM, which tarnished his image and hurt the sentiments of his supporters. The petitioner said that during the election rally in Thoothukudi,



Rahul Gandhi had called Nitish Kumar a "corrupt" and "compromising" leader. The petitioner said that Rahul Gandhi's statement has not only damaged Nitish Kumar's personal reputation, but also hurt the feelings of millions of his supporters and Janata Dal United (JDU) workers. The case has now been registered as Bankruptcy Suit No.

2213/2026 before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Muzaffarpur. Advocate Ambarish Kumar Sinha has also submitted copies of relevant documents in the court. The petition fur-

ther mentions that there are several cases, mainly pertaining to defamation, pending against Rahul Gandhi in different courts across the country. In his petition, Sinha cited an order of the Supreme Court saying that leaders in public life should use moderate and responsible language. He argued that such statements by senior leaders send a wrong message to society. The Chief Judicial Magistrate's court fixed the date of next hearing on May 15, 2026, to decide what further legal action can be taken in the case. It may also consider issuing a notice to Rahul Gandhi after the preliminary hearing.

'One Kerala Story Communalists Should Note': Tharoor Hails State As Model Of Communal Harmony

Thiruvananthapuram: Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has said that one "Kerala Story" from the recent election results that communalists should note is that a Muslim majority constituency elected a Christian, a Hindu majority constituency elected a Muslim, and a Christian majority constituency elected a Muslim. The MP from Thiruvananthapuram asserted that Kerala remains a model of communal harmony, a state where people see human beings first and caste or religion later. "One Kerala Story from the recent election results that communalists should note: a Muslim majority constituency, Thavanur, elected a Christian, VS Joy; a Hindu majority constituency,



Kalamassery, elected a Muslim. VE Abdul Gafoor, and a Christian majority constituency, Kochi, elected a Muslim, Muhammed Shiyas," Tharoor said in a post religion later," Tharoor said. The remarks came as the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) began the process of forming the government after registering a sweeping victory in the Kerala Assembly elec-

tions. The UDF secured 102 seats out of 140 seats in the Assembly elections, with the Congress emerging as the single largest party with 63 seats. With this victory, the 10-year rule of the Left government has also come to an end. Meanwhile, Congress MLA-elect VD Satheesan held a roadshow in his Paravur constituency on Wednesday following his victory in the Assembly polls.

Accompanied by a large number of party workers and supporters, Satheesan greeted people during the procession. Satheesan won the Paravur seat with 78,658 votes, defeating CPI(M) candidate ET Taison Master by a margin of 20,600 votes. He is being considered one of the frontrunners for the Chief Minister's post along with the KPC (KPC) is set Thursday in Thiruvananthapuram to attend the meeting, where discussions on the Chief Ministerial face are likely to take place. Earlier, KC Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithalamet Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi as consultations over government formation continued.

'No Disturbance For 6 Months': Stalin Rejects AIADMK's 'Alliance Offer' To Keep Vijay's TVK Out Of Power In Tamil Nadu

Chennai: Amid ongoing speculations over reported "talks between bitter rivals", Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), to stop Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) from forming its maiden government in Tamil Nadu, the DMK has reportedly turned down AIADMK's "offer" to explore government formation in the state after the elections threw up a hung Assembly. The buzz around possible talks between the two Dravidian rivals gained momentum after Congress snapped ties with its pre-poll ally DMK and extended support to the TVK. "Will Not Create Any For 6 Months," Says Stalin according to sources quoted by The Hindu, AIADMK reached out to DMK seeking support to form a government in the 234-member Assembly. However, the DMK leadership has reportedly rejected the proposal, saying the party is prepared to sit in the Opposition and does not want to go against the people's mandate. While no official comments have been received from the AIADMK in this regard, DMK president MK Stalin has firmly stated



that the party will not create any obstacles for Vijay for at least six months. During an interview with a news agency, the former Chief Minister clarified, "DMK would closely observe Vijay's administration for six months without causing any political disturbance." He also expressed hope that TVK would implement several of the welfare promises made earlier by the DMK. Stalin made it clear that his party does not want either a constitutional crisis or another election in the near future. When asked which scheme he expected the TVK government to prioritise, Stalin said the breakfast scheme for government school students should be continued. Responding

to questions about Vijay's promise to provide a monthly assistance of Rs 2,500 for women, Stalin remarked that fulfilling such a promise would be difficult. He added that the new government should at least continue providing Rs 1000, as implemented under the DMK regime. He also stated that the DMK government had fulfilled nearly 90 percent of the promises made in its 2021 election manifesto and claimed that the party could not abolish the NEEET examination due to restrictions imposed by the Union Government. Stalin further said that the DMK had included only practically achievable promises in its manifesto, while expressing doubts over

TVK's promise of providing six free LPG cylinders. "If they manage to implement it, we will be happy," he said.

Moreover, Vijay had contested from both Perambur and Tiruchirappalli East constituencies and won in both. Since he will have to vacate one seat, the party's effective strength would come down to 107 from the current 108, leaving it in need of 11 more MLAs for a majority.

In the recently concluded assembly polls, while TVK emerged as the single largest party, DMK was victorious in 59 seats, while the AIADMK secured 47. Congress bagged five seats and has already

Rajasthan: Former Minister Dr Mahesh Joshi Arrested In Rs 960-crore Jal Jeevan Mission Scam

Jaipur: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Thursday arrested former Rajasthan Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) minister Dr Mahesh Joshi in a Rs 960 crore scam involving the 'Jal Jeevan Mission', the Central government's ambitious scheme aimed at providing tap water to every household. ACB DIG Dr Rameshwar Singh said that Joshi was taken into custody at 5 am from his residence in Jaipur. The Special Investigation Team, which is probing the scam, arrested him following a round of interrogation. The case is linked to alleged irregularities in tenders issued under the Jal Jeevan



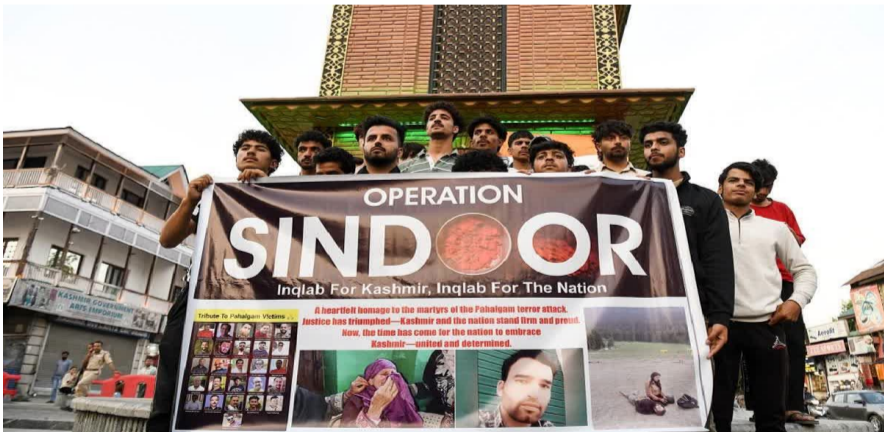
Mission. Investigators allege that two firms, Shri Ganpati Tubewell and Shri Shyam Tubewell, secured contracts by submitting fake experience certificates purportedly issued by IRCON International. As per the investigation, Shri Ganpati Tubewell allegedly secured contracts worth Rs 859.2 crore while Shri Shyam Tubewell obtained ten-

ders worth Rs 120.25 crore through fraudulent means. The ACB and accepted bribes in Laundering Act. The ED had arrested Joshi in this case in which he remained in jail for around seven months. He was granted bail by the Supreme Court on December 3, 2025. In this case, Joshi is accused of accepting bribes in exchange for

issuing tenders while serving as the PHED minister. The ACB had registered an FIR against Joshi in 2024. In connection with the Jal Jeevan Mission scam, the ACB had recently arrested 10 engineers. Subsequently, the ACB also arrested Dr Subodh Agarwal, the then additional chief secretary of the PHED, who had managed to evade the agency for a considerable period. Currently, three accused in this case remain at large and have been declared absconders. The ACB has gathered details regarding their assets and submitted this information to the court. Proceedings to attach their properties are now set to commence.

A Year After Operation Sindoor, Poonch Can't Even Bear The Sound Of A Firecracker

Poonch: The sunset of Wednesday, May 6, sent a grim reminder to people of Poonch of how difficult a similar night was for them last year after Operation Sindoor was launched, and they were made to go through the agony. The next morning had brought no respite for them as only death and destruction were witnessed by this scenic border town, where people of all the communities live peacefully, despite practising different ideologies. After Indian forces launched Operation Sindoor and dismantled the terror network deep inside Pakistan on the intervening night of May 6-7, Pakistani forces resorted to an offensive against the civilian population, targeting the Poonch town. Not only Poonch town, but all three major towns of Poonch district, Poonch, Mendhar and Surankote were targeted with heavy artillery shelling. The first death was reported from Mendhar town on the morning of May 7, but within a few minutes, Poonch town witnessed the worst ever destruction in its history



when shells landed deep inside the civilian areas. From Madrasa to Gurdwara, temple to missionary school, every installation came under attack. Homes of the people were not safe, and within a few hours, the entire Poonch town was vacated, and people either shifted to their ancestral homes in rural areas or migrated to Surankote, Rajouri and Jammu to save their lives. But before that, 14 people were killed in the district and out of them, 11 were killed in Poonch town only. Irrespective of religion, caste and creed, the shells coming from the Pakistani side targeted everyone. More than 60 people were also injured, and a

few of them, who were critically injured, were shifted to either Government Medical College (GMC) Rajouri or GMC Jammu for specialised treatment. As the Indian armed forces will be celebrating their victory during Operation Sindoor on its first anniversary, the people of Poonch are remembering the darkest period they have gone through. Talking to ETV Bharat, Sardar Surjan Singh, whose nephew Amarjeet Singh, a retired soldier, was killed, said that the wounds are still fresh and they can't forget their loved ones who laid their lives for the country. "We live close to the hospital, and when it

all started during the intervening night of May 6-7 last year, we were inside the hospital to help people. On the morning of May 7, around 6:45 am, I went home, and at around 7:30 am, a shell landed on our house. The debris of the roof also fell on me, but a few splinters hit my nephew, and he died," he said. "The martyrdom of our loved ones has done one thing. Earlier, Pakistani forces used to fire shells every now and then, but after last year, not a single shell or bullet was fired by them, which is a kind of victory of our forces and a result of martyrdom of our people," Surjan Singh added. Life in Poonch

Iran Says US Proposal To End War 'Under Review', The Two Countries Are Drafting A 14-Point Proposal



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, in Beijing on Wednesday morning, the official Xinhua news agency reported, without providing further details. It was the first time since the start of the war that Araghchi had travelled to China, whose close economic and political ties to Tehran give it a unique position of influence. Meanwhile, the US President Donald Trump said Tuesday evening he was pausing the U.S. effort to guide stranded vessels out of the Strait of Hormuz to allow time for a deal to end the Iran war, but that the American forces' blockade of Iranian ports would remain in place. Earlier in Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio had expressed hope that Beijing would reiterate to Tehran the need to release its chokehold on the strait, which is a vital waterway for global energy. Iran's effective closure of the strait, through which major oil and gas supplies passed before the war, along with fertiliser and other

petroleum products, has sent fuel prices skyrocketing and rattled the global economy. Breaking Iran's grip would deny its main source of leverage as Trump demands a major rollback of Tehran's disputed nuclear program. The United Arab Emirates, a key U.S. ally in the Persian Gulf, said it came under attack from Iranian drones and missiles for a second day Tuesday. But U.S. military leaders and Rubio insisted the nearly month-old ceasefire was still holding and that — while the conflict is not resolved — the initial major U.S. military operation against Iran has concluded. Iran denied striking the UAE "in recent days," according to a statement by Ebrahim Zolfaghari, a spokesman for Iran's joint military command, that was read Tuesday on state TV. Before the Trump announcement, Rubio told a White House press briefing that for peace to be achieved, Iran must agree to its nuclear program and also agree to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. "We

would prefer the path of peace," Rubio said. Rubio also described the day-old U.S. push to reopen the strait to maritime traffic as a defensive operation, aimed at helping thousands of civilian sailors stranded there by the war. China's foreign minister on Wednesday called for a comprehensive ceasefire in the Iran war, in comments that could inject new energy into stalled efforts to end the two-month conflict between Iran, after meeting with the Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who visited Beijing for the first time since the war started. Trump took to Truth Social to say that if Iran doesn't agree to 'give what has been agreed to', the bombing would start and would be 'sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before'. Iran and the U.S. are drafting a 14-point framework to restart talks aimed at ending tensions, with negotiations possibly resuming next week in Islamabad. Iran is now open to discussing its nuclear program, though major disputes remain over urani-

um enrichment, sanctions relief, and control of the Strait of Hormuz. French President Emmanuel Macron spoke to his Iranian counterpart Pezeshkian and expressed concern over the ongoing escalation. Macron stated on X that he 'condemned the 'unjustified strikes against Emirati civilian infrastructure and several ships' and urged all parties to 'lift the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz without delay and without conditions.' He also stated that the UK and France have launched a multinational mission to help 'restore confidence among shipowners and insurers' and it will be 'distinct from the warring parties'. Macron also spoke of the positioning of the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, saying that it fits within this context and that 'recent events clearly demonstrate the usefulness that such a mission would have. I have invited the Iranian president to seize this opportunity, and I intend to discuss this matter with President Trump.'

US Fires On Iranian Oil Tanker As Trump Pressures Tehran For Deal To End War

Washington: The U.S. military fired on an Iranian oil tanker Wednesday as President Donald Trump sought to pressure Tehran into reaching a deal to end the war. The Islamic Republic said it was reviewing the latest American proposals. A fighter jet shot out the rudder of the tanker in the Gulf of Oman as it tried to breach the American blockade of Iran's ports, U.S. Central Command said in a social media post. The attack occurred as Iran and the U.S. are officially in a ceasefire. Trump threatened Tehran with a new wave of bombing if a deal is not reached that includes opening the critical Strait of Hormuz. Trump posted on social media that the two-month war could soon end and that oil and natural gas shipments disrupted by the conflict could restart. But he said that depends on Iran accepting a reported agreement that the president did not detail. "If the don't agree, the bombing starts," Trump wrote. Israel hits Beirut for first time since last month's ceasefire. Meanwhile, Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs for the first time since a ceasefire between Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militant group was announced April 17. Fighting has continued since then in



southern Lebanon. The last strikes in Beirut were on April 8, when a series of massive Israeli attacks killed more than 350 people. More than 2,500 have died in Lebanon since fighting began March 2, two days after Israel and the U.S. launched the war on Iran. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Wednesday's strike, which came without warning, targeted a commander in Hezbollah's Radwan Force. Hezbollah did not immediately comment. Trump suggests U.S. might force a deal with Tehran. Trump insisted Wednesday that Iranian officials want to end the war. "We're dealing with people that want to make a deal very much, and we'll see whether or not they can make a deal that's satisfactory to us,"

th president said. He suggested that the U.S. could ultimately force a settlement. "If they don't agree, the bombing starts," Trump said on social media, "and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before." The White House believes it is near an agreement with Iran on a one-page memorandum to end the war, according to reporting by Axios. There is no deal yet, but provisions include a moratorium on Iranian uranium enrichment, lifting of U.S. sanctions, distribution of frozen Iranian funds and opening while affirming its he strait for ships. The White House did not immediately respond to questions about the possible agreement. A spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Esmail

Baghaei, told state TV that Tehran had "strongly rejected" U.S. proposals reported by Axios, but that it was still examining the latest U.S. proposal. A shaky ceasefire between the U.S. and Tehran has largely held since April 8. Pakistan hosted in-person talks last month between the two countries, but China's close economic Trump is scheduled to attend a high-profile summit on May 14-15 with Xi Jinping, who has not only caused serious losses to the Iranian people, but also had a severe impact on regional and global peace. "The Chinese Foreign Ministry's website said China values Iran's pledge not to pursue nuclear weapons while affirming its 'legitimate right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.'"

Bangladesh Hopes No 'Pushback' After BJP's Win In Elections

Dhaka: Bangladesh Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed on Wednesday expressed hope that people will not be pushed in his country after the BJP's victory in the recent assembly polls in bordering states. "I hope no such incident (push backs) will happen," Ahmed told reporters when asked if he feared an increase in cases of people suspected of being illegal immigrants being pushed from India. Ahmed, however, said that the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) have been asked to "remain alert" along the frontiers. Ahmed's comments came a day after Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman was quoted in the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party's official Facebook page say-



ing that Bangladesh will take action if "push-in" incidents occur amid the change of power in the bordering state of West Bengal. On Monday, assembly election results were announced in West Bengal, where the BJP won with a sweeping majority. In its election campaign, the BJP often

accused the Mamata Banerjee-led government of allowing an influx of Bangladeshi people to West Bengal - an allegation that the latter has dismissed. The party also retained power in the bordering state of Assam for a third term. The term "push-back" is typically used

to describe the action of forcefully sending people, believed to be illegal migrants, across borders. Countries where they are sent often use the term "push in". In recent years, such cases between India and Bangladesh have largely centered on border areas in northeastern states.

US Rights Agency Sues New York Times For Discriminating Against White Man Passed Over

New York: A federal civil rights agency filed a discrimination lawsuit Tuesday against the New York Times, claiming that the new organization passed over a white male employee for a promotion in favor of a lesser qualified woman to meet its diversity goals. The New York Times called the lawsuit politically motivated and said it would defend itself "vigorously." The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission filed the lawsuit Tuesday on behalf of a New York Times editor who lodged a complaint after he didn't get the role of deputy real estate editor in 2025, alleging gender and racial discrimination under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national orThe EEOC claimed the news organization's publicly stated goals of increasing the number of women and people of color in its leadership ranks influenced the decision to exclude the white male applicant for a final round of interviews, while advancing three women and a Black man. EEOC Chair Andrea Lucas, a Republican, has been a staunch champion of the Trump administration's campaign against corporate diversity policies that she argues veer into



discrimination against white men and others. In December, Lucas posted a social media call urging white men to come forward with complaints if they believe they have faced discrimination because of their employer's diversity policies. "No one is above the law — includes. The allegation centers on a single personnel decision for one of over 100 deputy positions across the newsroom, yet the EEOC's filing makes sweeping claims that ignore the facts to fit a predetermined narrative." "Neither race nor gender played a role in this decision — we hired the most qualified candidate, and she is an excellent editor," Rhoades Ha added. In the lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York, the EEOC complaint said the complainant, who was not identified, has worked as an editor for the New York Times

since 2014, mostly as a senior staff editor on the international desk with previous experience working on real estate stories. The lawsuit claims that the woman ultimately appointed deputy real estate editor "did not have experience with real estate journalism" but "as a multiracial female, this candidate matched the race and/or sex characteristics NYT sought to increase in its leadership." The EEOC said one final panel interviewer described her as "a bit green overall." The EEOC's lawsuit extensively cited The New York Times diversity and inclusion policies as evidence for its alleged discriminatory policies. In particular, the lawsuit cites the organization's "Call to Action" plan published in February 2021 in which it set a goal of increasing the number of Black and Latino employees in leadership by 50% by

2025. The EEOC said the New York Times met that goal in 2022 but continued its commitment to diversity policies. According to reports cited in the lawsuit, white employees composed 68% of its leadership in 2024, compared to 70% when making hiring, promotion and other decisions. Lucas has taken aim at practices signed to level the playing field for workers who have traditionally faced discrimination in U.S. workplaces. In February, the EEOC revealed that it was investigating sportswear giant Nike for racial discrimination against white employees. Unlike the New York Times lawsuit, the Nike investigation stemmed not from a worker complaint but by Lucas herself, who filed what is known as "commissioner's charge" an array of diversity policies at the sneaker company.

Hantavirus-Hit Cruise Ship Heads For Spain As Evacuees Land In Europe

Madrid: A cruise ship hit by a deadly hantavirus outbreak will reach the Spanish island of Tenerife "within three days", with the evacuation of passengers to start from May 11, Spain said Wednesday. The fate of the MV Hondius has sparked international alarm after three people travelling on the ship died, though World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus insisted the outbreak was not comparable to the Covid pandemic. One passenger, Ruhi Cenet, a 35-year-old Turkish travel vlogger, said what started out as an idyllic voyage turned chaotic when the ship's captain announced on April 12 that a passenger had died. "He said it was due to natural causes," Cenet told AFP. "They didn't even consider the possibility of having such a contagious disease," he added. "They didn't take the problem seriously enough." The WHO said emergency crews evacuated three people -- two sick crew members and another person who had been in contact with one of the confirmed cases -- from the ship Wednesday, which later left its anchorage off Cape Verde and headed for Spain's Canary Islands. After being taken from the ship to an ambulance boat by medical personnel in hazmat suits, the three evacuees later boarded flights at the airport in Cape Verde's capital Praia. A medical plane carrying two evacuated passengers landed at Amsterdam Airport in the Netherlands at 1747 GMT, according to AFP reporters at the scene. German emergency services said they had picked up one evacuee in Amsterdam who came into contact with an infected person on board the ship, and were transporting the individual to a hospital in Dusseldorf. Another medical plane landed at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands earlier Wednesday, an AFP journalist



there saw. Spanish officials said that plane had landed because of a "broken isolation bubble". Spain's health ministry said a new plane would be needed to travel on to the Netherlands. Low global risk: WHO experts confirmed the version of the virus detected aboard the Hondius was a rare strain known as the Andes virus, the only one that can be transmitted between humans. The first person to have the virus on the ship could not have been infected during the cruise, given the one- to six-week incubation period, WHO expert Anais Legand told AFP. The ship left Ushuaia, Argentina, on April 1, and the first death occurred on April 11. Argentine officials said the first couple killed had visited Chile, Uruguay and Argentina before the cruise. They said experts would travel to Ushuaia to test rodents there for hantavirus. Argentina has seen an increase in hantavirus cases, but not an outbreak, expert Raul Gonzalez Ittig told AFP. Health officials played down fears of a wider global outbreak from the virus, which is less contagious than Covid-19 pandemic, adding: "The risk to the rest of the world is low." The ship has been at the centre of an international health scare since Saturday, when the WHO was informed that three passengers had died and the sus-

pected cause was hantavirus. The rare respiratory disease is usually spread from infected rodents, typically through urine, droppings and saliva. A Dutch man died on board on April 11, and his wife, who left the ship to accompany his body to South Africa, died there 15 days later after also falling ill. Two other people are still being treated -- one in Johannesburg and one in the Swiss city of Zurich. Two people who returned to the UK from the ship have been advised to self-isolate, the UK Health Security Agency said, adding they were asymptomatic and insisting the risk to the public was "very low." Spanish Health Minister Monica Garcia Gomez said the vessel would dock within the next three days in Tenerife, in the Canaries, and all foreign passengers would be flown back to their home countries from there if their health allowed. Contact tracing The Dutch woman who died had flown on a commercial plane from the island of Saint Helena to Johannesburg while she was showing symptoms. Officials were trying to trace people on that flight, which South African-based carrier Airlink said was carrying 82 passengers and six crew. Fuelling fears of further contact, Dutch airline KLM said on Wednesday that one of the people who died from the virus had been "briefly" on its flight from

Trump Takes A Dig At Macron, Saying Wife Treats Him 'Badly'

Washington: US President Donald Trump made fun of the French president and his wife during a private lunch Wednesday, as he lambasted NATO allies for not joining the war against Iran that has roiled the Middle East. "We didn't need them, but I asked anyway," Trump told a private lunch in a video posted briefly on the White House YouTube channel before access was blocked. "I call up France, Macron --



whose wife treats him extremely badly. Still recovering from the right to the jaw," Trump said. He was referring to a May 2025 news video that appeared to show Brigitte Macron showing

the French president's face on a trip to Vietnam, which Macron later rejected as part of a disinformation campaign. "And I said, 'Emmanuel, we'd love to have some help in the

Gulf even though we're setting records on knocking out bad people and knocking out ballistic missiles. We'd love to have some help. If you could, could you please send ships immediately,'" Trump continued. He then mimics a French accent to give Macron's alleged answer: "No no no, we cannot do that, Donald. We can do that after the war is won," he said. "I said, 'No no, I don't need after the war is won Emmanuel,'" Trump said.

Boiler accidents in India are no aberration, but a regulatory failure



Industrial boilers are indispensable to India's energy and manufacturing sectors. Yet, when they fail, the consequences are catastrophic—and increasingly predictable. The recent boiler tube explosion at a power plant in Chhattisgarh, which killed 13 workers and injured 21, is not an aberration. It reflects a recurring pattern that exposes deep structural weaknesses in India's boiler safety regime.

Vedanta power plant's boiler explosion leaves nine dead Chhattisgarh's Singhitari near Patancheru Hyderabad; over 20 workers injured

The country has witnessed a series of major disasters over the years. The NTPC Unchahar boiler explosion claimed over 30 lives and injured nearly 100, with investigations pointing to pressure build-up and operational lapses. The Thane Chemical Factory Explosion further highlighted how industrial clusters continue to operate with inadequate safeguards. Alongside these, numerous smaller but underreported accidents occur across the States, indicating that boiler failures remain frequent and often fatal.

Law Only On Paper
This persists despite a comprehensive legal framework. The Boilers Act, 2025—an Act to provide for the regulation of boilers, safety of life and property from the danger of steam boiler explosions, and for ensuring uniformity in registration and inspection during manufacture, erection, and use—mandates certification, periodic inspection, and safe operation. It is supported by the Indian Boiler Regulations, 1950, which prescribe detailed technical standards, and the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules, 2021, which require structured and time-bound accident investigations.

On paper, the framework seems robust. In contrast, sectors such as aviation have shown that public disclosure of accident reports significantly improves safety outcomes by institutionalising learning. Boiler safety, given its risks, deserves a similar approach. Lessons from ChhattisgarhIt is, therefore, important that the

Central Boilers Board plays a more proactive role. The Board should ensure that all accident investigation reports conducted under the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules, 2021, are published on its official website within a defined timeframe. Such a measure would promote transparency, enable knowledge sharing, and strengthen accountability. In addition, several policy measures merit consideration. Standardising inspection practices through digital platforms can help ensure uniformity across States. Strengthening technical capacity through regular training and certification of inspectors is equally important. Risk-based inspection systems can focus attention on high-capacity and ageing boilers. Clear accountability mechanisms must be established for operators, inspectors, and certifying authorities. Adoption of modern technologies, including real-time monitoring and predictive maintenance, should also be encouraged. India does not lack laws or technical knowledge. The challenge lies in consistent enforcement, adequate technical capacity, and a culture that prioritises safety. Boiler accidents, whether in power plants or industrial units, often follow a similar pattern: warning signs are overlooked, inspections are inadequate, and lessons from past incidents are not widely shared.

The recent Chhattisgarh tragedy serves as a reminder that systemic improvements are urgently needed. The way forward is clear: enhance transparency, strengthen technical systems, and ensure accountability. With coordinated action, it is possible to reduce the recurrence of such accidents and improve overall industrial safety in the country. Work is failing to prevent repeat disasters. A key issue lies in the fragmented enforcement system. Boiler regulation is largely administered by States, resulting in disparities in inspection quality and frequency. Some States maintain yet repeaters, and polirelatively strong systems, while others face acute shortages of qualified inspectors. In many

cases, a single inspector is responsible for hundreds of boilers, making meaningful inspection difficult. This leads to procedural compliance rather than rigorous technical evaluation. The challenge is also technical. Modern boilers—particularly high-pressure units—require expertise in metallurgy, thermodynamics, and failure analysis.

However, training systems for inspectors are uneven, and exposure to advanced diagnostic methods such as non-destructive testing and condition monitoring is limited. As a result, inspections often lack the depth required to detect early warning signs of failure. Lack of Transparency

Industrial practices further aggravate the problem. In several sectors, particularly small and medium enterprises, boilers are operated with inadequate maintenance, poor water quality control, and sometimes untrained personnel. Safety interlocks may be bypassed to maintain production, and preventive maintenance is often delayed. These practices reflect systemic gaps rather than isolated errors. The most critical concern, however, lies in the lack of transparency after accidents. Under the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules, 2021, serious accidents are investigated in detail, covering root causes, equipment failure mechanisms, and human and systemic factors. These investigations generate valuable technical insights and recommendations. Yet, such reports are rarely made public. They remain confined to official records, limiting access for engineers, operators, and policymakers.

Under the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules, 2021, serious accidents are investigated in detail, yet reports remain confined to official records, limiting access for engineers, operators, and policymakers. This lack of transparency has serious implications. It restricts knowledge sharing across States and industries, weakens accountability, and deprives policymakers of a reliable evi-

dence base. In effect, India investigates accidents but does not fully learn from them. In contrast, sectors such as aviation have shown that public disclosure of accident reports significantly improves safety outcomes by institutionalising learning. Boiler safety, given its risks, deserves a similar approach. Lessons from ChhattisgarhIt is, therefore, important that the Central Boilers Board plays a more proactive role. The Board should ensure that all accident investigation reports conducted under the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules, 2021, are published on its official website within a defined timeframe. Such a measure would promote transparency, enable knowledge sharing, and strengthen accountability. In addition, several policy measures merit consideration. Standardising inspection practices through digital platforms can help ensure uniformity across States. Strengthening technical capacity through regular training and certification of inspectors is equally important. Risk-based inspection systems can focus attention on high-capacity and ageing boilers. Clear accountability mechanisms must be established for operators, inspectors, and certifying authorities. Adoption of modern technologies, including real-time monitoring and predictive maintenance, should also be encouraged. India does not lack laws or technical knowledge. The challenge lies in consistent enforcement, adequate technical capacity, and a culture that prioritises safety. Boiler accidents, whether in power plants or industrial units, often follow a similar pattern: warning signs are overlooked, inspections are inadequate, and lessons from past incidents are not widely shared. The recent Chhattisgarh tragedy serves as a reminder that systemic improvements are urgently needed. The way forward is clear: enhance transparency, strengthen technical systems, and ensure accountability. With coordinated action, it is possible to reduce the recurrence of such accidents and improve overall industrial safety in the country.

India needs a supply chain strategy amid Hormuz, Red Sea crises



The turbulence the world has experienced this decade indicates larger structural shifts. The current Israel-US-Iran war and instability across West Asia since the October 7 attacks, along with the Russia-Ukraine war, symbolise shifting contours of the international order. The US-dominated unipolar era is over.

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Abroad, the Trump administration's aggressive and hyper-militaristic policies cannot hide the fact that the world is no longer Pax Americana. At home, there's little appetite for large-scale wars like Iraq. Without a large-scale troop deployment in West Asia, Iran cannot be restrained. Iran is not Venezuela. Air campaigns and targeted assassinations of the Iranian leadership have failed to deliver the desired strategic end.

These changes highlight India's strategic vulnerability. Two events in West Asia—the disruption of sea lanes through Bab-el-Mandeb in 2023 and the Strait of Hormuz in 2026—clearly reveal our supply chain vulnerabilities. The Houthis and Iran successfully disrupted these straits for weeks, with the Americans struggling to keep these lanes open. Rising middle powers like India, located at the centre of the Indian Ocean, require a long-term supply chain strategy—not just for the West Asia but for the entire Indian Ocean.

By adopting such a strategy, India can protect itself against vulnerabilities while also leveraging its locational advantages in the Indian Ocean Region.

Dependence on IOR

According to data from the government of India, maritime trade accounts for almost 95% of India's trade by volume and 70% by value. India depends heavily on oil and natural gas that passes through the Straits of Hormuz and Bab-el-Mandeb. The country imported 4.5 million barrels per day of crude oil and condensate in 2023, with 45% of its crude imports still coming from West Asia

even after Russia's rise as a supplier. India was among the main Asian destinations for Hormuz crude flows in 2024. Roughly 90% of Indian LPG passed through Hormuz before the war. Qatar alone accounted for nearly 50% of LNG imports. Apart from energy security, India's overall trade is heavily dependent on these strategic chokepoints. India-Europe trade is deeply reliant on the Red Sea, with almost 80% of Indian exports to Europe passing through this route. India must combine reshoring, decoupling, and strategic partnerships to secure supply chains, which are vital for sustaining trade and supporting its ambitions as a major Indian Ocean power. The Iran-US war and the Red Sea crisis instigated by the Houthis have highlighted the vulnerability of India's oceanic trade.

In response to these crises, India sought to diversify its sources. However, such ad hoc responses are insufficient and often too late. The question now is: how can India prepare for such future shocks, and what should a long-term supply chain strategy entail? Global Supply Chain Strategy

Strategic autonomy lies at the core of India's strategic orientation and major power ambitions in the 21st century. This entails avoiding military alliances with any great power, pursuing multi-alignment with like-minded states on specific issues, and maintaining overall strategic independence. In this context, the vulnerability of India's global maritime supply chains is a key impediment. This requires prudent, long-term thinking about global supply chains.

India's major power ambitions require sustained economic growth and domestic political stability. These vulnerabilities create challenges on both fronts.

A nation's grand strategy, according to scholars like Barry Posen, is "theory about how to produce security for itself." This involves the prudent use of economic, political, military, and diplomatic means to achieve the desired end. For almost two decades, strategic thinkers have called for a grand strategy for India. Any long-term strategic document must take maritime security into account. In this context, the security of the supply chain is fundamental for an aspiring major power that depends on the

Indian Ocean for the majority of its trade.

As part of this supply chain strategy, Indian policymakers need to prudently combine reshoring, decoupling, and interest-based coupling. First and foremost, India should decouple its strategic industries from vulnerable regions and states with which its security interests do not align. Economic logic alone should not shape the supply chain for such industries. Strategic industries include core defence manufacturing, semiconductors, defence-related electronics systems, and pharmaceuticals. Reshoring such industries to regions and states with which its security interests do not align. Economic logic alone should not shape the supply chain for such industries. Strategic industries include core defence manufacturing, semiconductors, defence-related electronics systems, and pharmaceuticals.

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Punjab pummelled as Sunrisers make merry of drop catches



Former champions, Sunrisers Hyderabad, scored a dominant 33-run win in the crucial game against Punjab Kings to move to the top of points table with 14 points from 11 games and also closer to a play-offs berth in the IPL at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here on Wednesday night. Chasing 236, Kings, which paid a heavy price for shoddy catching earlier, suffered early setbacks, and the brilliance of Cooper Connolly (107 n.o., 59b, 7x4, 8x6) only delayed the inevitable after a dismal start. Poor shot selection saw fast bowler Pat Cummins dismiss Impact Sub Priyansh Arya (1) in the first over and then Nitish Kumar Reddy send back Prabhsimran Singh (3) with his first ball and first of the second over. A huge blow struck the Kings when the in-form captain Shreyas Iyer (5) hit one from pacer Eshan Malinga straight to mid-off (23/3 in 3.2 overs). Marcus Stoinis (28, 14b, 3x4, 2x6) played a breezy knock before left-arm spinner Shivang Kumar got the better of him, bowling marginally wide to force the batter to cut only to be caught behind (63/4 in 6.4 overs). Cummins was



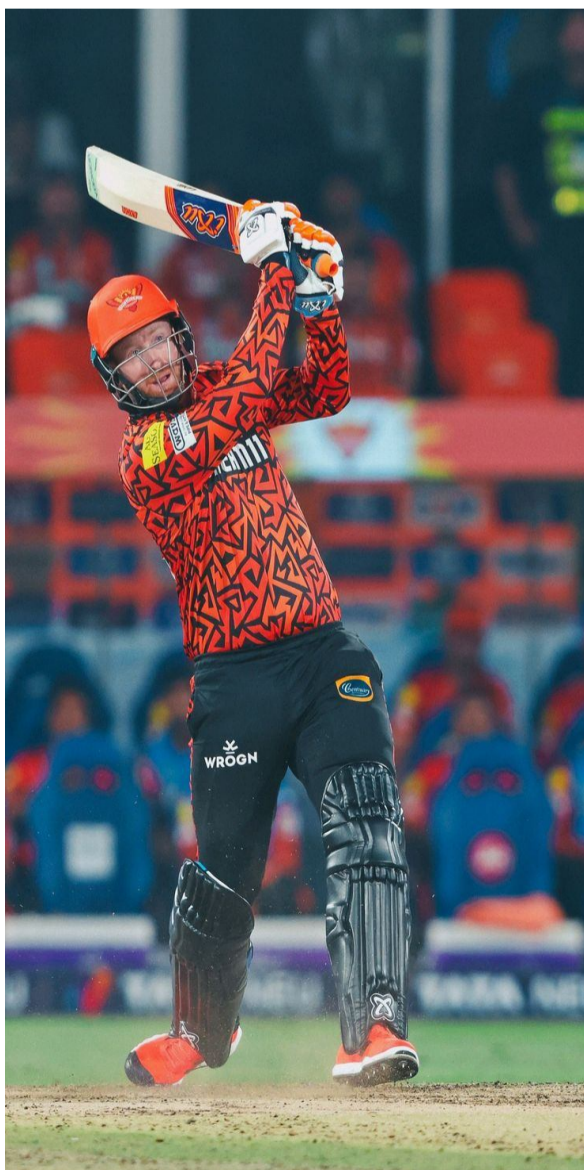
back in the 12th over to cut short the threatening, fourth wicket stand of 47 runs off 30 balls between Cooper Connolly and Suyansh Shedge (25, 17b, 1x4, 2x6) by forcing the latter to pull to the fielder in the deep (111/5 in 11.4 overs), effectively shutting Kings out of the contest. When Shashank Singh (5) pulled pacer Sakib Hussain straight to the fielder in the 13th over (119/6), it was all over bar shouting even as Connolly waged a lone battle with the team suffering third straight defeat. Flying start Earlier, Abhishek Sharma (35, 13b, 2x4, 4x6) and Travis Head (38, 19b, 3x4, 3x6) gave a flying start for

Sunrisers, put in to bat, with a 54-run stand off just 21 balls. Abhishek picked fast bowler Marco Jansen for special treatment – hitting two sixes and two fours in his first over and the second of the innings. However, both of them got out when they looked to take charge. Fergusson got rid of Abhishek and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal lured Head to hit straight to long-off (84/2 in 6.4 overs). Dropped chances But soon, Kings floored three catches to be denied more wickets before the halfway stage. First, Ishan Kishan was dropped on 9 and 18 and then Heinrich Klaasen on 9 before the 12th over.

Soon, Ishan (55, 32b, 2x4, 4x6) stepped into his own zone – hitting fast bowler Vijaykumar Vyshank for three sixes to reach his half-century in the 14th over. At the other end, Klaasen (69, 43b, 3x4, 4x6) was at his clinical best and once again proved that he is the most consistent and dangerous batter in this line-up. The two put on 88 runs for the third wicket off just 48 balls to shift the momentum away from Kings. n, Nitish Kumar Reddy (29 n.o., 13b, 2x4, 2x6) joined Klaasen to put on a very handy 63-run stand off 32 balls for the fourth wicket to help the home team score 235 for four in 20 overs.

Klaasen, Ishan fireworks set up formidable total

: Sunrisers Hyderabad, put in to bat, set up a challenging target of 236 for Punjab Kings in the crucial IPL league match at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here on Wednesday night. Southpaw Abhishek Sharma, in the company of the free-stroking opening partner Travis Head, gave a flying start for Sunrisers, put in to bat, with a 54-run stand off just 21 balls. Abhishek had a head start with some extravagant strokes, picking fast bowler Marco Jansen for special treatment – hitting two sixes and two fours in his first over and the second of the innings. Then, he pulled pacer Lockie Ferguson nonchalantly into the stands before the bowler induced a leading edge of another ambitious lofted stroke from Abhishek (35, 13b, 2x4, 4x6), to provide huge relief to the Kings in the fourth over. Then, Head (38, 19b, 3x4, 3x6) changed gears, pulling Fergusson for two sixes and looked to take charge before leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal lured him to hit straight to long-off (84/2 in 6.4 overs). Dropped chances But soon Kings' shoddy catching denied two



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Rupee To Trade Around Rs 95/ US Dollar By End-2026

The Indian Rupee is likely to trade broadly sideways at around Rs 95 per US dollar by end-2026, from its current level of Rs 95.20 per US dollar, with the Iran conflict expected to weigh on its value, BMI said on Wednesday. However, slowing profit repatriation and central bank currency intervention will limit the pace of rupee depreciation, the Fitch group company said in a report. The US-Iran conflict has exerted downward pressure on emerging market currencies, especially for large energy importers like India. The rupee depreciated 4 per cent during March-April 2026 and currently trades at Rs 95.20/USD. BMI said it expects India's GDP to grow 7.6 per cent and inflation to hit 3.4 per cent during the current fiscal year (April 2025-March 2026). As a result of the currency's weakness, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) intervened heavily in currency markets to stabilise the rupee. "Going forward, we expect the rupee to trade broadly sideways to end the year around Rs 95.00/USD. Our forecast of the rupee trading sideways by the end of 2026 reflects bearish and bullish factors balancing each other out," BMI said. BMI expects the



war to widen India's current account deficit by 0.4 percentage points to hit 1.3 per cent of India's GDP in the new fiscal year. This largely reflects India's reliance on energy imports, which amounted to 22 per cent of total imports in FY2025-26 and is expected to rise in FY2026-27. The conflict could also worsen the deficit by reducing remittance income. BMI estimates that 38 per cent of India's remittance inflows during 2025 stemmed from Gulf countries and comprised about 1 per cent of India's GDP. "If the conflict weighs on incomes of Indian workers in the Gulf severely, the current account deficit could

come in even wider than we forecast," BMI said. It also expects financial portfolio outflows in FY2026-27 to maintain pressure on the rupee, given rising risk aversion to emerging markets. While BMI's local policy uncertainty index for India fell sharply in March, possibly reflecting the India-US trade deal signed in February, the same index for global uncertainty rose over the same month, suggesting emerging market currencies could remain under pressure. "Given elevated policy uncertainty due to the believe net portfolio inflows will remain subdued. Recent data from the Institute of International Finance supports this view: capi-

tal outflows from the country during March amounted to USD 13.4 billion, the largest single-month outflow since the pandemic," it added. The Indian currency has fallen 10 per cent in value over the past 12 months. The last time the rupee experienced a similar decline was during January 2022-December 2022 when interest rate differentials favoured. Then, the RBI intervened aggressively to curb the rupee's fall, causing a 13 per cent drop in foreign reserves, BMI said. "We think the RBI will use its seven months worth of import cover to counteract sentiment-driven outflows and stabilise the currency in the quarters," BMI said.

Stock Markets Rally As Oil Prices Decline Amid Progress In US-



Benchmark Sensex rallied by 940 points on Wednesday following a sharp decline in crude oil prices after US President Donald Trump claimed progress in negotiations with Iran towards an agreement to end the war. -Helped by flag-end heavy buying, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 940.73 points, or 1.22 per cent, to settle at 77,958.52. During the day, it surged 1,004.99 points, or 1.30 per cent, to a day's high of 78,022.78. The 50-share NSE Nifty rallied 298.15 points, or 1.24 per cent, to end at 24,330.95. A positive trend in global markets aided the rally in domestic stocks. From the 30-Sensex firms, InterGlobe Aviation, Trent, Asian Paints, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and Eternal were among the major winners. Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro, Power Grid and NTPC were among the laggards. aid Trump has suspended "Project

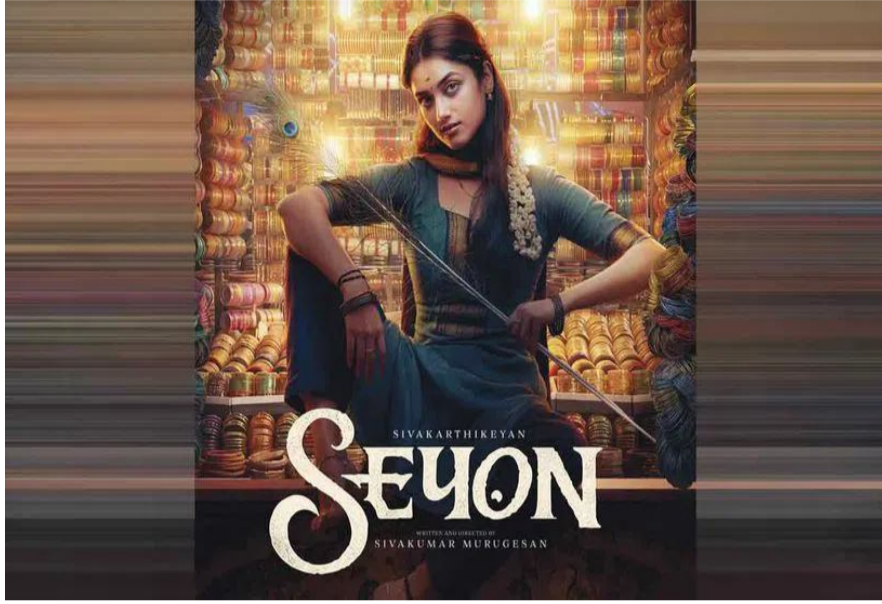
Freedom," to escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz, claiming progress in negotiations with Iran towards an agreement to end the war. In a post on Truth Social on Tuesday, Trump said, "Great progress has been made toward a complete and final agreement with representatives of Iran. "Based on the request of Pakistan and other Countries, the tremendous Military Success that we have had during the Campaign against the Country of Iran and, additionally, the fact that Great Progress has been made toward a Complete and Final Agreement with Representatives of Iran, we have mutually agreed that, while the Blockade will remain in full force and effect, Project Freedom (The Movement of Ships through the Strait of Hormuz) will be paused for a short period of time to see whether or not the Agreement can be finalized and signed." Trump said. Project Freedom

was launched on Monday to escort ships, stranded due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, to safety. Trump's "Freedom," to escort statement on Truth Social came hours after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced that Operation Epic Fury, launched on February 28, had concluded as its objectives had been achieved. -"Operation Epic Fury is concluded. We achieved the objectives of that operation. We're not cheering for an additional situation to occur. We would prefer the path of peace. What @POTUS would prefer is a deal... that is, a deal was largely global — renewed optimism around a potential US-Iran peace deal led to a sharp decline in crude oil prices, offering so far, not the route that Iran has chosen," Rubio told a press conference at the White House on Tuesday. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, tumbled 8 per cent to

USD 101.1 per barrel. "The trigger was largely global — renewed optimism around a potential US-Iran peace deal led to a sharp decline in crude oil prices, offering immediate relief to an import-heavy economy like India," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said. In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended higher. Kospi surged over 6 per cent. Markets in Europe were trading sharply higher. US markets ended in positive territory on Tuesday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,621.58 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. On Tuesday, the Sensex dropped 251.61 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 77,017.79. The Nifty edged lower by 86.50 points or 0.36 per cent to end at 24,032.80

Bhagyashri Borse joins Sivakarthikeyan's 'Seyon' cast

The makers of director Sivakumar Murugesan's next film, 'Seyon', featuring actor Sivakarthikeyan in the lead, on Wednesday wished actress Bhagyashri Borse a happy birthday, even as they announced that the actress had now joined the film unit. The film is being produced by Kamal Haasan's RaajKamal Films International and Turmeric Media. Taking to its X timeline to greet the actress, Raaj Kamal Films International (RKFI) wrote, "A birthday to remember and a journey to look forward to! Wishing #BhagyashriBorse a very Happy Birthday as she joins the #Seyon #HappyBirthdayBhagyashri."riggered huge interest in fans and film buffs ever since the makers released a glimpse video from the film called "The Celebration" earlier this year. The Celebration video showcases an incident that happens on the second day of the Maasi Kalari festival that is held at the Karumaathur Virumaandi Temple. The incident in question is shown taking place two hours after a major scuffle at the festival. A group of people gather at the local police station, even as the constable explains the situation to the inspector. He informs that a major fight had broken out at the festival, even as the inspector begins inspecting those who have gathered at the station. He finds a group of young men with half-tounged heads and asks them what happened. The constable explains



that the young men with half-tounged heads behaved in an indecent manner by flashing laser lights at dancers at the festival and making reels out of it. "Therefore, somebody bashed them up and tounged half their heads," he explains. The inspector then asks another man from another group as to why he was beaten. He says he was asked what play they were to stage at the festival and he had informed them that he was to stage the devotional "Valli Thirumanam (Valli's wedding to Lord Murugan)" and therefore, he too was bashed up. The reply makes those locked up in prison wonder if the person who bashed up the theatre artiste was an atheist. But then another man clarifies, "He is not an atheist. In fact, he is the one who gets possessed by the divine spirit of Virumaandi." The cops realise that everybody from the neighbouring villages is there, save one and that

is the people of Karumathur, who are carrying out the procession. The others try to stop the procession, but according to custom, the procession must not be stopped. The procession proceeds, and the inspector happens to see Sivakarthikeyan in a possessed state and prays to him... The celebration video gives the impression that the story will be set in Madurai. The makers also disclosed that the film would be released in October this year. The film, which will feature Sakarthikeyan in a power-packed and dynamic new role, will be a grand rural commercial entertainer. Now, with Wednesday's announcement, it has become evident that Bhagyashri Borse will be playing the female lead in the film. The film has triggered huge interest as it marks a significant reunion between Sivakarthikeyan and Raaj Kamal Films

International. Their collaboration for this film comes on the heels of the blockbuster success of their earlier film 'Amaran', which garnered both critical acclaim and commercial triumph. Produced by Kamal Haasan and R Mahendran, the film brings together powerful storytelling and a compelling cinematic vision. Director Sivakumar Murugesan will be stepping into his second directorial venture after the much-awaited soon-to-be-released 'Thaai Kizhavi'. Adding to the excitement, this project will mark the first-ever collaboration between RaajKamal Films International, Sivakarthikeyan, and acclaimed composer Santhosh Narayanan. The film has cinematography by Vivek Vijayakumar and editing by San Lokesh. Art direction for the film is by R K Nagu, while Keerthy Sampath and Joshua Maxwell are its costume designers.

Dulquer Salmaan Calls Parents Mammootty-Sulfath 'Timeless And Eternal' On Their 47th Wedding Anniversary



Malayalam superstar Mammootty and his wife Sulfath are celebrating their 47th wedding anniversary on May 6. On this special occasion, their son and actor Dulquer Salmaan shared a heartfelt post on social media, calling his parents his "favourite couple". Taking to Instagram, Dulquer posted a couple of adorable pictures of his parents and wrote a touching message. His caption read, "Timeless and eternal! Wishing my favourite couple the hap-

piest anniversary (followed by two heart-eyed emojis)!" Soon after the post was dropped, fans flooded the comments section with warm wishes. One user wrote, "Happy Anniversary, sir and madam," while another commented, "Classic couple forever!" In the pictures shared by Dulquer, Mammootty and Sulfath are seen sitting close together and smiling warmly at the camera. The couple looks relaxed and happy, dressed in simple yet

elegant outfits. Their natural chemistry and comfort with each other stand out, making the moment feel heartwarming. Mammootty and Sulfath tied the knot in 1979 and have remained one of the most admired couples in the Malayalam film industry. Despite Mammootty's long and busy career in cinema, the couple has always maintained a strong and private family life, often setting relationship goals for many. On the work front, Dulquer Salmaan

is now focusing on his return to Malayalam cinema. His last Malayalam release, King of Kotha, received mixed reactions from audiences. However, the actor is now gearing up for his upcoming project, I'm Game. Directed by Nahas Hidayath, the film has already completed its shoot and is expected to release during the Onam season on August 20. Interestingly, this film will mark Dulquer's return to Malayalam films after a gap of three years.

Thalapathy Vijay's Family Tree: A Closer Look At His Personal Life

One of Tamil cinema's biggest stars Vijay, popularly known as Thalapathy Vijay, comes from a deeply rooted film family that has shaped his journey from the very beginning. With his recent move into politics, curiosity around his personal life and family has only increased. Here's a detailed look at Vijay's family tree and the people who have played a key role in his life.

Who Is Thalapathy Vijay? Born as Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar on June 22, 1974, in Chennai, Vijay started his career as a child artist before becoming a leading actor in Tamil cinema. Over the years, he has delivered several blockbuster films like Thirumalai (2003) and Ghilli (2004), and built a massive fan following. Today, he is also making headlines for his political journey with his party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam. Thalapathy Vijay's Family Tree (Photo: A Filmfamily.com)

Father: S.A. Chandrasekhar
 Mother: Shoba Chandrasekhar
 Sister: Late Vidhya Chandrasekhar
 Wife: Sangeetha Sornalingam (Married - Aug 25, 1999, Divorce Pending)
 Son: Thalapathy Vijay



A Musical Influence: Mother Shoba Chandrasekhar
 A Love Story Turned Marriage: Sangeeta Sornalingam
 A Personal Tragedy: Sister Vidya

Vijay's mother, Shoba Chandrasekhar, is a talented playback singer, writer, and producer. She has contributed to several Tamil films and is known for her artistic background. Her influence brought a musical and creative balance into the family. Along with his father's filmmaking knowledge, Vijay grew up in an environment where cinema and art were a way of life.

shaped his calm and reserved personality. A Love Story Turned Marriage: Sangeeta Sornalingam
 A Personal Tragedy: Sister Vidya
 Despite maintaining a low public profile, she has been an important pillar in Vijay's personal life. However, recent reports suggest that the couple is going through a divorce process, marking a significant shift in their long-standing relationship. The Next Generation: Vijay's son, Jason Sanjay, was born in 2000 and is already stepping into the film world. He has shown interest in both acting and directing. He gained attention after appearing alongside his father on screen and is now reportedly working toward establishing himself as a director. Many believe he could carry forward the family's cinematic legacy. Vijay's daughter, Divya Sasha, leads a more private life. Unlike her brother, she prefers to stay away from media attention and public appearances. She is currently focused

Su From So Director JP Thuminad Ties The Knot With Rashmika, Shares Dreamy Wedding Pic



Kannada actor-director JP Thuminad has stepped into a new phase of life. The Su From So director has tied the knot with Rashmika in a traditional ceremony. He shared the happy news with fans on social media by posting a beautiful wedding picture. The picture shows the couple sitting together in a beautifully decorated wedding setup, dressed in traditional attire. They are seen smiling with folded hands, wearing flower garlands, with a temple-style backdrop and floral decorations behind them.

Success of his 2025 film Su From So. The movie turned out to be a surprise blockbuster and proved that strong content can win big even without a huge budget. Made with just around Rs 3-4 crore, the film reportedly earned more than Rs 100 crore at the box office. It also gained attention at international film festivals and received positive responses from audiences across regions. What makes the success even more special is that Su From So was released alongside big-budget films like Cooli and War 2. Despite tough competition, the film managed to attract viewers and became a fan favourite. It was produced by Raj B Shetty, who also appeared in a cameo role. JP Thuminad comes from the coastal region and has worked in

both Kannada and Tulu cinema. Before entering films, he spent more than 10 years in theatre. During that time, he wrote plays, directed them, and also acted on stage. He was especially known for comedy dramas. In his early days, he even worked as a cameo role. JP Thuminad comes from the coastal region and has worked in ainter before following his passion for acting. He made his acting role. JP Thuminad comes from the debut in 2017 with Ondu Motteya Kathe, directed by Raj B Shetty. Over the years, he appeared in films like Garuda Gamana Vrishabha Vahana and Sapta Sagaradaache Ello - Side B. However, Su From So marked a big turning point in his career, as he handled both acting and direction for the first time.