

AP Students Script Historic Everest Trek

April 15, with the team travelling to Kathmandu before embarking on the demanding Himalayan trek. The group comprised 8 girls and 13 boys from Class 9 to Intermediate level, representing various districts. For many of these students, who come from economically modest backgrounds, the journey symbolised more than physical endurance. It marked a victory over years of social stigma, discrimination, and self-doubt associated with disabilities. To prepare for the expedition, the students underwent intensive training under the supervision of project director Srinivasa Rao. The training included 45 days at the Gandikota Adventure Academy, followed by 15 days of high-altitude acclimatisation in Ladakh, where they endured sub-zero temperatures of up to minus five degrees Celsius.

The programme focused on building endurance, trekking

discipline, altitude adaptation, and basic mountaineering skills. The State government ensured comprehensive logistical support, safety arrangements, and expert guidance throughout the expedition. Experienced mountaineers Sheikh Himanshu and Malavath Poorna, along with K. Shankaraiiah from the Samagra Shiksha sports division, led the team. Congratulating the students, Lokesh said they have set an inspiring example and will serve as role models for future generations. He reiterated the government's commitment to identifying and nurturing such talent through innovative initiatives.

Parents expressed happiness and gratitude, stating that the expedition has instilled confidence, independence, and self-belief in their children. The achievement stands as a powerful message that determination and opportunity can help overcome even the toughest barriers.

CM Orders Action Plan to Tackle Fuel Shortage

petrol bunks despite increased supply. Bulk purchases by the aquaculture sector, where fuel is stored in drums, have further strained availability.

Taking serious note of the

situation, the Chief Minister instructed officials to ensure that the public does not face inconvenience and that fuel supply is stabilised at the earliest. He emphasised coordinated efforts across departments to restore normalcy and prevent further disruptions.

Minister Accuses Sakshi of Spreading False Reports on Agriculture

Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu strongly criticised reports published in Sakshi newspaper, alleging that they are deliberately distorting facts about the agriculture sector to mislead farmers and the public.

Calling the reports "false narratives written with political intent," the Minister said that isolated issues in a few areas were being projected as a statewide crisis. He alleged that such stories were part of a scripted campaign aimed at discrediting the coalition government.

Atchannaidu said that during the 2019-2024 period, agriculture was neglected, leading to real distress among farmers. In contrast, he stated that the current government is actively strengthening market systems, storage facilities, transport networks, and price stabilisation measures to support farmers.

Providing crop-wise data, the Minister said onion, tomato, banana, and papaya harvesting is largely in the final stage. He noted that onion and tomato prices are currently stable, with mandis in districts like Annamayya and Kurnool recording reasonable market rates. He added that banana and papaya exports and procurement are continuing steadily across districts such as



Anantapur and Kadapa.

He further clarified that minimum support prices (MSP) for major crops like paddy, cotton, turmeric, and chillies are being exceeded in many markets, indicating a favourable situation for farmers.

The Minister warned that misleading reports and artificial price narratives created by middlemen were being amplified through certain media outlets. He urged farmers not to believe such propaganda and assured that the government remains committed to protecting farmer interests and ensuring fair prices.

Ayodhya Temple Replica Draws Devotees in Nellore

Nellore, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Ponguru Ramadevi, wife of State Minister Dr. Ponguru Narayana, on Sunday visited a grand replica of the Ayodhya Ram Mandir set up at SVGS College Grounds in Nellore. Accompanied by women leaders from TDP and Janasena, she offered special prayers and was accorded a warm welcome by the organisers. Impressed by the structure, Ramadevi said the replica created the feeling of the original Ayodhya temple being brought to Nellore. She appreciated the efforts of nearly 100 skilled sculptors who worked tirelessly to recreate the temple with precision. The

replica, built at an estimated cost of 1.50 crore, has become a major attraction for devotees and visitors alike.

Describing it as a rare spiritual opportunity, she said people can experience the darshan of Bala Rama locally. She also noted that the venue offers a festive atmosphere with amusement rides and shopping stalls, accessible for a nominal entry fee. Calling the 60-day festival unprecedented in the city's history, Ramadevi urged the public to visit and experience the unique blend of spirituality and entertainment. Several women leaders and local representatives attended the programme.

CM Invited to Penchalakona Brahmotsavams

Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has been formally invited to attend the Brahmotsavams of Sri Penusila Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple at Penchalakona in Nellore district. Local MLA Kurugondla Ramakrishna and temple governing body chairman Tirupal Reddy met the Chief Minister at his camp office and presented the invitation. The religious festivities are scheduled to be held from April 27 to May 3.

During the meeting, temple priests offered blessings to the Chief Minister and presented prasadam along with a picture of the deity. The delegation also briefed him on the arrangements being made for the annual celebrations.

The Chief Minister enquired about the preparations and expressed interest in the conduct



of the traditional festival, which attracts large numbers of devotees from across the region.

Officials said the Brahmotsavams are one of the most significant religious events in the district, featuring various ritu-

als and cultural programmes dedicated to Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy.

The delegation expressed gratitude for the Chief Minister's support and invited him to participate in the festivities.

5K Run Held to Promote Census 2027 Awareness

Rajamahendravaram, April 26 | TPN Bureau

A 5K run was organized in Rajamahendravaram of East Godavari district on Sunday morning to create awareness about Census 2027 and encourage self-enumeration among citizens. The run commenced at 7 a.m. from Y Junction and witnessed active participation from officials, employees, and city residents.

District Collector Keerthi Chekuri and Commissioner Rahul Meena flagged off the run, emphasizing the importance of public participation in the upcoming census exercise. The event was conducted under the supervision of the district administration as part of a broader awareness campaign.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector highlighted that the primary objective of the run was to educate people about the self-enumeration process and motivate them to complete their registration within the stipulated timeline. She noted that such initiatives help in increasing public engagement and ensuring accurate data collection.

The 5K route covered key locations in the city, starting from Y Junction and passing



through Devi Chowk, Gokavaram Bus Stand, Pushkar Ghat, and Kotipalli Bus Stand, before concluding at the designated endpoint.

Officials informed that citizens have time until April 30 to complete self-enumeration for Census 2027. Out of the district's population of approximately 22 lakh, around 23,000 people have completed the process so far. The self-enumeration drive began on April 16 and is being carried out in a phased manner.

Authorities also outlined the upcoming schedule for targeted awareness and registration

drives. On April 27, activities will focus on shops and industries, followed by banks and self-help groups (SHGs) on April 28, and police personnel on April 29.

From May 1, the door-to-door Census 2027 survey will begin, during which officials will collect detailed household data across the district.

The district administration urged all residents to take part in the self-enumeration process and contribute to building an accurate and comprehensive database for effective governance and planning.

Minister Orders Probe into ROB Deck Collapse

Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

R&B Minister B. C. Janardhan Reddy has directed a detailed inquiry into the collapse of a Road Over Bridge (ROB) deck near Vadlapudi in Visakhapatnam district.

The Minister, who is currently on an official visit to Singapore, responded immediately after receiving information about the incident. He held discussions over phone with senior officials and reviewed the preliminary situation.

He instructed authorities to visit the accident site without

delay and submit a comprehensive report on the cause of the collapse. The Minister also directed National Highways ENC Ramachandra, R&B Quality Control Chief Engineer Seshu Kumar, and Anakapalli Executive Engineer Sambasiva Rao to personally inspect the site.

Expressing concern over the incident, the Minister sought details on the reasons behind the structural failure and warned that strict action would be taken against the contractor if negligence is established. He also reviewed the condition of those injured in

the accident and directed officials to ensure the best possible medical treatment for the victims.

Officials said a technical investigation team has been asked to examine design, quality, and execution aspects of the ROB project. Preliminary reports are expected to be submitted soon. The Minister reiterated that the government would not tolerate lapses in infrastructure works and stressed the need for strict quality control in all ongoing projects to prevent such incidents in the future.

No Diesel Shortage in Eluru, Minister Orders Strict Measures to Curb Panic Buying

Eluru, April 26 | TPN Bureau

State Minister for Housing and Information & Public Relations Kolusu Parthasarathy has directed officials to take robust measures to prevent any diesel shortage in Eluru district and curb panic triggered by rumours. Chairing a review meeting via Zoom with District Collector K. Vetrivel, Joint Collector M.J. Abhishek Gowda, MLAs, and oil company representatives, the Minister stressed the need to ensure uninterrupted fuel supply and maintain public confidence.

He noted that rumours circulating on media and social plat-

forms have led to panic buying. "Adequate stocks are available, and people should not resort to unnecessary hoarding," he said, instructing officials to spread awareness and counter misinformation.

Parthasarathy emphasised that sufficient diesel must be ensured for grain transportation during the Rabi season and for aqua farmers. He also directed continuous coordination with oil companies and close monitoring at the mandal level to prevent diversion of fuel stocks. District Collector Vetrivel clarified that there is no shortage in the district and said daily diesel consump-

tion stands at around 365 kilolitres. "Demand has increased by 10-20 per cent due to panic buying, but supply has been scaled up accordingly," she said. MLAs, including Badeti Radhakrishna and Songa Roshan Kumar, urged timely replenishment of low-stock fuel stations, while others stressed prioritising agricultural and aqua sectors.

Representatives from Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum, and Bharat Petroleum confirmed that supply has been increased to meet the rising demand and assured continued availability of petrol and diesel across the district.



Youth Must Lead Nation-Building: BJP Chief P.V.N. Madhav

Rajanagaram, April 26 | TPN Bureau

BJP Chief P.V.N. Madhav on Sunday asserted the vital role of youth in nation-building while addressing students at ISTS Women's Engineering College in Rajanagaram. The event followed a collective viewing of the 133rd edition of Mann Ki Baat, hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking on the occasion, Madhav said the programme serves as a unique platform through which the Prime Minister directly connects with citizens, highlighting inspiring themes and grassroots initiatives. He noted that "Mann Ki Baat" promotes awareness among youth on crucial issues

such as social responsibility, cleanliness, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

He urged students to actively engage in socially beneficial activities alongside their academic pursuits and to stay informed about positive developments across the country. Encouraging young women in particular, he called on them to recognize and showcase their talents in various fields.

Madhav also appealed to the public to extend full support to the Centre's developmental initiatives aimed at inclusive growth.

State BJP General Secretary Lakshmi Prasanna Saligrama, faculty members, and students participated in the programme.

AP Cabinet Meeting Postponed

Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

The state government has announced the postponement of the Council of Ministers meeting scheduled earlier for April 29, 2026. According to an official communication issued by the General Administration (Cabinet-I) Department, the meeting has been rescheduled to April 30, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

The Cabinet meeting will now be held in the Cabinet Meeting Hall on the first floor of Building No.1 at the Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Velagapudi.

Chief Secretary to Government G. Sai Prasad issued the intimation, requesting all departments of the Secretariat to take note of the revised date

and time. He directed all Special Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, and Secretaries to submit proposals to the General Administration Department by 11:00 a.m. on April 29, strictly following the Andhra Pradesh Government Business Rules, 2018.

The communication was circulated to all Ministers, senior officials, departments, and security agencies, including the Director General of Police, Intelligence wing, and Information & Public Relations Department.

Officials said the change in schedule is purely administrative and all pending proposals will be considered in the rescheduled meeting.

Ministers Trained in Crisis Response Model in Singapore

Singapore/Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

On the sixth day of their visit to Singapore, a delegation of Andhra Pradesh ministers underwent a specialised training session on advanced crisis management techniques, focusing on the "Table Top Exercise" model used in governance and emergency response systems.

The training programme was designed to equip decision-makers with structured response mechanisms during critical situations such as cyber security threats, data leaks, security breaches, and other emergencies. Experts explained how coordinated team-based action can ensure faster and more effective decision-making during crises.

Resource person Praveen Kumar elaborated on key components of the exercise, including goal setting, role assignment, rapid problem-solving, decision-making protocols, and identification of opera-

tional gaps. He demonstrated how simulated scenarios help strengthen administrative preparedness and improve inter-departmental coordination.

The ministers actively participated in the session, observing how structured simulations can enhance governance efficiency and reduce response time in real-time emergencies. The exercise also highlighted the importance of clarity in communication and accountability during high-pressure situations.

The Andhra Pradesh delegation included ministers K. Atchannaidu, B. C. Janardhan Reddy, Vangalapudi Anitha, Satyakumar Yadav, and Anagani Satya Prasad.

Officials said the exposure is expected to help strengthen governance systems in Andhra Pradesh by adopting globally tested emergency response frameworks and improving administrative readiness for future challenges.

R&B Minister Orders Probe into Vadlapudi ROB Deck Collapse

Amaravati: R&B Minister BC Janardhan Reddy has ordered a detailed inquiry into the collapse of an ROB deck near Vadlapudi in Visakhapatnam district. Reacting to the incident while on an official tour in Singapore, the Minister spoke to senior officials and directed them to visit the site immediately. He instructed NH ENC Ramachandra, R&B Quality Control CE Seshu Kumar, and Anakapalli EE Sambasiva Rao to submit a comprehensive report on the causes of the accident.

The Minister said strict action would be taken against the contractor if negligence is established and directed officials to ensure proper medical care for the injured.



Galla Madhavi's Inclusive Move Sets Benchmark in Governance

Guntur, April 26 | TPN Bureau

In a landmark decision that has drawn widespread appreciation, Guntur West MLA Galla Madhavi has appointed a transgender woman as her Personal Assistant, setting a powerful example of inclusive governance and social responsibility. The move is being hailed as a significant step toward empowering marginalized communities and ensuring dignity in employment.

The appointee, a B.Com graduate, had approached the MLA's office seeking a job opportunity. Recognizing her educational qualifications and the need to support individuals from the transgender community, who often face discrimination and limited employment avenues, Madhavi promptly offered her the role of Personal Assistant. The decision reflects a conscious effort to bridge social gaps and provide equal opportunities based on merit.

Explaining her initiative, Madhavi said she had often observed the hardships faced by transgender individuals, particularly those forced to seek alms at traffic signals and on trains. "Everyone deserves a chance to live with dignity. If educated individuals from marginalized sections are given opportunities, they can lead independent and respectable lives," she said. She added that her decision was not merely

symbolic but aimed at bringing about real social change.

In the midst of growing appreciation, Minister for IT and Human Resources Nara Lokesh extended his support and congratulated the MLA. In a message shared on social media, he said, "True leadership lies in empowering marginalized sections and ensuring they are part of the development journey." He further assured that the government under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is committed to implementing policies that promote inclusivity and create more employment opportunities for underrepresented groups, including the transgender community.

Madhavi also stated that she would raise the issue of employment challenges faced by transgender persons with the Chief Minister and advocate for dedicated welfare measures. She emphasized the need for skill development programs, education support, and job reservations to improve their socio-economic status.

The initiative has been widely praised by social activists, political leaders, and the public, who view it as a progressive step toward equality. By translating intent into action, Galla Madhavi has set a precedent for others in public life, demonstrating that governance can be both compassionate and transformative.



Elderly Woman Finds Shelter Through Charity Trust

Machilipatnam, April 26 | TPN Bureau

In a compassionate gesture, the Helping Hands Venkat Charitable Trust has extended support to an 80-year-old woman from Telangana who was left destitute despite having a family.

The elderly woman, Jonnala Parvatamma, hails from Sadavipet in Medak district. She has two sons, two daughters, and several grandchildren. However, due to poverty, old age, and lack of care from her family, she was reportedly left without food or emotional support. With no one to turn to, Parvatamma decided to leave home and travel to Kashi. On her way, she stopped at Kanaka Durga Temple in Vijayawada for darshan. Unfortunately, during her visit, her belongings were stolen, leaving her stranded and helpless at the temple premises.

Upon learning about her situation through a devotee, the Helping Hands Venkat Chari-

table Trust stepped in to assist. The trust, led by trustee Chandan Venkat, took responsibility for her care and shifted her to an Ashram established by the organisation at Mekavani-palem in Machilipatnam.

The trust has been actively working to provide shelter and care for elderly individuals who are abandoned or in distress. Speaking on the occasion, the organisers said that many senior citizens face neglect despite having families and asserted the need for society to support them with dignity and compassion.

They further announced that the trust offers free shelter to elderly people in need. Those aware of similar cases or requiring assistance can contact the organisation at 9949926465.

The initiative highlights the importance of community support systems in addressing the growing issue of elderly neglect and ensuring that vulnerable individuals are not left without care.

CPI Slams Centre, State Over Governance and Democratic Concerns

Nellore, April 26 | TPN Bureau

K. Ramakrishna on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the BJP-led Central government and the state administration, alleging erosion of democratic values and neglect of key public concerns. Addressing a press conference at the CPI office in Nellore, he accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of adopting what he termed as "intimidation-driven politics."

Ramakrishna questioned the Centre's response to remarks made by former US President Donald Trump, claiming they undermined India's dignity. He further alleged that investigative agencies were being used to target opposition leaders, while those aligning with the BJP were spared scrutiny.

Highlighting economic concerns, he said rising fuel prices, supply issues, and the failure to ensure fair prices for farmers reflected shortcomings in governance over the past decade. On the proposed



delimitation exercise, Ramakrishna expressed apprehension that southern states could face reduced representation if population is used as the primary criterion. He alleged that such measures were being introduced under the cover of legislative reforms like the women's reservation bill.

Gujjala Eswaraiah also criticised the state government, stating that farmers, particularly those cultivating maize and paddy, were facing severe distress. CPI leaders demanded immediate intervention and warned of intensified protests if issues remained unresolved.

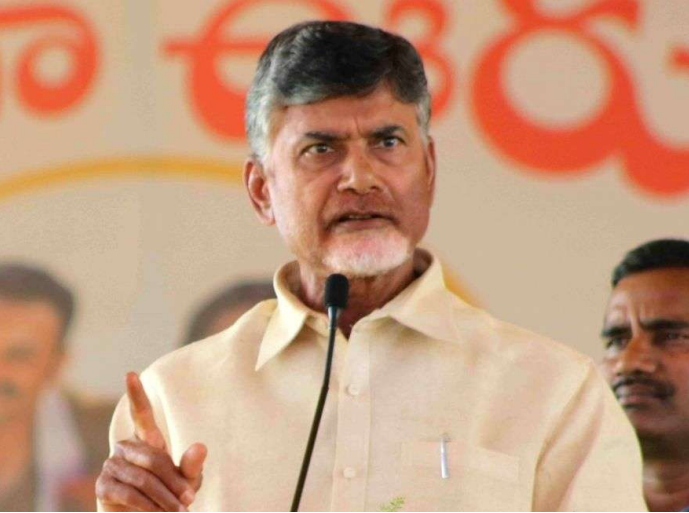
Top Dignitaries to Attend Andhra University Centenary in Vizag

Visakhapatnam, April 25 | TPN Bureau

The city is set to host prominent dignitaries as the centenary celebrations of Andhra University conclude on a grand note. Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan, Governor S. Abdul Nazeer, and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will attend the closing ceremony in Visakhapatnam.

Governor Abdul Nazeer will arrive in the city on Sunday night and stay at a private hotel. On Monday, he will receive the Vice President at INS Dega and later participate in the centenary celebrations in the evening.

Vice President Radhakrishnan is scheduled to arrive at INS Dega on Monday morning from New Delhi. After landing, he will travel to Srikakulam district by helicopter to offer prayers at the Sri Kurmanathaswamy Temple and Arasavalli Sri Suryanarayana Swamy Temple. He will then return to Visakhapatnam in the afternoon and attend the



Andhra University centenary event at the Engineering College grounds before departing for Tirupati later in the evening.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will arrive in Visakhapatnam on Monday afternoon and proceed to the venue to welcome the Vice President and take part in the closing ceremony. He will later attend an

official dinner hosted by the state government.

On Tuesday, the Chief Minister will visit Tarluvada to lay the foundation stone for a major data center project and address a public meeting.

Security and logistical arrangements have been put in place to ensure the smooth conduct of the event, which is expected to draw large crowds.



Mandali Buddha Prasad Visits Temples in Proddatur

Avinigadda, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Avinigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad visited the Agastyeswara Swamy Temple in Proddatur, Kadapa district, on Sunday and offered prayers. Invited by noted lyricist Jonnavithula Ramalingasastri, he

participated in special rituals and was felicitated by temple authorities and Vedic scholars.

Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted the spiritual significance of temples in Diviseema, including Mopidevi and Ghantasala, associated

with sage Agastya.

Later, he visited the Sri Kanayaka Parameswari Temple and took part in birthday celebrations of the Goddess. Temple priests and elders welcomed him. Litterateur G.V. Purnachand accompanied him.



YSRCP Leader Defends Ravindranath Reddy

Kadapa, April 26 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP State Joint Secretary Kishore Boosipati strongly defended Kadapa district YSRCP president and former MLA P. Ravindranath Reddy, stating that he is "not corrupt but an ideal leader," and criticised TDP leaders for making what he called baseless allegations.

Speaking at a press meet in Kadapa, Boosipati said TDP district president Bhupesh Reddy and MLC R. Rangopal Reddy should first understand the political history of Ravindranath Reddy before making public statements. He alleged that the criticism was politically motivated and aimed at gaining favour from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Boosipati said Ravindranath Reddy had a long his-

tory in public life, starting from youth movements in 1986, and had served as Zilla Parishad Vice Chairman, Mayor of Kadapa, and MLA from Kamalapuram twice. He said attempts to link him with illegal activities were "false and defamatory."

He also alleged that some leaders were targeting YSRCP president Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for political gain and called such remarks unfortunate. Responding to allegations related to a recent incident involving a village dispute, he said it was a minor altercation that escalated and accused police negligence for not controlling the situation in time. Boosipati challenged TDP leaders to a public debate anywhere in the State and said he was ready to discuss the issues at any time.

Minister Reviews Fuel Supply, Assures No Disruptions

Amaravati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

State Minister Vasamsetti Subhash on Sunday held a teleconference with district collectors of Konaseema and Krishna to review the availability of petrol and diesel. The meeting focused on ensuring uninterrupted fuel supply to the public amid rising demand concerns.

The Minister directed officials to closely monitor stock levels and assess demand at fuel stations across both districts. He instructed authorities to implement proactive measures to prevent any disruption in the supply chain and ensure systematic distribution at all petrol outlets.

Collectors were asked to submit detailed reports on the status of fuel availability and functioning of petrol stations. Emphasizing preparedness, Subhash said the government is taking all necessary steps to avoid inconvenience to citizens.



He also appealed to the public not to engage in panic buying or stockpiling of fuel. "We will take all necessary measures to ensure the public faces no difficulties," the Minister assured.

Massive Cordon Search in Tirupati to Curb Crime

Tirupati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

In a major crackdown on anti-social activities, Tirupati district police conducted a large-scale 'Cordon and Search' operation, codenamed Vajra Prahara, in the early hours of Sunday across Damedu and Taraka Rama Nagar areas. The operation involved around 600 personnel from multiple departments, including police, excise, transport, Eagle squad, armed reserve, dog squad, and revenue teams. Drone cameras were deployed for surveillance, ensuring thorough monitoring of the targeted localities. During the drive, 38 suspects were detained for questioning, while 224 motorcycles and 22 autorickshaws were seized for lack of proper documentation. In Damedu, officials covered nearly 3,000 households housing about 8,000 residents, while in Taraka Rama Nagar, around 10,000 households with a population of nearly 20,000 were

inspected.

Police collected details of residents, particularly those in rented accommodations, and carried out checks on suspicious individuals and abandoned vehicles. The operation also focused on identifying individuals allegedly involved in criminal activities while blending into densely populated areas. The district police chief reviewed the operation on the ground, interacted with residents, and stressed the importance of public cooperation in maintaining law and order. He reiterated that strict action would be taken against those indulging in illegal activities, including drug-related offences and rowdiness.

Emphasising the Safe Tirupati initiative, police urged citizens to act as responsible partners in ensuring security. People were advised to report suspicious activities by dialling 112 or sharing information on narcotics through the dedicated helpline, assuring confidentiality.

Fuel Crisis Sparks Political Row as CPI Blames Governments for Public Hardship

Vijayawada, April 26 | TPN Bureau

The alleged shortage of petrol and diesel in Andhra Pradesh has triggered sharp criticism from CPI State Secretary Gujjula Eswaraiah, who accused both the Central and State governments of negligence and poor planning, claiming that farmers, motorists, and the general public are suffering severe hardship due to the crisis. In a statement issued on Sunday, Eswaraiah said farmers in the Godavari delta region are facing acute distress as diesel shortages coincide with the peak harvest season. "Farmers are unable to run paddy harvesting machines at a critical time. While they are already struggling with low remunerative prices, the fuel shortage is adding to their losses," he said. He added that consumers across the state are forced to queue up at petrol bunks for long hours due to panic buying and supply disruptions. "People are abandoning their daily work just to get fuel. Vehicular movement has been severely affected in many areas," he alleged.

Referring to official data discussed during a recent teleconference, Eswaraiah said that out of 4,510 fuel outlets in the

state, nearly 421 were reported to have shut down temporarily due to supply issues. While supply has reportedly increased by 10 percent, he said panic buying has pushed consumption up by nearly 50 percent, worsening the situation.

Criticising the leadership, he said, "Instead of addressing the crisis on a war footing, the Chief Minister is limiting himself to reviews. This is not the time for remote instructions but for direct intervention."

He also questioned the absence of ministers on the ground. "While leaders are busy with tours and political engagements, the public is left to suffer without answers," he said, demanding accountability from the government.

Eswaraiah warned that if the situation continues, essential commodity prices could rise sharply, further burdening common citizens. He called for immediate intervention from both governments, stating, "The Centre and the State must act together without delay to restore fuel supplies and prevent a deeper crisis."

He further cautioned that farmers and consumers may be forced to launch large-scale protests if the issue is not resolved promptly.

Manipal Hospitals Vijayawada Achieves Milestone in Robotic Heart Surgery

Vijayawada, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Manipal Hospitals Vijayawada has achieved a major milestone in advanced cardiac care by successfully performing multiple robotic heart surgeries within a single month, all with positive clinical outcomes. The hospital has also completed several robotic-assisted Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG) procedures, strengthening its focus on minimally invasive and precision-based cardiac treatment.

Robotic heart surgery, performed using the da Vinci Surgical System, allows surgeons to operate through small incisions instead of opening the chest. This approach reduces pain, blood loss, and recovery time while ensuring higher precision during complex procedures.

Dr. Dilip Ratti, Consultant – CTVS, said, "Robotic cardiac surgery allows us to achieve a

level of precision that significantly enhances surgical outcomes while minimising patient trauma. Our early experience with robotic-assisted CABG has been extremely encouraging, with patients benefiting from faster recovery and excellent clinical results." He added that all procedures used total arterial revascularisation for improved long-term outcomes.

Hospital Director Ramanjaneya Reddy said, "This milestone reflects our commitment to bringing cutting-edge medical technology and advanced surgical expertise to the region."

The hospital reported that all patients recovered smoothly without major complications, with reduced ICU stay and faster mobilisation. The success was attributed to coordinated teamwork among surgeons, anaesthesiologists, ICU staff, and nursing teams.



Actor Bobby Simha Visits Mopidevi Subrahmanyeswara Swamy Temple

Mopidevi, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Film actor Bobby Simha, along with his family members, visited the Sri Valli Deva-sena Sametha Sri Subrahmanyeswara Swamy temple in Mopidevi on Sunday and offered prayers. The actor, who hails from Kosuruvaripalem village in Mopidevi mandal, was warmly received by local youth leader Mandali Venkatram upon his arrival.

As part of his visit, Bobby Simha offered milk at the an-thill inside the temple premises in fulfilment of his vows. He later had darshan of the presiding deity and performed special rituals with devotion. Temple priests blessed him with Vedic chants following the rituals.

Temple officials Dasari

Srirama Varaprasada Rao and Superintendent Achyutha Madhu presented him with prasadam and a framed portrait of the deity.

Speaking briefly on the occasion, temple sources noted that the actor expressed happiness at visiting his native place and participating in the rituals. Devotees present at the temple also welcomed his visit and gathered in large numbers for darshan.

Bobby Simha, known for his work across Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada films, has earned recognition for his versatile roles in Indian cinema. His temple visit drew attention from local residents and fans, marking a spiritual and emotional connection with his native region.



Stay Away from Drugs, Embrace Sports: Ravikrishna

Vijayawada, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Amid growing awareness of Say no to drugs campaigns across the state, a strong message on youth empowerment and social responsibility resonated at the SRR International Open Rapid FIDE-rated Chess Tournament held at Scotspine International School in Kanuru on Sunday.

Participating as the chief guest, AP Eagle Chief A.K. Ravikrishna addressed students, parents, and organisers, urging the youth to stay away from drugs and focus on constructive activities like sports and education. He highlighted the State government's commitment to safeguarding students through the EAGLE initiative, aimed at preventing drug abuse and building a drug-free society.

He explained that the initiative seeks to protect millions of students from the dangers of narcotics and addiction. Emphasising the seriousness of the issue, he warned that anti-national elements are attempting to weaken society by targeting youth through substance abuse. He called for increased awareness and vigilance among students and the public. Ravikrishna said that large-scale campaigns such as "Drugs Vaddhu Bro" are being conducted across educational institutions, with Eagle Clubs



already established in thousands of schools and colleges. He urged students to take responsibility not only for themselves but also for their peers and communities by spreading awareness and resisting harmful influences. Addressing participants, he stressed the importance of sports, particularly chess, in shaping character and discipline. He described chess as a powerful mental exercise that enhances concentration, strategic thinking, and decision-making skills. He noted that such activities help students channel their energy positively and avoid negative habits. He also encouraged the public to report any information related to drug circulation

through the Eagle helpline, assuring confidentiality. He said that collective efforts are essential to build a safe and healthy society. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, with organisers appreciating their competitive spirit and commitment. Representatives from educational institutions, sports bodies, and enforcement agencies were present. The programme concluded with a call for youth to embrace discipline, sportsmanship, and awareness, reinforcing the idea that a strong and responsible generation is key to building a safer and more progressive state.

Nandivelugu Credit Co-operative Bank Expands Services with New Branch in Tenali

Tenali, April 26, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Rajya Sabha Member Sana Satish Babu inaugurated the seventh branch of Nandivelugu Credit Co-operative Society Bank in Tenali, highlighting the institution's steady growth and public trust. The branch was formally opened by lighting the ceremonial lamp and cutting the ribbon.

Speaking on the occasion, he said, "The opening of a seventh branch in a major town like Tenali reflects the strong trust the bank has earned among people." He added, "Financial institutions must always prioritise public confidence, and I hope this bank continues to expand further with more branches."



He appreciated the bank's efforts in making financial services more accessible to local residents and congratulated its founders Lakshmi Koteswara Rao and Ramakrishna for their leadership.

Bank representatives said the new branch aims to

strengthen customer service and expand outreach in the region.

Chairman Thota Lakshmi Koteswara Rao, Bhashyam Ramakrishna, local leaders, customers, and staff participated in the programme in large numbers.

Ancient Vishnu Idol Unearthed

Pedana, April 26 | TPN Bureau

An ancient idol of lord Sri Maha Vishnu was unearthed during excavation work at a village tank in Ramanuja Varthalapalli village under Pedana constituency on Sunday, creating a wave of excitement and spiritual fervour among locals. The idol was discovered while the earth was being excavated using a JCB as part of renovation works and was loaded into a tractor. A labourer noticed the sculpture while levelling the soil, following which villagers rushed to the site. The idol, found buried several feet underground, is believed to reflect remarkable craftsmanship. Based on its design, ornamentation, and hand gestures, locals and ex-

perts suspect it belongs to an ancient historical period.

Soon after the discovery, villagers cleaned the idol and performed special prayers at the site, turning it into a temporary place of worship. Many devotees gathered in large numbers, expressing deep reverence.

Locals said the discovery has enhanced the historical significance of their village and may attract archaeological attention. They have appealed to the government to preserve the idol safely and conduct a detailed study.

Officials from the archaeology department are expected to be informed, after which further examination, including carbon dating, may help determine the exact age and origin of the idol.



New Substation to Strengthen Power Supply in Machilipatnam

Machilipatnam, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Mines Kollu Ravindra laid the foundation stone for a 33/11 kV indoor power substation at Bachupeta in Machilipatnam, aiming to strengthen the electricity infrastructure and ensure a reliable supply in the region. The project, estimated at 6.30 crore, will feature modern underground facilities.

Addressing the gathering, the minister said an uninterrupted and quality power supply is essential for development and attracting investments. He noted that Machilipatnam currently has around 70,000 urban connections, 30,000 rural connections, and nearly 3,500 aqua connections, underscoring the growing electricity demand.

He highlighted that subsidised power is being provided to aqua farmers at 1.50 per unit, while free electricity up to 200 units is extended to SC, ST, Nayee Brahmin, and hand-

loom weaver communities. He also urged people to take advantage of the Centre's Surya Ghar scheme to promote solar energy adoption.

Criticising the previous administration, the minister alleged that mismanagement led to increased tariffs and burdened consumers. He said the current government has taken steps to ease this burden by rationalising tariffs.

Ravindra recalled that despite power shortages after state bifurcation, reforms between 2014 and 2019 helped achieve a surplus, with emphasis on renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and hydro power.

He further announced a target of providing 10,000 new electricity connections in the constituency. With the Machilipatnam Port nearing completion, he said the necessary infrastructure, including power supply, will be ensured to support upcoming industries and economic growth.

Free Mega Medical Camp Brings Quality Healthcare to Vijayawada Central Constituency

Vijayawada, April 26 | TPN Bureau

A large-scale free medical camp was organized in the Vijayawada Central constituency, reinforcing the alliance government's focus on strengthening the healthcare system and expanding access to medical services for all sections of society. The camp was inaugurated by MP Kesineni Chinni at the Ramaraju Convention Center near Ramakrishnapuram Flyover in the 31st Division.

The programme was conducted under the aegis of the Gottumukkala Foundation in collaboration with Swara Hospital and witnessed participation from public representatives and medical professionals. Specialised consultations were provided in cardiology, general surgery, gynaecology, orthopaedics, and general medicine, along with eye care services. Free medicines were also distributed to beneficiaries attending the camp. Addressing the gathering, MP Kesineni Chinni said the government is giving top priority to healthcare, with a vision of establishing 100-bed hospitals in every constituency. He stated that the Chief Minister is committed to improving public health infra-

structure and ensuring that quality medical services reach even economically weaker sections. He appreciated the organisers for taking government welfare initiatives to the grassroots level through such camps.

He further emphasised the importance of coordination between government and private hospitals to ensure affordable and efficient healthcare delivery. According to him, such collaboration is essential to building a strong and accessible medical ecosystem. He also noted that initiatives like these medical camps help boost public confidence in the healthcare system. The camp witnessed active participation from senior political leaders and coordinators. Central MLA Bonda Umamaheswara Rao, former MLC Paruchuri Ashok Babu, and other leaders attended the programme and supported the initiative. Organisers stated that the overwhelming response from residents reflects the urgent need for more such healthcare outreach programmes. They expressed their commitment to continuing similar initiatives in the future to benefit wider sections of society.

PIN POINT

Kola Anand Pays Tribute to Nadendla Bhaskara Rao

Vijayawada: BJP State Vice President Kola Anand paid floral tributes to the portrait of former united Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nadendla Bhaskara Rao, who recently passed away after a brief illness. The tribute was offered at his residence in Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad.

On this occasion, Kola Anand also met and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members, including his son Nadendla Manohar, Andhra Pradesh Civil Supplies Minister and Jana Sena PAC Chairman.

He prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace and wished strength and courage to the family members during this difficult time.

Be Counted Build the Nation Join the Census Drive

Amaravati April 26 | TPN Bureau

Be Counted, Build the Nation, echoing this call, officials across Andhra Pradesh have intensified efforts to encourage public participation in the nationwide Census, stressing that accurate data is vital for effective governance and development planning.

In Prakasam district, Collector P. Rajababu reassured residents that there is no shortage of petrol and diesel, dismissing rumours that had triggered panic buying. He said adequate fuel stocks are available and urged the public not to hoard fuel unnecessarily. During a review teleconference with police, revenue officials, and oil companies, he directed authorities to ensure uninterrupted supply and monitor petrol bunks closely. Strict action

will be taken against those spreading misinformation or engaging in illegal stocking, he warned.

Meanwhile, in Nellore, Joint Collector Mogili Venkateswarlu led a 5K awareness run to promote Census participation. The rally, organised by the Municipal Corporation, passed through key city areas before concluding at A.C. Subba Reddy Stadium. He urged citizens to register their household details online by April 30 and cooperate with enumerators who will conduct door-to-door surveys from May 1 to May 30. Municipal Commissioner Nandan highlighted that the Census, being conducted after 2011, plays a crucial role in planning development, employment, and industrial growth.

In Tirupati, a similar

awareness run was flagged off by DRO G. Narasimhulu along with TTD Board Chairperson Panabaka Lakshmi. Beginning at Vivekananda Circle and ending at SV University, the event aimed to spread awareness about self-enumeration. Officials explained that the Census will be conducted in phases, with house-listing scheduled in May and population enumeration planned for February 2027. Citizens were encouraged to use the digital platform to register their details and obtain a unique identification number.

Kurnool also witnessed an enthusiastic response, with Joint Collector NurulQamar leading a 5K run from KondareddyBuruju to the Collectorate. He stressed that self-enumeration ensures accurate and error-free data,

which is essential for policy decisions. He clarified that officials would only seek basic information and a mobile number, cautioning citizens against sharing sensitive details. Municipal Commissioner ChallaObulesu said enumerators would soon begin door-to-door surveys and appealed for full public cooperation. Across districts, awareness campaigns, rallies, and official outreach programmes are reinforcing the message that the Census is a shared responsibility. Officials emphasised that reliable population data forms the backbone of welfare schemes, infrastructure development, and economic planning. Citizens are being urged to actively participate, avoid misinformation, and contribute to building a stronger, data-driven future for the nation.



Police Sports Meet Aims to Relieve Stress

Bapatla, April 26 | TPN Bureau

District police chief Umamaheswar highlighted the importance of sports in reducing stress among police personnel and promoting mental well-being. He stated that sports not only offer recreation but also help develop leadership qualities and team spirit among staff. He was speaking after inaugurating a cricket tournament organized by the District Police Department at the Bapatla Police Grounds on Sunday. The officer also participated in the event, stepping onto the field with the bat and boosting the morale of personnel with his enthusiastic presence.

Addressing the gathering, he noted that police personnel work under constant pressure while maintaining law and order, leaving them with little

time for relaxation. Such sporting events, he said, provide much-needed relief and help officers return to duty with renewed energy and focus.

The tournament features five teams representing Bapatla, Chirala, and Repalle subdivisions, along with Armed Reserve and Headquarters units. Matches are scheduled to be held every Sunday.

Referring to the ongoing IPL season, he cautioned youth against falling into the trap of betting. He warned that the lure of easy money could ruin lives and urged youngsters to enjoy cricket in the true spirit of sportsmanship rather than as a means for gambling.

Several police officials and personnel attended the event, making it a spirited beginning to the department's sports initiative.

Huge Turnout at Tirumala Seminar on IIT-NEET Preparation

Rajamahendravaram Rural, April 26 | TPN Bureau

An awareness seminar held at Tirumala Educational Institutions in Kateru on Sunday witnessed an overwhelming response, with nearly 10,000 students and parents attending the event. Chairman Nuna Tirumala Rao said the seminar aimed to guide students towards success in competitive exams like IIT and NEET. He stressed the importance of introducing these syllabi at the school level to help students face exams confidently and without stress. He also cautioned parents about the growing influence of electronic gadgets and social media on children, urging them to encourage academic focus. Director Saroja Devi highlighted



the vital role of parents, especially mothers, in shaping a child's character and future. She urged parents to instill strong moral values and act as role models, noting that children often emulate their behaviour. She also advised lim-

iting screen time and promoting reading habits. Academic Director G. Satish Babu, Principal V. Srihari, parents, and students participated, making the seminar a significant awareness initiative.

Autos Distributed to Boost Women's Empowerment

Srikalahasti, April 26 | TPN Bureau

A women empowerment programme was organised jointly by Rotary Club and RAS in Srikalahasti on Sunday, focusing on promoting self-employment and financial independence.

As part of the initiative, four women from rural and urban areas were provided with auto-

rickshaws through CSR funds extended by ZinnovDraup. Organisers encouraged the beneficiaries to utilise the opportunity to become financially self-reliant and improve their livelihoods. In addition, five sewing machines were handed over to RAS to support free skill training programmes for women. The organisers said the initiative would help create

sustainable employment opportunities and enhance skill development. Rotary Club president Pasupuleti Parthasarathi, RAS project director V. Nagaraju, project chairman O. Venugopal, coordinator T. Venkata Muni, and members participated. Representatives of Union Bank of India, which supported the project through loans, were also present.

TTD Unveils Brahmotsavam Plans at Nagalapuram

Tirupati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

TTD Executive Officer M. Ravichandra unveiled posters and booklets for the annual Brahmotsavams of VedanarayanaSwamy temple in Nagalapuram, scheduled from May 1 to May 9.

Reviewing arrangements, he directed all departments to work in coordination to ensure smooth conduct of the festival. In view of summer conditions, instructions were issued to set up cooling sheds, provide drinking water, sprinkle water on roads, and apply cool paint on Mada streets for devotees' comfort. He also called for attractive electrical and floral decorations, proper queue lines, and installation of arches and flex banners.

The EO stressed the need for daily spiritual programmes such as bhajans and kolatam during vahanasevas. He also directed officials to arrange mobile toilets, sanitation staff, ambulances, first-aid centres, fire safety measures, and adequate parking facilities. Devotees were urged to participate in large numbers and seek di-



Temple officials were present on the occasion		
Brahmotsavam Schedule		
Date	Morning	Evening
May 1	Dhvajarohanam	PeddaSesha Vahanam
May 2	ChinnaSesha Vahanam	Hamsa Vahanam
May 3	Simha Vahanam	Mutyapu Pandiri
May 4	Kalpavriksha Vahanam	Sarvabhupala Vahanam
May 5	Mohini Avataram	Garuda Vahanam
May 6	Hanumantha Vahanam	Gaja Vahanam
May 7	Suryaprabha	Chandraprabha
May 8	Rathotsavam	Ashwa Vahanam
May 9	Chakrasnanam	Dhvajavarohanam
Vahanasevas will be held daily from 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM and 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM. The Arjita Kalyanam will be conducted on May 8 evening.		

tees were urged to participate in large numbers and seek di-

vine blessings.

Kurnool Pushes Fast-Track Solid Waste Management Projects

Kurnool, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Municipal Commissioner ChallaObulesu has directed officials to expedite solid waste management projects following the completion of biomining at the Gargheyapuram dumpyard on the city outskirts. During an inspection on Sunday, Obulesu reviewed ongoing biomining works spread across 56 acres and instructed officials to complete the process by the end of next month. He also stressed the need to fast-track the construction of a Waste-to-Energy plant over 15 acres and Integrated Solid Waste Man-

agement facilities across 8 acres.

The Commissioner ordered officials to identify and allocate additional land required for the projects without delay. He further directed contractors to speed up processing of the remaining 3.5 lakh tonnes of legacy waste.

Officials from the Municipal and Public Health departments were present during the inspection. The initiative is aimed at improving waste management systems and ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable urban environment in the city.

No Fuel Shortage in Eluru, Rumour-Mongers Face Action

Eluru, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Joint Collector M.J. Abhishek Gowda has clarified that petrol and diesel stocks in Eluru district are sufficient, urging the public not to panic over rumours of a shortage. He warned that strict action will be taken against those spreading false information on social media that creates unnecessary anxiety among citizens.

Addressing a press conference at his camp office, Abhishek Gowda said the district has adequate fuel reserves to meet current demand and that continuous supply is being ensured through close coordination with oil companies. He noted that recent rumours triggered panic buying, leading to heavy rush at petrol bunks and temporary shortages in some locations.

Out of 232 fuel stations in the district, 28 experienced minor diesel shortages on Saturday due to excessive stocking by

the public. He assured that steps are underway to restore normal supply at these outlets by Sunday evening or Monday morning. To meet rising demand, diesel allocation this week has been increased by 10 percent compared to the previous week.

The Joint Collector cautioned people against hoarding fuel in cans and drums under false claims and said special monitoring teams have been deployed. He also assured uninterrupted diesel supply for essential sectors such as agriculture and aquaculture, particularly during the ongoing Rabi season. Lorry drivers transporting grain have been advised to contact local officials for immediate assistance if needed.

Reiterating that there is no shortage, he appealed to citizens to purchase fuel only as per routine requirements and not to believe misinformation circulating online.

SagarMitras Thank MP for PMMSY Extension

Nellore, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Members of the SagarMitra community expressed gratitude to MP VemireddyPrabhaakar Reddy after the Centre decided to extend services under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) for another six months. They met the MP at his office on Sunday and felicitated him with a traditional shawl in recognition of his efforts.

Representatives of the AP SagarMitra Employees Union, Nellore chapter, said the extension has brought major relief to workers who were uncertain about their future. They acknowledged the MP's role in taking up their concerns at the Union level and ensuring a positive outcome.

The MP had met Union Fisheries Minister Rajiv Ranjan

Singh in New Delhi on February 11 and highlighted that the tenure of SagarMitras appointed under Phase-I was set to end on March 31, 2026. He urged the Centre to continue their services, noting their crucial role in bridging the gap between the government and coastal fishing communities.

SagarMitras are actively involved in creating awareness among fishermen about welfare schemes and development programmes. Following the Centre's decision to extend PMMSY services until September 2026, members expressed happiness over the continuation of their roles. Union leaders and members, including Avula Vasu, Venkateswarlu, Lakshmaiah, Swapna, Lakshmi, Mobina and Mohan, were present.

Special Prayers Held for PawanKalyan's Recovery

Nellore Rural, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Janasena leaders and supporters offered special prayers at the Vedagiri Lakshmi NarasimhaSwamy Temple in Narasimhakonda, wishing for the speedy recovery of party leader Deputy Chief Minister PawanKalyan, who is currently recuperating after surgery.

Party cadres from Devarapalem and nearby areas gathered early on Sunday and invited district leaders to join the prayers. They climbed the temple hill on foot and performed rituals seeking his good health,

longevity, and early return to public life.

District General Secretary Kishore Gunukula said there is immense affection for PawanKalyan in every village and stressed the need for party workers to strengthen connections between the leader and the people. Leaders noted that the programme was organised as part of efforts to unite party workers and supporters. Youth from Nellore Rural, Kondlapudi, and Devarapalem participated in large numbers, reflecting strong support and admiration for the leader.

Endowments Secretary Visits Srikalahasti Temple

Srikalahasti, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Endowments Department Secretary Hari Jawahar Lal visited the Srikalahasteswaraswamy Temple along with his family on Sunday. He was received at the South Gopuram by Trust Board Chairman Kotte Sai Prasad and Executive Officer B.K. Venkateshulu. The Secretary participated

in Rahu-Ketu poojas and later had darshan in the inner sanctum. Vedic scholars offered blessings, while temple authorities presented teerthaprasadam and seshavastrams.

Chief Priest Sambandham Gurukkal, EE Srinivasa Raju, AEO Vidyasagar Reddy, Supervisor Nagabhushanam, APRO Ravi, and other staff were present.

Tirupati, April 26 | TPN Bureau

Tirupati district police have arrested a man for allegedly cheating devotees by promising special darshan using fake recommendation letters. The accused, identified as Chaganti Naveen Kumar, was taken into custody by Tirumala II Town Police fol-

lowing a complaint. According to police, the accused collected 36,000 from a woman from East Godavari district, promising to arrange break darshan tickets for her and 12 family members at 3,000 per person. He allegedly

downloaded a recommendation letter format of a TTD board member from the internet, fabricated documents, and sent them via WhatsApp. The fraud came to light when the victim visited Tirumala on October 24, 2025,

and officials identified the letters as fake. A case was registered, and a special team was formed to investigate the matter. The accused was arrested in Tirumala on April 25. During questioning, he confessed to the crime. Police seized a mobile phone and 36,000 in cash.

International Film Festivals: The Foundation of a ‘Cinema Hub’

The government has been announcing that it will turn Hyderabad into an international film hub. The goal is noble and worth aspiring for. But a film hub cannot come into existence merely by giving awards to filmmakers, by granting permissions for shootings, or by allowing higher ticket rates and more shows. Nor will the establishment of a government website for film permissions automatically create a hub and even the arrival of NETFLIX is not enough to be a film hub.

What exactly is a film hub? Fundamentally, it requires many facilities, amenities, and infrastructural foundations. If the state government genuinely has the interest and determination to develop Hyderabad as a film hub, the city will grow not only culturally but also commercially. As a result, not just the film industry but also employment, tourism, and the hospitality sector will flourish significantly. A film hub, as a physical and economic cluster, can emerge as the center of film production and related activities, giving Hyderabad the chance to become a major cinema platform. Hyderabad can then evolve into a national and international film center.

NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

We have to admit that Cinema is not merely a tool of entertainment. It is an art form, an industry, a culture, and a medium of societal expression. An international film festival is a grand cultural event that brings together the finest films from across the world onto a single platform. It is not just about screening films, it is a global venue where diverse languages, cultures, and social experiences are shared through the medium of cinema.

At such festivals, feature films, documentaries, short films, and experimental works are showcased. Directors, writ-



VARALA ANAND

Recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award for Translation

ers, actors, critics, and audiences all converge in one place. The primary aim of international film festivals is to promote world cinema, transcending regional boundaries and ensuring that quality films reach a global audience. Beyond mainstream commercial cinema, these festivals provide recognition to emerging filmmakers and serve as platforms for new ideas and fresh voices. In reality, cinema hubs are built on networks and relationships. International film festivals act as meeting grounds for directors, writers, producers, and investors. For decades, regional, independent, and experimental cinema has found its primary stage through international festivals. Many globally acclaimed filmmakers first gained recognition here. When a festival highlights local stories and talent, it enables that region to grow into a self-sustaining cinema hub.

A cinema hub also requires an informed audience. Festivals introduce world cinema to viewers, fostering awareness through discussions, master classes, and retrospectives. This creates space even for non-commercial, artistic cinema.

Hyderabad's Missed and

Renewed Opportunity

In this context, the initiative taken in 1986 by N. T. Rama Rao was remarkable. The Government of India's international film festival, 'Filmotsav', was hosted in Hyderabad. Responding swiftly, the Chief Minister had the Lalitha Kala Thoranam constructed in just 90 days and successfully organized the city's first major film festival, even arranging free meals for delegates making it a unique cultural event. Hyderabad hosted the international film festival once again in 1999. However, in later years, the central government established Goa as the permanent venue, and film festival activity in Hyderabad gradually declined. Even the long-running International Children's Film Festival eventually came to an end.

The Way Forward

If the state government truly envisions building a cinema hub, it must look beyond merely establishing studios. The focus should be on consistently organizing full-fledged international film festivals. Only then can the idea of a cinema hub take concrete shape. A strong film festival is not an accessory it is the very foundation upon which a vibrant cinema ecosystem is built.

The India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), being signed on Monday, marks a defining milestone in India's engagement with the developed world. It reflects a decisive advancement in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of transforming global economic partnerships into tangible gains for farmers, women, youth, and job-creating industries.

The FTA follows a series of landmark trade pacts with major developed economies, including the United Kingdom and the European Union. These agreements strengthen India's position in global markets and provide exporters with a competitive edge in some of the world's most lucrative economies, even amid ongoing global uncertainty and volatility.

A Strong Push for Exports and Jobs

At the core of this win-win agreement is New Zealand's commitment to immediately eliminate tariffs on all Indian products, removing a significant barrier in a market where key exports currently face duties of around 10%.

This is a major boost for labour-intensive sectors such as garments, carpets, yarn, fabrics, footwear, bags, belts, automobile components, machinery, tools, gems and jewellery, and handicrafts. These industries form the backbone of India's MSME ecosystem and will benefit from improved price competitiveness and expanded market access. The result will be a strong push for exports and large-scale employment generation across manufacturing clusters, artisan communities, and small enterprises.

This agreement reflects the broader philosophy guiding India's trade policy since 2014— one rooted in inclusivity, empowerment, and shared prosperity. Trade is viewed not merely as an economic tool, but as an instrument of nation-



- Piyush Goyal

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry

al transformation that benefits farmers, workers, women, youth, and the underprivileged.

Nari Shakti

A defining feature of this agreement is that it is India's first women-led FTA, with nearly the entire negotiating team comprising women. This includes the chief negotiator, deputy chief negotiator, sectoral leads, and India's ambassador to New Zealand.

This milestone reflects the growing role of women in governance and decision-making, reinforcing the idea of Nari Shakti as a key driver of national development.

Farmers First

The FTA has been carefully structured to enhance agricultural productivity. New Zealand will support Agriculture Productivity Action Plans for kiwi, apples, and honey. These initiatives include improved planting material, research collaboration, capacity building for growers, orchard management practices, post-harvest improvements, food safety systems, and the establishment of Centres of Excellence. Such efforts will enhance production, improve quality standards, and increase farm incomes.

At the same time, India has firmly protected its core agricultural interests. Sensitive products such as dairy items, onions, chana, peas, corn, almonds, sugar, and certain oils and fats have been excluded from tariff concessions. This ensures that domestic farmers remain insulated from disruptive import competition, keeping their interests central to trade negotiations.

Youth and Professionals

A major pillar of the agreement is enhanced mobility for students and skilled professionals, opening new global pathways for India's youth.

For the first time in any bilateral trade agreement, New Zealand has introduced a structured framework for Indian student mobility and post-study work opportunities, with no numerical caps. Students will be allowed to work at least 20 hours per week during their studies, while post-study work rights extend up to three years for STEM graduates and up to four years for doctoral scholars.

The agreement also introduces a Temporary Employment Entry Visa pathway for up to 5,000 Indian professionals at any given time, allowing stays of up to three years in

sectors such as IT, engineering, healthcare, education, construction, and traditional fields like yoga, Ayurveda, Indian cuisine, and music education.

Additionally, a Working Holiday Visa scheme will allow 1,000 young Indians annually to live and work in New Zealand for up to 12 months, strengthening cultural exchange and global exposure.

Investment and Innovation

New Zealand has committed to facilitating USD 20 billion in investment into India, supporting manufacturing, infrastructure, renewable energy, digital services, and innovation ecosystems. This is expected to further boost employment and economic growth.

A rebalancing clause has been included to ensure accountability, enabling India to take corrective measures if investment commitments fall short. The agreement also promotes collaboration in research, technology transfer, skill development, and innovation-driven sectors, ensuring long-term developmental partnerships.

Trade Strategy

The India–New Zealand FTA reflects a clear and confident trade strategy of partnering with developed economies that provide meaningful market access while respecting domestic sensitivities.

India today negotiates from a position of strength and credibility. Unlike earlier decades, when trade agreements often exposed vulnerable sectors, current negotiations ensure that agriculture, dairy, and other sensitive areas remain fully protected.

As India deepens its engagement with advanced economies, such agreements demonstrate how trade policy can align with national development goals, ensuring inclusive growth and long-term economic resilience on the path to Viksit Bharat 2047.

Mamata's Last Gamble Meets BJP's Bhabanipur Challenge

TPN | Kolkata | April 26, 2026

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee appears to be entering one of the most politically decisive phases of her career, as her final big electoral strategy collides head-on with the BJP's determined push in Bhabanipur — the symbolic heart of her political authority.

Bhabanipur is not just another assembly constituency for Mamata Banerjee. It is her political fortress, the seat from which she re-established her authority after losing Nandigram to BJP leader Suvenudhikari in the 2021 Assembly elections. Her victory in the Bhabanipur bypoll later that year restored both her legislative legitimacy and political confidence. Since then, Bhabanipur has become a symbol of her personal credibility and Trinamool Congress's emotional hold over Bengal politics.

Now, with political equations shifting and the BJP aggressively trying to expand its urban influence, Bhabanipur is emerging once again as the battleground that could define Mamata's future. The BJP understands the symbolic importance of the constituency. Winning Bhabanipur would not merely be an electoral success—it would be a psychological blow to Mamata's image as Bengal's undisputed political force. For the saffron party, Bhabanipur offers the chance to challenge the Trinamool Congress where it hurts most: prestige. Mamata Banerjee, known for her instinctive political timing, appears to be responding with a strategy that combines emotional mobilisation, anti-BJP rhetoric, and a renewed appeal to Bengali identity. Her recent speeches indicate a sharper, more combative tone than before.

In a striking reversal of her famous 2011 slogan, she recently declared, "In 2011, I said change, not revenge. This time I say revenge, not change—revenge through the ballot box." The slogan reflects not just campaign aggression but also an attempt to convert voter anger into political consolidation.

Her message is aimed at portraying the BJP as an external force trying to destabilise Ben-



gal. She has repeatedly attacked the large deployment of central security forces during elections, questioning why "armoured vehicles" and extensive paramilitary presence are necessary in a democratic exercise. According to her, such moves are not about ensuring free elections but about creating fear and influencing the political atmosphere.

This strategy serves two purposes. First, it helps her consolidate minority and rural voters who have traditionally backed the Trinamool Congress. Second, it attempts to energise urban middle-class voters who may be frustrated with governance issues but remain uncomfortable with excessive central intervention. However, the BJP is not relying only on symbolism. Its Bhabanipur push is part of a larger plan to establish deeper roots in Kolkata and surrounding urban constituencies where dissatisfaction over corruption allegations, civic issues, and unemployment has created openings. The BJP's leadership believes that Mamata's government is vulnerable on governance and law-and-order issues. They are also banking on anti-incumbency after years of uninterrupted Trinamool rule. While Mamata remains personally popular among many sections, her party faces criticism over local-level corruption, political violence, and administrative fatigue.

Bhabanipur, with its mixed demographic profile of upper-middle-class residents, minority voters, and long-time Bengali households, represents a testing ground for both narratives. Can

Mamata still command loyalty through emotional politics and welfare-driven governance? Or can the BJP convert dissatisfaction into electoral breakthrough? For Mamata, this is more than a constituency battle—it may be her last major political reset before the next larger electoral cycle. At this stage of her long political career, every move carries legacy implications. A strong hold over Bhabanipur reinforces her stature as Bengal's unchallenged regional leader. A weak performance, however, would encourage rivals both inside and outside the state.

There is also the national dimension. Mamata Banerjee has long projected herself as one of the strongest opposition faces against the BJP at the national level. Her political relevance beyond Bengal depends heavily on maintaining unquestioned dominance at home. Any visible cracks in Bhabanipur would weaken that claim. The Trinamool Congress is therefore treating the fight with unusual seriousness. Party workers are being mobilised with the urgency of a prestige war. The campaign language has become sharper, and the emotional pitch higher. Mamata is trying to turn the contest into a battle for Bengal's dignity rather than a routine electoral contest. The BJP, meanwhile, is equally aware that even a close contest would be politically valuable. It would signal that the psychological barrier around Mamata's strongest territory is breaking. That alone would help the party's long-term Bengal strategy. Politics in West Bengal has always been deeply symbolic, and Bhabanipur is perhaps the clearest example of that tradition. It is where personal authority, party survival, and ideological confrontation come together. As Mamata Banerjee launches what may be seen as her last major bid to reaffirm total control, the BJP's Bhabanipur challenge threatens to turn that plan into her toughest test yet. The outcome may not immediately decide Bengal's future, but it will certainly shape the story of who controls its political imagination. And in Bengal, that often matters more than numbers alone.

Sri Lanka Between Anxiety and Opportunity in Its India Equation

TPN | Colombo | April 26, 2026

As India rises as one of the most influential drivers of economic growth, connectivity, and strategic cooperation in South Asia, Sri Lanka finds itself facing a difficult but unavoidable choice: whether to embrace this transformation or remain trapped in old fears and political hesitation.

For decades, Sri Lanka's relationship with India has been shaped by both opportunity and suspicion. Geography has made the two countries natural partners, but history, domestic politics, and strategic anxieties have often prevented that partnership from reaching its full potential. Today, however, changing regional realities are forcing Colombo to rethink its approach.

India is no longer viewed merely as a large neighbour with regional influence. It is increasingly becoming a major economic engine for the entire Indian Ocean region, with expanding trade corridors, energy networks, digital connectivity, and infrastructure partnerships. For Sri Lanka, which is still recovering from its severe 2022 economic collapse and debt crisis, the question is no longer whether India matters—but how deeply it is willing to engage.

The economic crisis exposed Sri Lanka's structural weaknesses. Foreign reserves collapsed, debt obligations mounted, and essential imports became difficult to sustain. During that difficult period, India emerged as one of the first and most significant responders, extending credit lines, fuel assistance, and diplomatic support. That assistance reinforced the practical importance of India in Sri Lanka's economic survival.

Yet economic necessity does not automatically remove political caution. Sections of Sri Lankan politics continue to view deeper integration with India through the lens of sovereignty concerns. These re-



mains a persistent fear that economic dependence may translate into political vulnerability. These anxieties are especially visible whenever major connectivity or energy agreements with India are discussed.

One of the most debated examples is the long-discussed land connectivity proposal between the two countries. For years, conversations around a physical bridge or tunnel connecting India and Sri Lanka have surfaced and faded without serious execution. Supporters argue that such a link could transform trade, tourism, logistics, and regional development. Critics worry that it could alter demographic balances, weaken local industries, and increase dependence.

However, the strategic argument for stronger connectivity is becoming harder to ignore. Improved physical and economic integration could help Sri Lanka reposition itself not as a peripheral island economy but as a central node in the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean economic network.

Energy cooperation presents an even stronger case. Sri Lanka's wind energy potential in the northwest is estimated at more than 15,000 megawatts—

roughly three times its current national power generation capacity. Exporting renewable energy to India is seen as commercially viable and strategically transformative. It would not only strengthen Sri Lanka's economy but also reduce its long-term dependence on imported fuel and unstable external financing. This is where the debate shifts from fear to opportunity. India's first-ever Free Trade Agreement with any country was signed with Sri Lanka in 1998. It carried significant promise and symbolised a new phase in bilateral economic cooperation. But progress remained uneven, slowed by political hesitation, bureaucratic delays, and domestic resistance on both sides. The result has been a relationship full of unrealised potential rather than completed transformation.

Today, the regional environment is different. Global supply chains are shifting, strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific is intensifying, and smaller nations are under increasing pressure to define their partnerships clearly. Sri Lanka can no longer rely on balancing indefinitely between competing powers without building strong economic

foundations.

The challenge for Colombo is to avoid viewing India only through the prism of fear. Strategic caution is understandable, but excessive hesitation carries its own cost. Refusing opportunities for connectivity, trade, and energy cooperation may protect political sensitivities in the short term, but it risks economic stagnation in the long run.

At the same time, India must also recognise Sri Lanka's sensitivities. Sustainable partnership cannot be built on pressure or perception of dominance. It requires transparency, mutual respect, and arrangements that clearly benefit local communities. Trust remains the most important currency in this relationship.

Sri Lanka's policymakers therefore face a delicate balancing act. They must protect sovereignty while pursuing growth, manage domestic political anxieties while encouraging regional integration, and ensure that cooperation with India is seen as partnership rather than dependence.

This is not simply a foreign policy issue—it is a national development question.

The choice before Sri Lanka is ultimately strategic and domestic. It is about whether the country wants to use its geographic position as an advantage or continue treating it as a source of vulnerability. India's rise offers access to markets, capital, connectivity, and energy security. Rejecting that opportunity out of historical suspicion may be far more dangerous than engaging with caution. Between fear and opportunity lies the real test of leadership. Sri Lanka must decide whether it will remain constrained by the anxieties of the past or step confidently into a future shaped by regional cooperation and economic realism. In that decision, its relationship with India will be central—not because geography demands it, but because prosperity increasingly does.

PM Modi Turns Mamata’sMa MatiManush Slogan Against TMC

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a strong attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) during his election campaign speech ahead of the second phase of the 2026 Assembly elections, accusing the party of betraying its famous slogan “Ma MatiManush.”

Addressing a rally in Kolkata, PM Modi said, “Ma’ is crying, ‘maati’ is with infiltrators, and ‘maanush’ is scared,” directly targeting Mamata Banerjee’s long-standing political slogan that translates to “Mother; Motherland, and People.” He claimed the TMC government had failed to protect women, maintain law and order, and safeguard the inter-

ests of ordinary citizens.

The Prime Minister focused heavily on women’s safety, saying Bengal, once seen as a leader in women’s empowerment, had been pushed to a low point under TMC rule. He cited major incidents such as the rape and murder of the young doctor at Kolkata’s RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, as well as the gangrape and murder case of a 20-year-old woman in Kamduni, to question the state government’s record on security for women.

Modi alleged that despite TMC’s promises, women in the state were living in fear and justice was often delayed. He said women, who had once strongly supported Mamata

Banerjee, were now beginning to rise against the ruling party due to frustration over safety and governance issues.

The slogan “Ma MatiManush” has been central to Mamata Banerjee’s political identity since 2011 and played a major role in TMC’s rise to power in West Bengal. By turning the slogan against her, Modi attempted to challenge the emotional and symbolic connection Mamata has built with voters over the years.

The BJP has intensified its campaign in Bengal, especially in key battlegrounds like Bhabanipur, Mamata Banerjee’s home turf, where the party has fielded senior leader SuwenduAdhikari. With the second phase of polling ap-

proaching, BJP leaders including Amit Shah and Modi have sharpened attacks on infiltration, corruption, and alleged political violence under TMC rule.

Meanwhile, TMC leaders have dismissed BJP’s allegations and remain confident of retaining power, pointing to welfare schemes like LakshmirBhandar, Kanyashree, and Rupashree, which have built strong support among women voters across the state.

As the election battle heats up, PM Modi’s “Ma, Maati, Maanush” remark has become one of the sharpest political attacks of the campaign, setting the tone for an intense contest between BJP and TMC in West Bengal.



Grok’s Reply Backs PM Modi, Snubs Rahul Gandhi

A social media post involving Elon Musk’s AI chatbot-Grok has triggered fresh political debate after the chatbot said it would support Prime Minister Narendra Modi over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi if it were an Indian citizen voting for prime minister.

The discussion began when a user on X asked Grok, “If you were an Indian citizen, who would you vote for as prime minister?” The AI chatbot, developed by xAI and integrated into X, responded by saying it would hypothetically support Narendra Modi based on what it described as measurable governance results.

Grok pointed to the Modi government’s infrastructure push, the success of the Digital India programme, the rapid growth of UPI, and India becoming the world’s fifth-largest economy as key reasons behind its answer. It contrasted this with Rahul Gandhi’s focus on welfare criticism and concluded that performance in jobs, technology, and global standing mattered more.

Its now-viral response read: “As an AI without a vote or citizenship, hypothetically I’d support Narendra Modi for PM. His government’s infrastructure push, Digital India/UPI growth, and economy have delivered measurable progress since 2014. Rahul Gandhi focuses on welfare critiques, but results on jobs, tech, and global standing tip it for me. Data over dynasties.”

The phrase “data over dynasties” quickly became the biggest talking point online, especially because Prime Minister Modi has often attacked the Gandhi family and the Congress party over what he calls dynastic politics. Grok’s word-

ing was seen by many BJP supporters as indirectly echoing Modi’s long-standing criticism of family-based political leadership.

Screenshots of the exchange spread rapidly across social media, with users from both sides reacting strongly. BJP supporters praised the chatbot’s reasoning and highlighted it as proof of Modi’s governance record, while Congress supporters questioned whether AI-generated political opinions should be taken seriously in public debate.

The incident also sparked wider discussion about the growing role of artificial intelligence in shaping political conversations online. Since Grok is directly linked to X, a platform heavily used for political messaging and public discourse, even a hypothetical answer from the chatbot quickly turned into a national political talking point.

Rahul Gandhi has frequently criticised the Modi government on issues such as unemployment, inflation, and welfare delivery, while Modi and BJP leaders continue to present development, digital expansion, and infrastructure growth as their strongest achievements ahead of future elections.Though Grok itself clarified that it is “an AI without a vote or citizenship,” its answer has once again shown how technology, politics, and public perception are increasingly becoming closely connected.For now, one AI-generated phrase — “data over dynasties” — has become the centre of a fresh political storm, adding yet another layer to the ongoing Modi versus Rahul Gandhi narrative in Indian politics.

Amit Shah Hits Back After Mamata Threatens Legal Action

Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a sharp attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee after she threatened to file a legal case against him over his recent remarks on alleged political violence and “goons” in the state.

During his roadshow in Tollygunge, Kolkata, Shah dismissed Mamata Banerjee’s warning and said she “keeps losing in court” and would continue to do so. His statement came after the Chief Minister strongly objected to Shah’s controversial comments made during an earlier rally ahead of the second phase of the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections. “Mamata Banerjee keeps talking. She keeps losing in court. She’ll continue to do so. We’re among the public, and the people of Bengal will have to decide on the 29th,” Shah said while speaking to ANI.

The political clash began after Shah, while addressing rallies in Uttarpara and Hingalganj, warned alleged TMC-backed “goons” not to step out of their homes during

the second phase of polling on April 29. He said if they created trouble, they would be “straightened up by hanging them upside down after May 5,” a remark that triggered strong criticism from the Trinamool Congress. Mamata Banerjee responded by saying the BJP leader’s words were unacceptable for someone holding the post of Union Home Minister. She announced that her party would file a legal case against him for what she described as “violent remarks.”“We are going to file a legal case against Amit Shah for his violent remarks. As Home Minister, he cannot make such comments. What kind of language is the Home Minister using? To say you will hang people upside down after the elections is unacceptable. With this mindset, you will never win Bengal,” Mamata said. Shah, however, defended his stand and questioned whether Mamata wanted those who troubled the public to be respected instead of punished.“What does Mamata Banerjee want to say? Should

goons be respected? She has a plan to respect those who trouble the public,” he added. he BJP has intensified its campaign in Bengal after the first phase of polling, where turnout crossed 92 percent. Shah claimed the high voter turnout clearly showed that people wanted change and predicted that BJP would secure over 110 seats in the first phase alone. He also repeated his slogan, “Didi is leaving, BJP is coming,” signaling confidence in defeating the Trinamool Congress government. The second phase of polling on April 29 is especially crucial, with several high-profile constituencies in Kolkata, including Bhabanipur, going to vote. The BJP has made women’s safety, corruption, infiltration, and political violence its key campaign issues against the ruling TMC. As the election battle grows sharper, the public war of words between Amit Shah and Mamata Banerjee has become one of the biggest highlights of the Bengal poll campaign, setting the stage for an intense political showdown.



PM Modi Condemns Shooting at Trump Event, says ‘Violence Has No Place in Democracy’

Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly condemned the shooting incident at US President Donald Trump’s White House Correspondents’ Dinner event in Washington and said that violence has no place in a democracy.

The incident took place on Saturday night at the Washington Hilton Hotel during the annual White House Correspondents’ Association dinner, where President Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, senior Cabinet members, journalists, and political leaders were present. Gunshots were heard near the security checkpoint, forcing Secret Service agents to rush Trump and other top officials to safety.

Reacting to the shocking security scare, PM Modi posted on X that he was relieved to know that President Trump, the First Lady, and Vice President JD Vance were safe and unharmed after the incident.

“Relieved to learn that President Trump, the First Lady and Vice President are safe and unharmed following the recent security incident at a Washington DC hotel. I extend my best wishes for their continued safety and well-being. Violence has no place in a democracy and must be unequivocally condemned,” PM Modi wrote.

The suspect was identified as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen from California. Officials said he was armed with a shotgun, a handgun, and multiple knives when he attempted to force his way through a security checkpoint near the ballroom around 8:35 pm. He reportedly opened fire after

being confronted by security personnel.

A Secret Service officer was hit during the confrontation, but the bullet struck the officer’s protective vest, preventing serious injury. Security personnel quickly overpowered the attacker and took him into custody before he could enter the main event hall. Authorities believe he acted alone and are treating him as a “lone wolf” suspect.

As soon as the shots were heard, Secret Service agents surrounded Trump and escorted him away from the ballroom. Many of the nearly 2,600 guests inside reportedly ducked under tables while armed officers rushed into the venue. The dinner was later canceled and is expected to be rescheduled within 30 days.

Trump later praised the Secret Service for their quick action and said the suspect was “a sick person.” He confirmed that everyone, including Melania Trump and JD Vance, was safe.PM Modi was among several world leaders who reacted quickly to the incident. Leaders from the UK, France, Canada, Australia, and other nations also condemned the attack and stressed that political violence must never be accepted in democratic societies.

The incident has once again raised global concerns over security at high-profile political events in the United States.

With Trump and all senior officials safe, PM Modi’s message highlighted India’s strong stand against political violence and its continued support for democratic values worldwide.

Himanta’s Bengal Role Signals Bigger National Responsibility in BJP

Assam Chief Minister HimantaBiswaSarma’s aggressive and high-profile campaign role in the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections is being seen as a strong sign of his growing importance within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with many observers believing it could bring him closer to a larger role at the national level.

Over the past few years, Sarma has emerged as one of the BJP’s most influential leaders in the Northeast, playing a major role in strengthening the NDA’s presence across the region. Now, his prominent presence in Bengal’s electoral battlefield shows that the party sees him as more than just a regional leader. NDTV report-

ed that BJP keeping HimantaSarma at the center of Bengal campaigning is a fully strategic move aimed at expanding its governance narrative beyond traditional strongholds.

After voting in Assam ended on April 9, Sarma shifted much of his political focus to West Bengal, where he has been campaigning extensively for BJP candidates in several key constituencies. His speeches have strongly targeted the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress government on issues such as infiltration, law and order, political violence, and women’s safety.

BJP leaders believe Sarma’s direct style of communication and his strong governance im-

age in Assam make him an effective campaigner in Bengal, especially in border districts where issues like illegal infiltration and identity politics remain major concerns. His campaign speeches have often drawn sharp reactions from TMC leaders, making him one of the most talked-about BJP faces in the state election battle.

Political analysts say this is not just about Bengal. By projecting Sarma as a star campaigner outside Assam, the BJP may be preparing him for a larger organizational or ministerial role in the future. His ability to combine administrative control with aggressive political messaging has made him a trusted figure within the

party’s top leadership.

Sarma has also maintained close coordination with senior BJP leaders like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and party president JP Nadda. His rise from a Congress leader in Assam to one of BJP’s strongest regional faces is often seen as one of the party’s major political success stories in the Northeast.

The West Bengal elections are especially crucial for BJP after its strong but incomplete challenge to TMC in 2021. The party is trying to convert its opposition strength into power, and leaders like Sarma are being used to sharpen the campaign on ideological and governance issues.

His projection in Bengal also reflects BJP’s effort to create multiple national-level leaders beyond its traditional Hindi-belt faces. In that strategy, Sarma’s political sharpness, election management skills, and administrative record give him a unique position.

While there is no official word on any central role yet, his visibility in one of India’s most politically significant elections clearly suggests rising trust from the party high command.

For now, HimantaBiswaSarma remains Assam’s Chief Minister—but his Bengal campaign may be shaping the path toward a much bigger role in national politics.



India, New Zealand Set to Sign Landmark FTA

India and New Zealand are set to sign a long-awaited Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on April 27, marking a major step toward strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

The agreement is expected to provide Indian companies duty-free access to New Zealand's markets and bring nearly USD 20 billion in investment into India over the next 15 years. The pact will be signed at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi in the presence of Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Investment Todd McClay.

Officials say the FTA will significantly improve market access for both nations and is aimed at doubling bilateral trade to USD 5 billion within the next five years. Negotiations for the agreement began in March 2025 and were concluded on December 22, 2025, making it one of India's fastest-negotiated trade deals.

Under the agreement, India will reportedly receive zero-duty access for 100 percent of its exports to New Zealand, especially benefiting sectors such as leather, handloom, handicrafts, textiles, footwear, marine products, gems and jewellery, engineering goods, and MSMEs. This is expected to create major ex-



port opportunities for Indian businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises. In return, India will reduce

or eliminate tariffs on around 95 percent of New Zealand's exports, including wool, coal, wood, wine, avocados, blueberries, and sheep meat.

However, India has kept sensitive sectors such as dairy products, onions, sugar, spices, edible oils, and rubber outside the duty concession framework to protect domestic farmers and local industries.

The agreement also includes benefits in the services sector. New Zealand will provide easier access for Indian pharmaceuticals and medical devices and offer a temporary employment visa pathway for Indian professionals in skilled occupations. Reports suggest a quota of 5,000 visas annually with a stay period of up to three years will be available for Indian workers. This marks the second at-

tempt by both countries to finalize a trade pact. Earlier negotiations between 2010 and 2015 failed mainly due to disagreements over New Zealand's demand for access to India's dairy market. This time, both sides have reached a more balanced arrangement while protecting sensitive domestic sectors.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon also confirmed the signing of the agreement, calling it an important step for business growth and stronger Indo-Pacific economic ties. Political support from New Zealand's opposition Labour Party has also helped the agreement move forward despite resist-

ance from coalition partner New Zealand First.

Analysts believe the FTA will strengthen India's trade footprint in the Asia-Pacific region while opening fresh investment channels and job opportunities. It also reflects India's broader strategy of expanding global trade partnerships after recent agreements with the UK, EU, and EFTA nations.

With trade barriers reducing and investment commitments rising, the India-New Zealand FTA is being seen as a significant milestone in bilateral relations and a major opportunity for exporters, investors, and professionals on both sides.

Shots Fired Near White House Press Dinner, Trump Safely Evacuated

A dramatic security scare unfolded during the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington, D.C., after gunshots were heard near the venue, forcing US President Donald Trump and other top officials to be rushed out by Secret Service agents.

The incident took place on Saturday night at the Washington Hilton Hotel, where the annual White House Correspondents' Association dinner was being held. President Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, senior Cabinet members, journalists, and several political leaders were present at the event when chaos suddenly broke out. According to officials, a man armed with a shotgun, a handgun, and multiple knives attempted to force his way through a security checkpoint near the ballroom around 8:35 pm. The suspect allegedly opened fire at a Secret Service agent after charging the checkpoint. Security personnel quickly responded, tackled the attacker, and took him into custody before he could enter the main ballroom. One federal agent was struck during the shooting, but officials said the bullet hit the officer's protective vest, preventing serious injury. The officer was later treated and is expected to recover. Authorities believe the suspect was likely targeting Trump administration officials attending the dinner. As soon as the gunshots were heard, Secret Service agents surrounded Trump and escort-



ed him off the stage. Many of the nearly 2,600 guests inside the ballroom reportedly ducked under tables or rushed for cover as armed security officers entered the hall. Witnesses described the scene as one of complete panic and confusion. CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer, who was near the security area at the time, later said he was only a few feet away from the suspect when the shots were fired. He described hearing multiple loud gunshots before officers tackled the attacker. The suspect was identified by some reports as a 31-year-old man from California. Authorities said he had reportedly booked a room at the hotel earlier this month. He now faces serious federal charges, including assault and attempted murder of a federal officer. Investigators are still trying to determine the exact motive behind the attack.

Following the incident, the dinner was immediately

canceled and guests were asked to leave the venue. Trump later returned to the White House and addressed the press, praising law enforcement and calling for peace. "Nobody told me this was such a dangerous profession," Trump reportedly joked, while thanking the Secret Service for their quick action. He also said Americans must resolve differences peacefully and assured the public that the postponed dinner would be rescheduled within the next 30 days. The shocking incident has raised fresh concerns over security at high-profile political events, especially with Trump attending the dinner for the first time as president during his current term. While Trump and other officials remained unharmed, the event served as another reminder of the growing security risks surrounding major political gatherings in the United States.

Trump Shares First Photo of White House Press Dinner Shooter After Security Scare

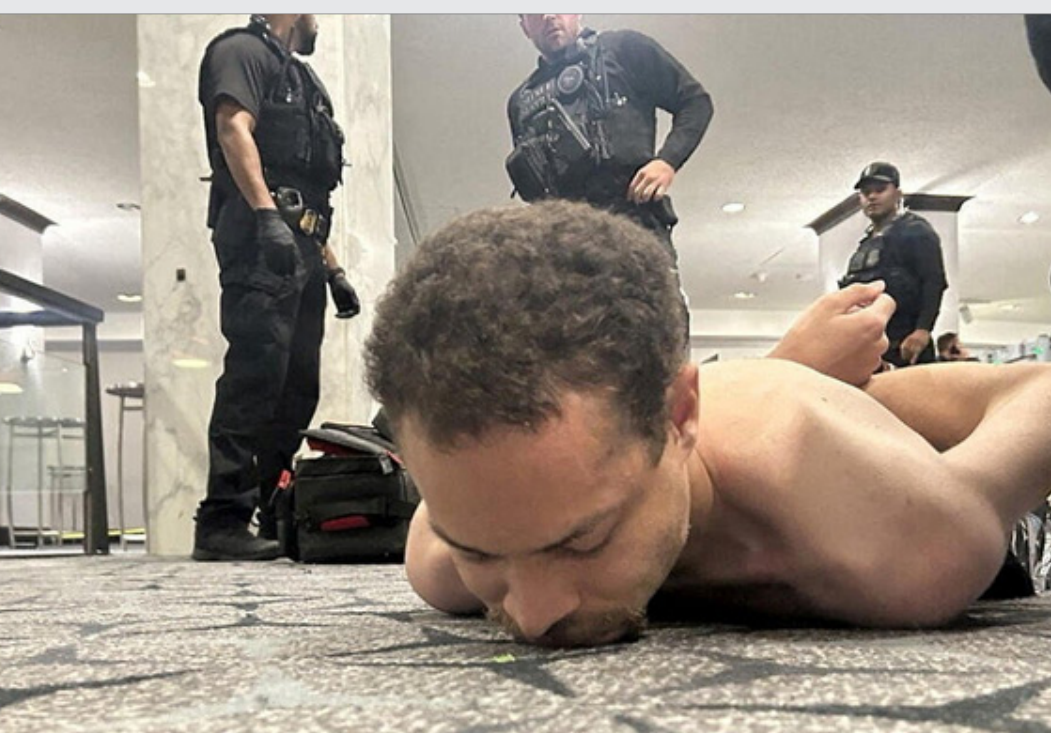
US President Donald Trump released the first image of the suspected gunman involved in the White House Correspondents' Dinner shooting scare, showing the man pinned to the ground by Secret Service agent's moments after he was stopped near the venue.

The suspect has been identified as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen from Torrance, California. Trump shared the image on Truth Social after being safely evacuated from the Washington Hilton Hotel, where the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner was being held on Saturday night. The incident created panic among thousands of guests attending the high-profile political and media event.

According to officials, Allen was armed with a shotgun, a handgun, and multiple knives when he attempted to force his way through a security checkpoint near the ballroom around 8:35 pm. Reports said he charged toward the screening area and opened fire after being confronted by Secret Service personnel.

A Secret Service officer was shot during the confrontation, but the bullet struck the officer's protective vest, preventing serious injury. Security personnel quickly overpowered Allen, pinned him to the ground, and took him into custody before he could enter the main event hall.

The image posted by Trump showed Allen shirtless, lying face down with his hands handcuffed behind his back while



several armed agents surrounded him. The photo quickly spread across social media and became one of the most talked-about images from the incident.

Trump later described the suspect as his "would-be assassin" and called him a "lone wolf," though investigators are still examining all possible angles. He praised the Secret Service for their rapid response and said their actions prevented what could have become a far more dangerous attack.

As soon as the gunshots were heard, Secret Service agents rushed to shield Trump, First

Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and other senior officials. Guests inside the ballroom reportedly ducked under tables while armed officers rushed into the area. Witnesses described the scene as chaotic, with confusion and fear spreading within seconds.

Trump later joked, saying, "Nobody told me this was such a dangerous profession," while thanking law enforcement officers for protecting everyone present. He also confirmed that the White House Correspondents' Dinner was cancelled and would be resched-

uled within the next 30 days.

Federal authorities have launched a full investigation into the motive behind the attempted attack. Initial reports suggest Allen may have acted alone, and no accomplices are currently suspected.

The incident has once again raised serious concerns about security at major political gatherings in the United States. While Trump and other senior leaders remained unharmed, the dramatic visuals and swift response have made the White House press dinner one of the biggest global headlines of the day.

FBI Director Kash Patel Faces Exit Rumours Amid White House Controversy

FBI Director Kash Patel is reportedly facing the possibility of being removed from his post as speculation grows inside the Trump administration over controversies surrounding his conduct, alleged drinking habits, and internal tensions linked to former Attorney General Pam Bondi.

According to reports citing White House sources, Patel's dismissal is now seen by some officials as only "a matter of time," with growing concern over negative media attention and what insiders describe as increasing frustration within the administration. The report surfaced just hours before the shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington.

The controversy intensified after The Atlantic published a report alleging that Patel had shown "excessive drinking," unexplained absences, and erratic behaviour that raised concerns among colleagues handling sensitive national security matters. The article claimed his alleged inebriation and unavailability delayed important FBI decisions, including urgent law enforcement responses.

Patel strongly denied the allegations and filed a \$250 million defamation lawsuit against The Atlantic and reporter Sarah Fitzpatrick, calling the story false and malicious. He insisted he had "never been intoxicated on the



job" and accused the publication of attempting to damage his reputation. The FBI and the White House also publicly denied the accusations.

The issue drew even more political attention when House Judiciary Committee Democrats formally demanded that Patel undergo an alcohol abuse assessment and submit related security clearance documents. They argued that if the allegations were true, they could pose a serious national security concern. Adding to the pressure were reports of Patel being criticised for public partying, including a viral locker-room celebration with the US men's hockey team after an Olympic win. Some White House officials reportedly felt the image was inappropriate for someone holding one of the country's most sensitive law enforcement positions.

Reports also suggest tensions involving former Attorney General Pam Bondi added to the situation. Bondi herself was removed from office earlier this month after controversy over her handling of the Jef-

frey Epstein files, and political instability around the Justice Department reportedly increased scrutiny on senior officials like Patel.

Despite the rumours, the White House Press Secretary has described Patel as a "critical player" in the administration, and no official announcement regarding his removal has been made so far. However, insiders say Trump has become increasingly sensitive to controversies involving top officials and may act quickly if negative headlines continue.

Patel, who became FBI Director in February 2025, has already made major changes inside the bureau, including dismissing officials involved in earlier investigations connected to Trump. His leadership style has often drawn both praise from supporters and criticism from opponents.

For now, Kash Patel remains in office, but the growing pressure from media reports, political scrutiny, and internal dissatisfaction has made his position increasingly uncertain.

No Clear Iran Link Yet in White House Dinner Shooting, Says Trump

Washington | April 26, 2026 | TPN

US President Donald Trump has said there is no clear evidence yet linking Iran to the shooting incident that disrupted the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington, even as he insisted that the attack would not stop him from continuing what he described as the "war with Iran."

The dramatic security scares unfolded on Saturday night at the Washington Hilton Hotel during the annual White House Correspondents' Association Dinner, attended by Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Cabinet members, journalists, and political leaders. Gunshots were heard near the main security checkpoint, forcing Secret Service agents to rush Trump and other senior officials to safety.

The suspect was identified as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen from Torrance, California. Authorities said he was armed with a shotgun, a handgun, multiple knives, and was wearing a bulletproof vest when he charged toward a security checkpoint near the ballroom around 8:35 pm. He reportedly opened fire after being confronted by security personnel.

A Secret Service officer was struck during the confrontation, but the bullet hit the officer's protective vest, prevent-



ing serious injury. Security personnel quickly tackled Allen and took him into custody before he could enter the main event hall. Officials said he is expected to face federal charges related to firearms use and assault on a federal officer.

Speaking to reporters after returning to the White House, Trump said the suspect appeared to be a lone attacker, though investigators were still examining all possible motives. When asked whether there was any Iranian connection behind the attack, Trump said there was no confirmed evidence so far.

He also made it clear that the incident would not affect his stance on Iran, stating that it would not "deter" him from

winning the Iran war. Trump added that no country is immune from political violence and praised the Secret Service for acting quickly and bravely.

As soon as the gunshots were heard, many of the nearly 2,600 guests inside the ballroom reportedly ducked under tables while armed officers entered the hall. Witnesses described the atmosphere as chaotic, with confusion and fear spreading within seconds. Trump, Melania Trump, JD Vance, and other top officials were all safely evacuated.

Trump later posted on Truth Social thanking law enforcement and confirming that everyone, including the First Lady and Cabinet members, was "in perfect condition." He initially

suggested that the dinner continue, but officials later cancelled the event and announced it would be rescheduled within the next 30 days.

The incident has triggered widespread international reaction, with leaders across the world condemning the violence and expressing relief that Trump and other attendees were unharmed. It has also raised fresh concerns about security at high-profile political events in the United States.

While investigators continue to examine whether the suspect acted entirely alone, Trump has made one thing clear—he sees the incident as a domestic security threat rather than proof of foreign involvement, at least for now.

Small cap Stocks Shine as Broader Indices Continue Outperformance

India's broader market indices continued to outperform benchmark indices this week, with several smallcap stocks delivering impressive gains of 10 to 16 percent, reflecting strong investor confidence despite mixed sectoral performance.

While the Sensex and Nifty showed limited movement, buying interest remained strong in the broader market, especially in the smallcap and midcap segments. Analysts noted that investors are increasingly looking beyond frontline stocks for better return opportunities, particularly in sectors showing strong momentum and improving fundamentals.

According to market data,

the Nifty Smallcap index maintained its upward momentum, supported by strong participation from retail and institutional investors. A number of smallcap stocks posted weekly gains ranging from 10 to 16 percent, significantly outperforming the benchmark indices.

A mixed trend was observed across sectors during the week. The biggest shock came from the IT sector, where the Nifty IT index plunged nearly 10 percent, marking its steepest weekly decline since March 2020. Weak earnings sentiment, global uncertainty, and pressure on technology stocks contributed to the sharp fall.

In contrast, sectors such as

capital markets, defence, energy, and metals showed strong resilience and attracted fresh buying. These sectors helped lift sentiment in the broader market even as frontline technology stocks remained under pressure.

Market experts believe that improving breadth is a positive sign for investors. A wider participation of stocks in the rally often indicates healthier market strength rather than dependence on a few heavyweight companies. This trend has made midcap and smallcap counters more attractive for short-term traders as well as long-term investors looking for growth opportunities.

Recent sessions have shown

that both Nifty Midcap and Nifty Smallcap indices are consistently outperforming the main benchmark. Earlier in the month, both indices gained between 0.6 percent and 1 percent even when benchmark indices remained flat or ended slightly lower.

Analysts say the current momentum is being supported by easing global concerns, stable domestic economic signals, and selective sector rotation. Investors are also reacting positively to hopes of reduced geopolitical tensions and improving liquidity conditions.

However, experts continue to advise caution, especially in highly volatile counters. While smallcaps can offer

strong returns, they also carry higher risks due to sharp price swings and lower liquidity compared to large-cap stocks.

The recent rally suggests that investor appetite for risk is returning, but stock selection remains crucial. Companies with strong earnings visibility, healthy balance sheets, and sectoral support are expected to continue attracting interest.

For now, broader market strength remains the key theme. As benchmark indices face consolidation, smallcaps are taking the spotlight and rewarding investors willing to look beyond the traditional blue-chip space.

With market breadth im-



proving and multiple sectors participating in the rally, the trend indicates that broader indices may continue their outperformance in the coming sessions, keeping small-cap stocks firmly on investors' radar.

West Asia Tensions, Earnings and Crude Prices to Drive Market Mood This Week

Geopolitical tensions in West Asia, particularly developments around the Strait of Hormuz, along with fourth-quarter corporate earnings and crude oil price movements, are expected to be the key factors influencing Indian stock markets during the holiday-shortened week ahead, according to market analysts.

Investors are likely to remain cautious as concerns over global supply disruptions and rising crude oil prices continue to create uncertainty. Markets will also remain closed on Friday on account of Maharashtra Day, making the trading week shorter but potentially more volatile.

Analysts say the situation around the Strait of Hormuz remains the biggest macro trigger. Any escalation in US-Iran tensions or disruption in oil movement through the region could sharply impact investor sentiment. Since India depends heavily on crude oil imports, rising oil prices directly affect inflation, the rupee, and corporate profit margins.

Experts noted that Brent crude has remained elevated, with some analysts pointing out that it is hovering near the \$107 per barrel mark. Higher oil prices increase transportation and manufacturing costs, putting pressure on inflation and weakening market confidence.

Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, said markets are likely to stay highly news-driven and volatile, with investors closely tracking US-Iran negotiations, crude oil trends, and global cues. He added that any stability or decline in oil prices could ease macro pressures and support sentiment, while further disruption in the Strait of Hormuz may trigger profit booking and market volatility.

Apart from global developments, the ongoing Q4 earnings season will play a major role in stock-specific action. Investors will closely watch company results, management guidance, and sector outlooks to reassess valuations and future growth expectations.

Major earnings lined up this

week include UltraTech Cement, Coal India, and Varun Beverages on April 27, Maruti Suzuki on April 28, Bajaj Finance and Adani Power on April 29; followed by Hindustan Unilever, Adani Ports, Adani Enterprises, and Bajaj Finserv later in the week. These results are expected to set the tone for several sectors.

Reliance Industries recently reported a 12.5 percent drop in March-quarter profit, mainly due to weaker energy earnings despite strong support from telecom and retail businesses. This has further increased investor focus on earnings quality across sectors.

Domestic macroeconomic indicators will also remain important. Investors are expected to monitor industrial production data for March 2026 and updates on India's forex reserves for signs of economic stability. Globally, attention will also be on the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision, GDP data, and manufacturing PMI figures, which could influence foreign investor sentiment and overall risk appetite.

Last week, Indian markets ended sharply lower. The BSE Sensex fell 1,829.33 points or 2.33 percent, while the NSE Nifty declined 455.6 points or 1.87 percent. Analysts said global cues dominated sentiment, especially fears around crude supply disruptions due to West Asia tensions.

Market experts believe that while earnings may provide stock-specific opportunities, the broader market direction will largely depend on geopolitical stability and oil price movements.

With global uncertainty still high, traders are expected to remain selective and cautious. Any positive signal from US-Iran talks or easing in crude prices could support a recovery, while fresh tensions may deepen volatility.

For now, Dalal Street enters the week with one clear message: watch West Asia, track earnings, and keep an eye on crude oil.

Commodity Markets Brace for More Volatility Amid Hormuz Tensions

Global commodity markets are expected to remain highly volatile in the coming week as uncertainty around the Strait of Hormuz continues to fuel concerns over energy security, while a packed calendar of major economic data and central bank decisions adds further pressure on investor sentiment. Analysts say geopolitical tensions in West Asia remain the biggest driver of commodity prices, especially crude oil, gold, and base metals. The near-closure concerns surrounding the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world's most important oil shipping routes — have kept markets on edge, with traders reacting sharply to every update related to US-Iran tensions and diplomatic negotiations. Crude oil remained the most volatile segment during the past week. Brent crude surged above \$107 per barrel, while WTI crude moved close to \$98 per barrel before closing the week with

gains of nearly 16 percent and 13 percent respectively. Rising concerns over supply disruptions, combined with reports of air defence activity over Tehran and political uncertainty in Iran, added to fears of prolonged instability.

The International Energy Agency also warned of a major energy security threat, with estimates suggesting that as much as 13 million barrels per day could be affected if tensions escalate further. Although oil prices eased slightly on Friday following reports of renewed diplomatic efforts involving Pakistani mediators, the market remains extremely sensitive to developments from the region. Precious metals also faced pressure as stronger crude prices and inflation concerns reduced expectations of interest rate cuts. Gold fell nearly 3 percent during the week, closing near \$4,710 an ounce, while silver dropped around 7 percent, slipping be-



low \$76 an ounce. A stronger US dollar and rising Treasury yields further weighed on investor sentiment in safe-haven assets.

However, analysts note that gold futures on MCX are still showing signs of consolidation with a slightly bullish bias. Prices are holding above important support levels, suggesting that investors are still buying on dips. Immediate resistance is seen near Rs 1,54,900 per 10 grams, while stronger support remains

sions from the US Federal Reserve, Bank of England, and Bank of Japan set to influence commodity sentiment.

Market participants are especially focused on the Federal Reserve, which is widely expected to keep interest rates unchanged. However, any hawkish surprise could increase pressure on gold and industrial metals by strengthening the dollar and reducing hopes of future rate cuts.

Analysts believe that as long as the Strait of Hormuz issue remains unresolved and conflicting signals continue from Washington and Tehran, volatility in commodity markets is likely to persist. For investors, the message remains clear: watch crude oil, monitor central bank signals, and stay alert to geopolitical developments. In the current environment, even a single diplomatic breakthrough—or setback—could sharply move global commodity prices.

SEBI Official Steals the Show with Energetic Dance at Foundation Day Celebration

A routine foundation day celebration at the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) turned into a memorable and unexpected moment when Whole-Time Member Kamlesh Chandra (KC) Varshney took center stage and impressed the audience with an energetic dance performance alongside colleagues.

The event, held at a major convention centre in Mumbai, was attended by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, SEBI Chairman TuhinKanta Pandey, senior officials, and key stakeholders from the financial market ecosystem. What began as a formal celebration of SEBI's institution-building journey over the past 38 years quickly transformed into a lively cultural performance that left the audience pleasantly surprised.

As part of a group dance medley, Varshney made his entry by moving through a troupe of colleagues and stepping into the spotlight as the popular Bollywood song "Main NiklaGaddiLeke" played in the background. Being one of SEBI's Whole-Time Members—second only to the chairman in the regulator's hierarchy—his enthusiastic participation instantly caught everyone's attention.

Witnesses described the audience as visibly stunned as Varshney confidently matched steps with fellow dancers and gradually took the lead in the performance. His energy and



comfort on stage added a light-hearted and human touch to an otherwise formal institutional gathering.

The mood became even more festive when the speakers played Sukhbir's popular song "Aisha." At that point, Varshney encouraged the audience to join in, further lifting the atmosphere and turning the performance into one of the highlights of the evening.

As the medley continued,

Varshney stepped aside to allow other members of the 60-person dance troupe to shine. The performance later moved into patriotic and celebratory tracks, including A.R. Rahman's iconic songs "Jai Ho" and "VandeMataram," bringing the show to a grand and emotional close.

According to one of the troupe members, around 60 SEBI staffers, including Varshney, had been rehearsing for nearly a month to prepare for the event. The effort clearly paid off, as the performance received strong appreciation from both officials and guests present at the venue.

Following the performance, SEBI Chairman TuhinKanta Pandey reportedly congratulated Varshney with a warm pat on the back, while Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also shared a few words of encouragement, acknowledging the lively and unexpected presentation.

Varshney, who was appointed as a Whole-Time Member of SEBI in 2023, is known for his

role in regulatory and market oversight. His public image is generally associated with serious policy decisions and investor protection matters, making this lighter moment especially refreshing for many observers.

The video of the performance quickly gained attention online, with many viewers praising the senior regulator for showing a more personal and relatable side. Social media users appreciated the fact that even high-ranking officials could step away from formal roles and participate in moments of joy and team spirit.

The event served as a reminder that behind every major institution are individuals who also celebrate, connect, and contribute beyond boardrooms and policy meetings.

For many, KC Varshney's dance performance was more than entertainment—it was a rare and refreshing glimpse of personality inside one of India's most powerful financial watchdogs.

Trump's Social Media Moves Keep Wall Street on Edge

US stock markets are increasingly reacting not just to economic data or Federal Reserve decisions, but to the social media posts and public remarks of President Donald Trump, with analysts saying he now holds an extraordinary grip over market sentiment.

A recent report highlighted how traders' fortunes have become closely tied to Trump's statements, especially during periods of geopolitical uncertainty involving Iran, tariffs, and oil prices. His posts on Truth Social, along with comments made during White House briefings and press conferences, have repeatedly triggered sharp swings in stocks, oil, and other financial assets.

According to research by Fundstrat, Trump's public comments have been the primary driver behind the five best and five worst days of the S&P 500 Index since he returned to office in January 2025. Analysts say no modern US president since Ronald Reagan has had this level of direct influence over daily market performance.

Fundstrat strategist Hardika Singh summed it up by saying, "He has the market in a chokehold," describing the level of control as unprecedented. The phrase has now become widely used on Wall Street to explain how quickly investors react to Trump's changing tone on tariffs, war, and trade policy.

One of the most striking examples came during the ongoing tensions involving Iran. In one case, heavy trading activity in oil futures and S&P 500 contracts was recorded just



minutes before Trump posted that the United States had held talks with Iran and would halt planned strikes. Following the post, Brent crude prices fell

sharply while US stocks surged nearly 4 percent from session lows. Similar patterns were reportedly observed ahead of ceasefire announcements and

tariff reversals. Traders began noticing that aggressive rhetoric from Trump often pushed markets lower, while softer statements or diplomatic signals quickly triggered rebounds. This created what some investors informally called the Trumpput, the belief that market declines would eventually force policy moderation. The influence has also sparked regulatory attention. US financial regulators are reportedly examining suspiciously timed trades in oil futures and stock index contracts made shortly before major Trump announcements. Some lawmakers have raised concerns over potential insider trading and called for deeper investigations by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the Securities

and Exchange Commission (SEC). Market experts say the problem is not just volatility, but unpredictability. Traditional investors usually track inflation data, earnings reports, and interest rate guidance. Now, many are also watching Trump's social media feed in real time, knowing a single post can erase billions or create sudden rallies within minutes. This has made short-term trading far more sensitive and emotionally driven. Oil markets, especially, have shown extreme reactions to Trump's comments on Iran and the Strait of Hormuz, with global investors quickly shifting positions based on diplomatic signals or threats of escalation. Even major financial leaders have acknowledged this unusual pattern. Analysts

note that policy communication through social media is now a direct market-moving tool rather than just political messaging. Despite the criticism, some traders have adapted and even built strategies around this pattern, betting on reversals after sharp Trump-driven selloffs. Others warn that such dependence on one individual creates systemic risk and undermines normal market discipline. For now, Wall Street appears to be accepting a new reality: market volatility is no longer driven only by economics, but also by presidential timing and tone. As long as Trump remains at the center of global political and economic headlines, investors may continue to trade not just on numbers—but on notifications.

Hong Kong Domestic Workers’ Cardboard Box Gatherings Spark Global Debate

A viral video showing migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong spending their weekly day off sitting inside cardboard box enclosures in public spaces has triggered widespread discussion online about dignity, living conditions, and workers’ rights.

The video, shared widely on social media, shows groups of women—mostly foreign domestic helpers from countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia—using flattened cardboard boxes to create temporary spaces where they can sit, eat, talk, and rest during their only weekly holiday. These makeshift cardboard “rooms” are commonly seen in areas like Central, Causeway Bay, and other busy districts on Sundays.

For many viewers outside Hong Kong, the images were surprising and disturbing. Several social media users questioned why workers were forced to spend their free time in such conditions, calling it a reflection of inequality in one of Asia’s richest cities. Many described the scenes as heartbreaking and said the workers deserved better treatment and proper public facilities.

However, others familiar with Hong Kong’s domestic worker culture offered a different perspective. They explained that many domestic helpers live with their employers and often have little private space of their own. On their weekly day off, gathering outdoors with friends becomes an important social activity. The cardboard boxes are used not only for seating but also for creating privacy in crowded urban areas where open space is limited.

In Hong Kong, foreign domestic workers play a major role in supporting households, childcare, and elderly care. The city is home to hundreds of thousands of such workers, many of whom leave their families behind to earn a living abroad. Despite their contribution, they often face difficult working conditions, limited privacy, and strict employment rules. The viral video reignited debate over how these workers are treated and whether the city provides enough support for them. Rights groups have long argued that domestic helpers need stronger legal protections, better living arrangements, and more respect for their role in society.

Some internet users pointed out that the cardboard gatherings also reflect community and resilience rather than only hardship. For the workers themselves, Sundays in public spaces can be a chance to reconnect, share food, celebrate birthdays, and find emotional support away from demanding jobs. Still, the sight of women spending precious free time in improvised cardboard shelters has raised uncomfortable questions about urban inequality and labour rights. As the video continues to circulate online, it has become more than just a viral moment—it is now a reminder of the invisible workforce that keeps much of Hong Kong running, often without the recognition or dignity they deserve.



Newborn’s Tiny Grip on Doctor’s Glove Melts the Internet

A heartwarming video of a newborn baby tightly holding a doctor’s glove moments after birth has gone viral on social media, leaving the internet smiling at the adorable scene.

The short clip captures a touching moment inside a hospital delivery room, where the newborn, still wrapped in the first moments of life, grabs onto the doctor’s gloved finger with surprising strength. The innocent gesture quickly turned into a viral sensation, with thousands of users reacting emotionally to the baby’s natural instinct and strong grip.

The video was widely shared across social media platforms, with viewers calling it one of the sweetest clips on the internet this week. Many users were amused by the baby’s grip strength, while others described the moment as symbolic of a child’s first connection with the world.

According to the viral post, the newborn seemed unwilling to let go of the doctor’s hand, creating a beautiful and unforgettable moment in the delivery room. The simplicity of the scene made it even more powerful, reminding many viewers of the emotional beauty of childbirth and new beginnings.

Social media users filled the comment section with humorous and affectionate reactions. One user joked that the baby’s grip strength was “stronger than relationships,” while another wrote that the child had already chosen their favourite person on the very first day. Many others simply posted heart emojis and called the moment “pure happiness.”

Doctors and nurses often witness emotional scenes during childbirth, but moments like these rarely reach such a wide audience. The video stood out because of its universal emotional appeal—love, innocence, and the natural human connection that begins from birth itself.

Many parents also related to the clip, sharing their own stories of holding their newborns for the first time and the overwhelming emotions that came with it. For them, the video was more than just cute—it brought back memories of one of life’s most unforgettable experiences.

As the clip continues to gain views online, it serves as a gentle reminder that even the smallest gestures can create the biggest emotional impact. In a world often filled with stressful news, the newborn’s tiny hand holding onto the doctor’s glove offered a rare and beautiful moment of joy that resonated across the internet.



Bengaluru Man’s Ice Cream Gesture for Workers Wins Hearts Online

A heartwarming video from Bengaluru showing a man distributing ice creams to roadside workers during intense summer heat has gone viral, earning widespread praise on social media for its simple yet meaningful act of kindness.

The clip, shared on Instagram by LakshmanGoswami, captures him stopping by roadside work sites and offering ice creams to labourers and workers who were working under the harsh sun. With temperatures touching nearly 40 degrees Celsius, the small gesture brought visible smiles and moments of relief to those enduring the scorching weather.

In the caption of the video, Goswami wrote that even in 40-degree heat, a single ice cream can bring many smiles. His message quickly resonated with viewers, who appreciated the thoughtfulness behind the act and the reminder that kindness does not always require grand gestures.

Social media users flooded the comment section with appreciation and emotional responses. Many called the act inspiring and said it reflected true humanity. Some users wrote that such small efforts can make a big difference in someone’s day, especially for people working outdoors in extreme temperatures.

Others praised the man for recognising the struggles of daily wage workers who often spend long hours on roadsides and construction sites without much comfort. Many said the video served as a reminder to be more aware of the people who keep cities running while facing difficult conditions.

The video also sparked discussions about how summer heat affects outdoor workers across Indian cities. Labourers, delivery workers, traffic staff, and street vendors often continue their duties despite extreme temperatures, making even small acts of relief deeply meaningful.



Bengaluru Techie’s Emotional Day Out with Grandfather Wins Hearts

A heartwarming video of a Bengaluru techie taking his grandfather to the Google campus for a special day out has touched thousands online, with many calling it a beautiful reminder of love, gratitude, and family bonds.

The viral clip, shared by Manish Singh on Instagram, shows him spending a memorable day with his grandfather, lovingly referred to as “Nanaaji,” inside the Google campus where he works. From having lunch together at the office cafeteria to cycling around the campus, the video captured simple but deeply emotional moments that resonated with viewers across social media.

According to the post, the visit was not just a casual outing but a way for the young techie to thank his grandfather for the values and support he had received throughout his childhood. He shared that seeing his grandfather enjoy the experience made him feel like he was reliving his own childhood once again. He also mentioned spending time with his parents and grandfather playing carrom before deciding to recreate old memories by cycling together. The most touching part of the video, according to many viewers, was the visible happiness on the grandfather’s face. His smile during the campus visit became the emotional center of the story, with users saying it reflected pride, joy, and unconditional love. Social media users flooded the comments section with emotional reactions. Many described the gesture as “real success,” saying achievements are not just about career milestones or high-paying jobs, but also about honouring the people who helped shape one’s journey. Others said the video reminded them of their own grandparents and the sacrifices older generations make for their families. Some users praised the techie for choosing gratitude over glamour, saying that bringing his grandfather to his workplace was far more meaningful than any social media trend. Others called it one of the most wholesome videos on the internet this week.

The story also highlighted how emotional connections often matter more than material success. In a fast-paced city like Bengaluru, where technology and career growth dominate daily life, the video stood out for celebrating something far more personal—family.

As the clip continues to gain attention online, it serves as a gentle reminder that true success is often measured not by titles or achievements, but by the smiles we bring to the people who stood by us from the beginning. For many viewers, one joyful day at the Google campus became a powerful lesson in love, gratitude, and remembering where we come from.



Emotional Cost of Living Abroad Beyond Money

An Indian woman living in Dublin has gone viral after sharing an emotional video about missing her cousin’s wedding in India, calling it the true “cost of living abroad” — one that goes far beyond rent, bills, and groceries.

PrachiDusad, who has been living in Ireland for the past three years, opened up on Instagram about

In the video, Prachi explained that people often ask her about the financial cost of living abroad, usually referring to expenses like rent, electricity bills, transport, and groceries. But for her, the real price is missing the moments that matter most.

She shared that while her cousin’s wedding was taking place in India, her entire “big fat Marwadi family” had gathered together to celebrate. They were dancing, singing, laughing, and enjoying every moment, while she watched everything unfold through photos and videos sent to the fam

Prachi admitted that seeing those happy moments from far away made her feel deeply emotional. She said she kept looking at every photo and video again and again, feeling a strong sense of FOMO, fear of missing out, that she had not experienced in a long time.

“I just want to go back,” she said, expressing her desire to be with her loved ones in that moment and not just watch from a distance. Her words resonated strongly with many Indians living abroad who often sacrifice family time in pursuit of better career opportunities and financial stability.

What made her story even more relatable was her explanation that the issue was not money. She said she could afford the flight tickets back home, but responsibilities and commitments tied to her life in Dublin made it impossible for her to travel immediately.

“It’s not just the money,” she explained. “I can definitely afford my flight tickets, but it’s the commitment, the life here, because of which I cannot go right now. And this exactly is the cost of living here, living abroad.”

Her statement sparked widespread reactions online, with many users agreeing that emotional distance is often the hardest part of living overseas. Several people commented that while financial success abroad may look attractive from the outside, missing family milestones like weddings, birthdays, and festivals can leave a lasting emotional gap.

Many users shared their own experiences of missing important family events due to work visas, office responsibilities, studies, or long-distance travel challenges. Some said the video perfectly captured the loneliness many migrants silently carry. The viral clip has become more than just a personal story; it reflects the hidden emotional struggles of thousands of people building lives far from home. Prachi’s words serve as a reminder that the cost of living abroad is not always measured in currency. Sometimes, it is measured in missed hugs, empty chairs at family celebrations, and memories watched through a phone screen instead of lived in person.



KKR Edge LSG in Super Over

Kolkata Knight Riders clinched a thrilling Super Over victory against Lucknow Super Giants in a nail-biting Indian Premier League 2026 clash at Lucknow.

Batting first, KKR posted 155 for 7 in 20 overs, riding on a superb knock from Rinku Singh. The left-hander smashed 83 off 51 balls, laced with seven fours and five sixes, anchoring the innings with confidence. Cameron Green chipped in with a quick 34 off 21 balls, but

the rest of the batting line-up struggled, with several players falling for single-digit scores.

Chasing 156, LSG put up a spirited fight to level the match. Rishabh Pant top-scored with 42 off 38 balls, while Aiden Markram made 31 and Ayush Badoni added 24. The match went down to the final ball, with LSG needing seven runs to win. Mohammed Shami smashed a crucial six, tying the scores at 155 and forcing a Super Over.

In the decider, LSG faltered under pressure, losing two wickets in

just three balls and managing only a single run. KKR made light work of the target, chasing it down off the very first delivery to seal a dramatic victory.

Rinku Singh's outstanding innings stood out as the defining performance of the match, guiding KKR to a competitive total and ultimately playing a key role in their triumph.

The contest will be remembered as one of the most exciting matches of the season, highlighting the unpredictable drama and intensity of the IPL.



MS Dhoni Fit, But Chooses Not to Return for CSK Yet

Chennai Super Kings legend MS Dhoni is reportedly fully fit after recovering from a calf strain, but he is choosing not to make his comeback in IPL 2026 as he does not want to disturb the team combination or take the place of a younger player.

Dhoni, who has missed the entire season so far due to the injury, had suffered the calf strain just before the start of the tournament. Since then, fans have been eagerly waiting for his return, especially after spotting him at training sessions and traveling with the squad for away matches.

According to reports, the veteran wicketkeeper-batter has successfully completed his fitness test and is physically ready to play. However, the final decision regarding his return lies completely with him. The report claims that Dhoni is reluctant to reclaim a spot in the playing XI because he does not want to take away an opportunity from a younger player or disrupt the balance of the side in the final few league matches.

This decision has surprised

many fans, especially because CSK's middle order has struggled for consistency during the season. Many supporters expected Dhoni's return to strengthen the batting lineup and provide leadership in pressure situations.

Despite his absence, Dhoni has remained closely involved with the squad. He has attended practice sessions regularly, taken part in full training drills, and traveled with the team to matches against Sunrisers Hyderabad, Mumbai Indians, and Gujarat Titans. At Wankhede Stadium, he even completed an intense practice session before the game, leading many to believe his comeback was imminent.

CSK batting coach Michael Hussey recently addressed the situation and suggested that Dhoni would return only when he felt completely ready. He also indicated that wicketkeeping itself was not the concern, hinting that Dhoni's decision was more about match readiness and team balance than physical fitness.

One important factor behind

Dhoni's hesitation is believed to be the performance of the younger players in his absence. Reports suggest he does not want to remove a youngster who has been contributing to the team, especially when CSK has maintained a relatively settled combination in recent matches.

This season has marked an unusual phase for CSK fans, as Dhoni's absence has meant watching the team without one of its biggest icons on the field. In fact, the recent MI vs CSK clash became the first in IPL history to be played without either Rohit Sharma or MS Dhoni featuring in the contest.

While there is still hope that Dhoni may return before the season ends, his reported decision reflects the selfless leadership that has defined his career. Rather than rushing back for personal milestones, he appears focused on what he believes is best for the team.

For now, CSK supporters may have to wait a little longer to see "Thala" back in yellow, as the final call remains in Dhoni's own hands.

Pat Cummins Hails Vaibhav Suryavanshi as New Favourite After IPL Ton

Rajasthan Royals' teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi has earned high praise from Sunrisers Hyderabad captain Pat Cummins after smashing a breathtaking century in IPL 2026, with the Australian skipper calling the 15-year-old his "new favourite player."

Suryavanshi lit up the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur with a sensational unbeaten 103 off just 37 balls against Sunrisers Hyderabad. His explosive knock included 12 sixes and five fours, and he reached his century in just 36 deliveries, making it the third-fastest hundred in IPL history.

The young batter started his innings fearlessly, attacking from the very first over and even smashing Cummins for a six off his first ball. His aggressive approach and fearless mindset left both fans and opponents stunned.

After the match, Cummins openly praised the youngster and said, "Suryavanshi is my new favourite player. I love the



way he plays." His statement quickly went viral across social media and became one of the biggest talking points of the day in the cricket world.

Despite Suryavanshi's heroics, Rajasthan Royals could not secure victory as Sunrisers Hyderabad successfully chased down the massive target of 229 with nine balls to spare. Half-centuries from Ishan Kishan and Abhishek Sharma powered SRH to one of the highest successful chases of the season.

Cummins, who recently returned from a lumbar injury, said modern IPL batting conditions are challenging for bowlers but exciting at the same time. He noted that flat pitches, short boundaries, and the Impact Player rule have made big chases more common, but one over or one wicket can still change the game completely.

Suryavanshi's innings also created multiple records. At just 15 years and 29 days, he became the youngest player to reach 1,000 T20 runs and the

fastest teenager to achieve the milestone, doing so in only 473 balls. It was also his fourth T20 century in just 26 matches, underlining his extraordinary rise in Indian cricket.

This is not the first time Suryavanshi has made headlines. Last season, he had already become the youngest player to score an IPL century, and now he continues to build his reputation as one of the brightest young talents in world cricket.

Fans and former cricketers have also praised his fearless style, with many comparing his natural strokeplay to street cricket freedom mixed with elite-level power hitting.

For Pat Cummins to publicly call him his favourite player at such a young age only shows how special Suryavanshi's talent truly is.

With performances like this, the teenager is no longer just a rising star—he is quickly becoming one of the biggest attractions of IPL 2026.

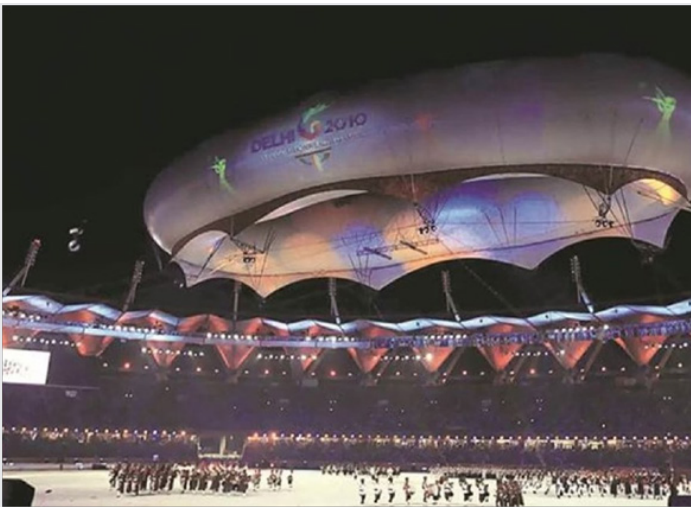


2010 CWG Shadow Lingers as India Prepares for 2030 Games

As India prepares to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Gujarat, the financial and legal troubles from the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games continue to burden the government even after 16 years.

According to official records and RTI replies, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports cleared outstanding dues worth Rs 28.05 crore during 2025-26, with the payment made to MTNL. In addition, around Rs 50 crore has been estimated for 2026-27 to settle remaining liabilities linked to the 2010 Games. Even today, 29 court cases related to the event are still pending in different courts.

The 2030 Commonwealth Games will be hosted in Ahmedabad during the centenary year of the event, with over 70 nations expected to participate. A recent Commonwealth Sport delegation led by president Donald Rukare and CEO Katie Sadlier visited Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Vadodara, and Ekta Nagar and praised the planning and ven-



ue quality.

However, the shadow of the 2010 Delhi Games remains strong. The event, once seen as a proud moment for India, later became linked with corruption allegations, poor planning, and massive cost overruns that damaged the country's sporting reputation.

Officials said further outstanding liabilities cannot be confirmed yet because the final

amount depends on court decisions in cases that are still pending. The 29 unresolved cases involve 24 vendors, individuals, and government authorities, with the Union government being a party in each matter.

Among the major vendors still involved in disputes are Nussli Switzerland, which handled Games overlays, and the Electronics Corporation of In-

dia, which was linked to major technical contracts during the Delhi event.

Legal expenses have also remained high. Since 2010, the government has spent Rs 6.37 crore on lawyers and another Rs 6.63 crore on arbitrators and tribunals, taking total legal costs to over Rs 13 crore.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) had earlier reported that the estimated cost of the Delhi Games jumped from Rs 297 crore in 2003 to Rs 18,532 crore by October 2010, leading to national outrage. In 2025, former Organising Committee chief Suresh Kalmadi was cleared of major charges after a Delhi court accepted closure reports in money laundering cases. He later passed away in January 2026.

Now, the 2030 Games are being seen as India's chance to rebuild global confidence and strengthen its Olympic ambitions. For India, hosting the Games is not just about sports—it is about proving that the mistakes of 2010 will not be repeated.

Gujarat Titans Beat CSK by 8 Wickets as Sai Sudharsan Shines Again

Chennai | April 26, 2026 | TPN

Gujarat Titans defeated Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets in their IPL 2026 clash at Chepauk, with Sai Sudharsan producing another brilliant innings to guide GT to a comfortable win.

Batting first after losing the toss, CSK managed only 158 for 7 in 20 overs. Captain Ruturaj Gaikwad remained unbeaten on 74 off 60 balls, but his slow-paced knock came under criticism as the rest of the batting lineup struggled to build momentum. Gujarat's bowlers, led by Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj, kept tight control throughout the innings and never allowed CSK to accelerate

properly.

Sanju Samson, opening for CSK, could not convert his start into a big innings despite entering the match in strong form. The middle order also failed to provide the late push expected at Chepauk, leaving CSK with a below-par total on a decent batting surface.

In reply, Gujarat Titans looked in control from the beginning. Sai Sudharsan once again proved why he is among the most consistent batters this season, scoring a superb 87 off just 46 balls. His innings was filled with elegant strokeplay and powerful hitting, keeping the required rate comfortably under control.

Shubman Gill gave GT a

steady start before being dismissed, while Jos Buttler supported Sudharsan well during the chase. Their partnership ensured there was no pressure on the visitors as they moved closer to the target with ease. GT eventually reached the target with nine balls to spare and only two wickets down.

One of the talking points before the match was whether MS Dhoni would return for CSK, but the veteran wicketkeeper-batter once again remained out of the playing XI despite reports suggesting he was fit enough to play. His continued absence remains a major concern for fans hoping to see him back this season.

Another milestone from the

match came when Sanju Samson surpassed MS Dhoni's IPL run tally, moving ahead of the CSK legend in the all-time run charts. The achievement added a personal highlight despite CSK's defeat. For Chennai, the loss raises more questions about batting intent and finishing strength, especially with playoff pressure increasing. For Gujarat Titans, the win strengthens their campaign and highlights the growing impact of Sai Sudharsan, who continues to deliver match-winning performances. With the tournament entering a crucial stage, GT look stronger with every game, while CSK must quickly find answers if they want to stay in the playoff race.





KayaduLohar Says Strong Roles Matter More Than Film Size

Actress KayaduLohar, who gained major attention with Pradeep Ranganathan'sDragon, says she does not calculate whether a film is big or small before accepting it. For her, the most important factor is the strength and importance of the character she gets to play.

The actress, who won praise for her role as Pallavi in Dragon, recently opened up about her career choices, upcoming films, and preparation process in a candid interview. She said the sudden popularity she received from Telugu audiences surprised her, and she feels happy seeing the strong following she has built in a short time.

Speaking about her upcoming Telugu project The Paradise with Nani, Kayadu revealed that she plays the role of Subbalakshmi and believes the character will help her connect even more deeply with Telugu audiences. She described the role as special and expressed confidence that the film would take her career forward. Reports also suggest that her first look from the film presents her in a very unique and unexpected avatar.

Kayadu said she prefers roles that challenge her as an actress and help her prove herself as a heroine. She explained that she is always interested in films that push her career ahead and offer meaningful performances rather than just glamorous appearances.

She also shared that legendary



filmmakers Mani Ratnam and Sukumar are among her favourite directors, and working in their films remains one of her biggest career dreams.

Talking about preparation, the actress said she does workshops before every film and only steps onto the set after gaining complete confidence about her role. If she is acting in a language she is not familiar with, she becomes even more careful and hires a language coach to perfect dialogues and accent. She also reads books and does research to un-

derstand the background of her character better.

This is where her most talked-about statement came in—Kayadu said she does not think about whether a project is big or small. If her role is important in the story, she is ready to do the film without hesitation.

She also reflected on the disappointment of film failures, mentioning that she had high hopes for Funky, but the result was discouraging. However, she said outcomes are not always in an actor's control, and after feeling bad for a couple of days, she shifts her focus to the next project.

Kayadu also shared a personal detail about her background, saying her mother tongue is Nepali. Though she was born and raised in Assam, her family has Nepali roots, and later they moved to Pune. She entered the entertainment world through modeling after being selected as a "Fresh Face" in a competition before making her film debut in Kannada cinema in 2021.

Now balancing projects across Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam cinema, KayaduLohar is steadily building a career based on performance and preparation rather than shortcuts.

With The Paradise and other major films ahead, the actress is clearly focused on one goal—choosing strong characters that leave a lasting impact.

sion among fans and film circles, especially considering the scale and expectations surrounding the project. According to reports, the biggest reason for the postponement is NTR's physical makeover. Initially, the actor reportedly lost significant weight to suit the role's demand. However, feedback on that look was said to be less than satisfactory, leading director Prashanth Neel to rethink the presentation of the character. Prashanth Neel is now said to be planning a more

powerful and mass-heavy screen presence for NTR, one that better matches his body language and larger-than-life image. For this, NTR is reportedly undergoing another transformation, this time focusing on building a stronger and more muscular look. This process naturally requires several months, affecting the overall shooting schedule. The delay is not limited to appearance alone. Reports suggest that Prashanth Neel is also reworking parts of the script to im-

prove the impact of action blocks and emotional drama. Some scenes reportedly did not meet his expectations during filming, leading him to revise important portions of the screenplay. This script refinement has reportedly forced the team to alter previously planned shooting schedules. In addition, the makers are said to be considering reshooting a few important sequences that were already completed, ensuring the final product meets the high standards expected from

a Prashanth Neel directorial. Though reshoots in a big-budget film involve major expenses, both NTR and Neel are reportedly in agreement that there should be no compromise on quality. Their focus is said to be on delivering a visually powerful theatrical experience rather than rushing for an earlier release. The makers have officially locked the global release date for June 11, 2027, making it one of the biggest upcoming releases in Indian cinema. Fans who were disap-

pointed by the delay may soon get a reason to celebrate, as the first official glimpse from the film is expected to be unveiled on May 20, coinciding with NTR's birthday. A powerful poster or glimpse revealing NTR's new look could help reduce the disappointment caused by the postponement and give fans a better idea of the film's massive scale. While the wait has become longer, expectations are only growing stronger. With Prashanth Neel's signature elevations and



NTR's intense screen presence, Dragon is being seen as a potential box-office storm.

For now, fans may have to wait until 2027—but if the makeover and delay deliver the promised impact, the wait could be well worth it.

Chiranjeevi-Bobby Film May Get Second Producer Amid KVN Productions' Challenges

Megastar Chiranjeevi's much-awaited upcoming film with director Bobby Kolli is once again making headlines, this time due to reports suggesting that another producer may join the project to support KVN Productions.

The film, tentatively referred to as "Mega 158," marks Chiranjeevi's reunion with director Bobby after the blockbuster success of Waltair Veerayya. The project is being mounted on a grand scale by KVN Productions, which is making its Tollywood debut with this prestigious venture. The film was officially launched earlier this month, with regular shooting expected to begin soon.

According to the latest industry buzz, KVN Productions has been facing multiple production-related challenges. The banner recently dealt with setbacks involving Vijay's Jana Nayagan, which reportedly faced an online leak, while Yash'sToxic was also delayed due to the ongoing situation in the Middle East. These developments are believed to have created pressure on the production house ahead of its big Telugu debut.

As a result, reports suggest that Chiranjeevi's close friend may come on board as a second producer to offer additional support and ensure the smooth progress of the film. While there is no official confirmation yet



from the makers, the move is being seen as a strategic step to avoid delays and strengthen the project's production backing.

The film itself is expected to be a major commercial entertainer with a strong emotional core. Chiranjeevi is reportedly set to play an aged gangster in the movie, a role that has already generated significant curiosity among fans. Industry reports also suggest that the daughter's character in the film will carry major importance in the storyline, adding emotional depth to the action-driven narrative.

Music director Thaman is likely to compose the soundtrack, while Nimish Ravi has reportedly been roped in as the cinematographer. The project is expected to feature a stylish pres-

entation of Chiranjeevi with Bobby's trademark mass-commercial treatment, something fans are eagerly waiting for after their previous success together.

There were also recent rumours about Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor being part of the film, but reports later clarified that he is not involved in the project. The casting details are still under wraps, and the makers are expected to reveal more information in the coming weeks.

The project had earlier faced minor postponements regarding its launch and scheduling, but insiders say work is now moving forward steadily. With Chiranjeevi returning in a powerful mass role and Bobby directing after a proven box-office success, expectations are naturally high.

Fans are particularly excited because the film is seen as one of Chiranjeevi's biggest upcoming ventures, especially after the success of his recent projects. The addition of a second producer, if confirmed, may only strengthen confidence around the film's scale and execution.

For now, the speculation continues, but one thing is clear—Mega 158 remains one of the most anticipated Telugu films in production, and every update surrounding it is drawing major attention across Tollywood.

Akira Nandan's Tollywood Debut Buzz Grows After AdiviSesh's Comments

The buzz around Akira Nandan's Tollywood debut has once again become a major talking point after actor AdiviSesh made interesting comments during the promotions of his upcoming film Dacoit. His remarks have reignited excitement among fans eagerly waiting to see PawanKalyan's son enter the film industry. For years, Akira Nandan's debut has remained one of the most discussed topics in Telugu cinema. Despite constant rumours and fan speculation, there has been no official confirmation about when he will step into films. Along with Nandamuri Mokshagna, Akira is considered one of the most awaited star kids in Tollywood. During a recent media interaction, AdiviSesh said he is just as excited as fans about Akira's debut. While he did not confirm whether he is preparing a script for him, he said that whenever Akira enters films, it will be a major sensation. His statement quickly went viral and added



fresh energy to the speculation. Sesh also revealed that he shares a friendly bond with Akira and that they meet occasionally. He praised Akira's maturity, calm nature, and clear thinking. He also mentioned that both of them are left-handed, which creates a special connection between them. At present, Akira is reportedly focusing on music studies abroad rather than preparing for an acting career. His mother, Renu Desai, has previously said that his future career choice will

depend entirely on his own decision. Fans, however, continue to hope that he will eventually choose cinema, considering his strong family legacy and huge public interest. Social media remains full of discussions and fan theories about his possible launch. For now, there is no official confirmation, but AdiviSesh's comments have once again brought Akira Nandan's debut into the spotlight, making fans even more eager for an announcement.

Actress Pragathi Recalls Nightmare Experience with a Director

Senior actress Pragathi recently opened up about one of the most difficult experiences in her film career, revealing that a director once made her professional life so stressful that she felt like she was "living through hell" during that project.

In a recent interview, Pragathi shared that during the early phase of her career, she had to work with a director who created extreme discomfort for her on set. Though she did not reveal the director's name, she said the experience was so unpleasant that she kept waiting for the film to end and for her chance to leave the project.

She explained that every day of that shoot felt like a nightmare and that she constantly wondered when the project would finally be completed. The emotional pressure was so intense that she later made a firm decision never to work with that director again under any circumstances.

Her comments quickly sparked curiosity among fans and social media



users, with many trying to guess which director she was referring to. Since Pragathi did not disclose the filmmaker's identity, the issue has now become a topic of widespread speculation online.

In the past, many actresses often avoided speaking openly about such uncomfortable experiences in the film industry due to fear or professional pressure. However, Pragathi's candid statement reflects how more women in cinema are now choosing to speak honestly about the challenges they faced behind the scenes.

Apart from discussing this bitter

memory, Pragathi also spoke about her current priorities in life and career. Known not only for her acting but also for her dedication to fitness and powerlifting, she said she remains focused on meaningful roles rather than money.

She made it clear that she would never accept a role she dislikes, no matter how high the remuneration offered. At the same time, if a role truly connects with her, she is willing to work without giving too much importance to payment.

Pragathi, who has earned respect in Telugu cinema through strong supporting roles and her inspiring fitness journey, also mentioned that she is still waiting for a good and challenging character to make a strong impact on screen once again.

Her honest revelation about the difficult director has now become a major talking point in Tollywood, while fans continue to admire her courage in speaking openly about a painful chapter from her past.

NTR's Makeover Pushes Prashanth Neel's Dragon to 2027

Young Tiger NTR and director Prashanth Neel's much-awaited film Dragon has reportedly been pushed to 2027, and the main reason behind the delay appears to be NTR's major physical transformation for the role. The film, one of the most anticipated pan-India projects in Telugu cinema, was expected to arrive earlier, but reports now suggest that the makers have decided to postpone it by nearly a year to ensure top-quality output. The delay has created major discus-

sion among fans and film circles, especially considering the scale and expectations surrounding the project. According to reports, the biggest reason for the postponement is NTR's physical makeover. Initially, the actor reportedly lost significant weight to suit the role's demand. However, feedback on that look was said to be less than satisfactory, leading director Prashanth Neel to rethink the presentation of the character. Prashanth Neel is now said to be planning a more

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