

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | 4 APRIL 2025

## WEATHER

Max: 34.9°C  
Min: 23.2°C  
RH: 36%  
Rainfall: 054.1 mm  
Forecast: Generally cloudy sky. Max/Min temp. 33/22°C

## ASTROGUIDE

Viswavasu; Uttarayana  
Tithi: Shukla Saptami till 9.41 am  
Star: Ardra till 4.05 pm  
Varyyam: 2.04 pm to 3.38 pm  
Durmuhurtam: 3.00 pm to 4.30 pm  
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12.00 noon  
HIJRI CALENDAR  
Shawwal 5, 1446 H  
PRAYERS  
Fajar: 5.07 am  
Zohar: 12.29 pm  
Asar: 4.40 pm  
Maghrib: 6.35 pm  
Isha: 7.44 pm  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM  
SUNSET TODAY 6.29 PM  
MOONRISE 11.03 AM  
MOONSET

## COUNTER POINT



Give me some sweets with 0% GST to celebrate the record collection!

## IN BRIEF

### IAF jaguar crash: Pilot killed

New Delhi, April 3: The Indian Air Force (IAF) on Thursday confirmed that one of the pilots of a two-seater Jaguar aircraft died when the jet crashed at Jamnagar, Gujarat, on Wednesday night during a training flight. "An IAF Jaguar two-seater aircraft airborne from Jamnagar airfield crashed during a night mission," said a statement.

### LS affirms Prez rule in Manipur

New Delhi, April 3: The Lok Sabha early on Thursday confirmed the imposition of President's Rule in Manipur, adopting by voice vote a resolution titled "Consideration on the Proclamation issued by the President on the 13th February 2025 under Article 356 (1) of the Constitution in relation to the State of Manipur."

Full report on Page 9

### Record 202 MPs speak in Zero Hour

New Delhi: A record 202 MPs got an opportunity to speak on 'matters of public importance' during an extended Zero Hour lasting five hours in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The previous record, on July 18, 2019, saw 161 MPs speaking. Officials said the extension came as part of an initiative by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who was committed to providing more members with time to raise matters.

## DIGITAL LEAP

# New AI-system aims to enhance transparency and prevent corruption in SROs

## AI-powered property registration by mid-April

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The state government is set to introduce an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered property registration system in Hyderabad by mid-April. This initiative aims to enhance transparency and curb corruption in sub-registrar offices.

As part of the pilot phase, the AI-driven system will be launched at the Champapet and Saroornagar sub-registrar offices before April 15. Following a successful trial, the initiative will be gradu-

ally expanded across the state. The new system promises to reduce the time taken for property registrations from nearly one hour now to just 10 to 15 minutes.

According to official sources, revenue minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy submitted a proposal to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday, seeking an approval to commence the pilot project.

The project is expected to be launched soon after receiving the Chief Minister's approval. One of the unique aspects of the

### SMART REGISTRATION

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ONE OF THE UNIQUE aspects of the AI-based registration system is its ability to assign buyers and sellers to a sub-registrar office of its choice upon booking an online slot.

Artificial Intelligence-based registration system is its ability to assign buyers and sellers to a sub-registrar office of its choice upon booking an online slot. For

AS PART OF the pilot phase, the system will be launched at Champapet and Saroornagar sub-registrar offices before April 15

the first time, buyers and sellers will have access to an online slot-booking facility for non-agricultural property registrations, extending the service

beyond the existing Dharani portal, which currently caters only to agricultural properties. A major challenge in the existing registration system is the prevalence of irregularities and corruption. Many buyers and sellers face difficulties due to arbitrary rejections of registrations, often leading to bribery.

With the AI-driven system, sub-registrar staff will not have prior information about applicants, thereby preventing selective processing of registrations. The system will randomly allocate sub-registrar offices,

minimising undue influence and malpractices. Additionally, the Artificial Intelligence system will display all slot bookings at the headquarters in Hyderabad, allowing senior officials to monitor registrations closely.

If a registration is rejected, staff members must provide valid reasons, which the AI system will verify. Any unwarranted rejections will trigger alerts, bringing erring officials under scrutiny.

Page 3: AI to ensure smooth registration process



## WORLD | 11

### Trump will give Ukraine sops

# Pharma, semiconductor, energy sectors spared

## Trump goes soft on India with 27% duty

MADHUSUDHAN SAHOO | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced a sweeping 10 per cent basic duty on all imported goods coming into the United States and an additional tariff on the countries that enjoy favourable trade surplus with his country.

These measures effectively ended the 80-year-old free trade regime that the United States promoted and could possibly throw the world into a recession.

India will attract a 27 per cent tariff, which is the lowest among major developing countries in Asia, while China tops the list of countries which attract Trump's reciprocal tariffs.

There was some relief at the relatively lower impact on India, with Trump not announcing any measures against the pharma, semiconductor and energy



President Donald Trump speaks during an event to announce new tariffs in the Rose Garden at the White House, on Wednesday. — PTI

sectors. The IT sector, which is part of the services sector, did not suffer in Thursday's order.

Government sources said the tariff imposition was not a setback, and pointed out that India was in bilateral trade talks with the US.

All Chinese goods coming into the US will be charged a 54 per cent duty

- consisting of a 10 per cent basic duty, 24 per cent reciprocal duty, and 20 per cent tariff announced earlier. Cambodia is the second in the list, attracting 49 per cent duty followed by Vietnam (46), Sri Lanka (44), Myanmar (44, Bangladesh (37).

Page 9: More tariff cuts likely soon, say officials



Heavy rain causes severe waterlogging at VST crossroads on Thursday, disrupting traffic and daily life. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

# Rain, thunderstorms wreak havoc, lightning kills 3 in TG

SABA ANJUM SHAIK | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Life in Hyderabad and several districts were disrupted by the unexpected heavy rains and thunderstorms, which claimed three lives on Thursday, prompting Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to step in and direct officials to take relief measures.

In Nagarkurnool, two women lost their lives after being struck by lightning while working in the fields. Sunkari Saidamma (40) and Gajula Veeramma (60) died on the spot, while another woman, Sunkari Laxamma, sustained injuries.

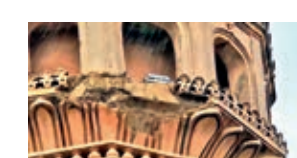
In Jogulamba Gadwal district, another lightning strike killed a person at Chandrashekharnagar, Manopad mandal. Hyderabad struggled with

severe waterlogging, bringing traffic to a standstill in many areas.

Many were seen pushing their bikes through flooded streets, while a bus was submerged in Malakpet and a wall collapsed in Gowliguda, while vehicles parked at Ranigun were submerged. There were reports of vehicles being washed away in flooded streets.

The Old City, Ranigun chowrasta, Mettuguda, VST crossroads, Ashoknagar, Gaganmahal, Tarnaka, Begumpet, Basheerbagh, Charminar, Banjara Hills and Parsigutta were among the severely flooded areas. Waterlogging was also reported in Musheerabad and Padmaranagar.

Page 2: Emergency response teams put on high alert



A portion of the stucco work fell from one of the minarets of the Charminar owing to heavy rain.

### STUCCO WORK OF CHARMINAR FALLS, NO ONE HURT

Hyderabad: A piece of Charminar's plasterwork broke from one of its minarets on Thursday, as heavy rain lashed the city. It fell on the sheet roof of the Bhagyalakshmi temple.

Full report on Page 2

## SPORTS | 14

### KKR thrash Sunrisers in IPL match



# SC stays all activities at Kancha Gachibowli

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Supreme Court on Thursday took cognisance of the largescale felling of trees in the 400 acres of land situated in Survey No. 25 of the Kancha Gachibowli in Serilingampally mandal and directed the state government to immediately stop all activities in the vicinity, including deforestation.

Except for works related to protection of the trees in the land, no single work should be taken up, until further orders, the apex court made it clear to the state government. The court said that if there were violations of the interim orders, the Chief Secretary would be held responsible.

A bench of Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih issued the interim orders in a suo motu writ petition titled "Kancha Gachibowli Forest".

After going through photographs of the site, the bench, prima facie, said that the site consisted of lakes and forests that were inhabited by wild animals and various species of birds.

The court felt that it was an alarming issue as the government had destroyed the trees in more than 100 acres in three days by deploying hundreds of excavators and other machinery. This was nothing but taking the law into their hands and was a very serious matter, the court observed. The court also directed central empowered committee to visit the area and file a report by April 16.

Page 5: HC Registrar gave alarming picture: SC

# REVANTH SETS UP PANEL FOR TALKS ON ROW

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Thursday constituted a committee with group of ministers (GoM) to hold consultations with the executive committee of the University of Hyderabad (UoH) and stakeholders to recommend a way forward on Kancha Gachibowli land issue. The GoM will comprise Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and ministers D. Sridhar Babu and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy. The GoM has been asked to hold consultations with the UoH executive panel, JAC, students unions.

Full report on Page 5

## TABLOID

### Rashmika's golden streak stumbles!



# India, Thai ink 6 pacts, boost ties

Believe in progress in Indo-Pacific region: Modi

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Thai PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra held talks in Bangkok on Thursday, during which the two leaders announced the elevation of bilateral ties to strategic partnership level and inked six pacts. In a veiled dig at China at the joint presser with the Thai PM, Modi asserted that India and Thailand believe in progress, not expansionism and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

In his remarks after the meeting, the Prime Minister said, "We (India and Thailand) believe in development and not expansionism. We welcome Thailand's decision to co-lead the 'Maritime Ecology' pillar of the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative."

He said both nations believe in a free, open, inclusive and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Prime Minister mentioned that Thailand has a "special place" in India's Act East policy and also in India's vision for the Asia-Pacific and focus on the unity and centrality of the Southeast Asian grouping Asean (of which Thailand is a member).

The Prime Minister thanked the Thai government for its help in rescuing Indian nationals who had been trapped by cyber-crime gangs in some of the Southeast Asian nations.

Page 9: Modi to participate in 6th Bimstec summit today



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being presented The World Tipitaka as a gift by his Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra at Bangkok in Thailand. — PTI

# PM, EAM take dig at Bangla's Yunus

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and external affairs minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar took separate veiled potshots at Bangladesh interim government head Muhammad Yunus on Thursday by reiterating the importance of India's northeastern region in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec) architecture.

In a shocker last week during his visit to China, Yunus had claimed that Bangladesh is the sole guardian of the ocean in its region on the grounds that the seven northeast-

ern states of India are landlocked and had invited China for an "extension" of its economy in the region through building and marketing products. In his departure statement on Thursday morning from New Delhi before embarking for Thailand to attend the sixth Bimstec summit, Modi said, "With its geographical location, India's northeastern region lies at the heart of Bimstec. I look forward to meeting the leaders of the Bimstec and engaging productively to further strengthen our collaboration with interest of our people in mind."

Page 9: EAM: Co-operation not subject to cherry-picking

# RS approves Waqf Bill, to be renamed Umeed by Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

The Rajya Sabha passed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the early hours of Friday after a marathon debate. The House also passed the Mussalman Waqf (Repeal) Bill 2024. The Bill will go to the President for assent.

After the Lok Sabha passed the Bill 288-232 early on Thursday, Union minority affairs minister Kiren Rijiju tabled it in the Upper House. The Bill aims to include all Muslim sects in the Waqf Board.

The minister said there were 4.9 lakh Waqf properties in 2004, which had increased to 8.72 lakh. Rijiju said the Bill aimed to accomplish the unfulfilled tasks of the previous governments.

"The government has introduced the Bill with good intentions and thus renamed it 'Umeed'. No

one should have any problem with the name," he added. The government proposes to rename the Bill Unified Waqf Management Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (Umeed) Bill.

Congress MP Syed Naseer Hussain termed the Bill unconstitutional and alleged that it targeted the Muslim community, even as he accused the BJP of using the legislation to trigger communal tension and polarisation to strengthen its vote-bank. He alleged the Bill sought to treat Muslims as second-class citizens.

Leader of the House J.P. Nadda accused the Congress of making Muslim women second-grade citizens during its rule at the Centre and said the Modi government had liberated them by banning triple talaq.

Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge

accused the government of trying to sow the seeds of conflict by suppressing Muslims through the Bill. He said the legislation was "unconstitutional" and not good for Muslims. He urged the government to withdraw the Bill, which he said had a lot of "mistakes" and not make it a prestige issue.

Kharge alleged that the ruling dispensation wanted to take away the land of Muslims and hand it over to its corporate friends. He also questioned the Bill's membership rules for non-Muslims, drawing comparisons to Hindu trusts where Muslims cannot be members. He asked, if Hindu trusts restrict membership to their own faith, why should the Waqf Board allow members from other religions. He even added that people like him of the SC community were not trustees.

More reports on Pg 9

# Warangal Chapata Chilli gets GI tag

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC WARANGAL, APRIL 3

In a significant milestone for Warangal's agricultural community, Chapata Chilli has received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag, bringing global recognition to this unique chilli.

Chapata Chilli, known for its low pungency and unique red colour, is cultivated in Thimmapur of united Warangal district. It is famed for its oleoresin content, ranging from 6.37 to 6.75 per cent, which makes it ideal for



Warangal Chapata Chillies use across segments like sweets, cosmetics, beverages, and medicines.

The latest achievement is the result of efforts by farmers from the Thimmapet Mirchi Farmers' Association, in Duggaondi mandal.

Page 5: Chilli farmers applied for GI tag in 2022

# Pharma sector escapes Trump tariff, staff happy

Approximately 47% of the US's medicine imports come from India

MRITTIKA BANERJEE | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

US President Donald Trump's exemption for the pharmaceutical sector from the reciprocal tariff offered relief to companies and workers in Hyderabad, which is widely seen as India's pharma capital.

Lalit G., partner at a pharmaceutical firm operating out of Genome Valley, described the mood as one of relief.

"Basically, it's not entirely exempted, the definition hasn't been made yet. Ten per cent might still be imposed. But if we have to absorb that to stay competitive, we will."

His firm, like many others, relies on the American market where nearly half the generic medicines originate from India.

"Roughly 47 per cent of what the US imports in medicines comes from India. Any tariff will raise their costs, not ours," he said, pausing before adding, "They'll just

have to pass that burden to their people." Genome Valley accounts for close to 30 per cent of India's pharmaceutical production.

The density of output here means that even a partial tariff can rattle the balance.

Lalit pointed to how south India, especially Hyderabad, contributes over 15 per cent of that 47 per cent India-to-US pharma flow.

"The only real question now is whether there will be any tariff at all, or a small one. That'll decide how the market moves."

Though pharma stocks surged after news of the exemption, he remained measured.

"Could be a pump, honestly. A bit of overreaction, nothing is final. But the very fact that pharma was carved out is a good sign. They can't move dependency away from us overnight."

Pharmaceuticals seem to have escaped the worst of it,

at least for now. Analysts say this was less about diplomacy and more about dependence. The US cannot easily fill the gap if Indian pharma pulls back.

The cost of setting up parallel production chains domestically would be steep, slow, and politically unattractive.

Meanwhile, China, another major supplier, faces a 34 per cent tariff. This places India in a relatively better spot, though not without its own risks.

Unlike pharma, the tech sector appeared rattled, even if only on the surface. Joy, who works at an American firm based in Hyderabad,

saw his portfolio shrink within hours.

"We lost lakhs of rupees in stock value in hours as I watched the whole thing live. It was brutal," he said. Many employees at his company receive shares as part of

their compensation, and the sudden dip in valuation was more than just a number on a screen.

Tariffs, he explained, may not directly threaten jobs, but they chip away at how companies operate. "If a US company sources components or raw materials from another country, the costs rise."

That eventually makes the product more expensive. Be it Ford or Royal Enfield, everyone pays more, and that's going to be passed on to consumers."

Joy doesn't see a mass lay-off scenario unfolding. "This is more about pricing and perception. And this whole move is to push US-made products. It's classic Trump."

He believes the bigger blow will be to companies relying on India as a manufacturing base for exports to the US. "It's a long-term thing. The iPhones, the cars, those will get pricier because the parts aren't local."



Heavy rain disrupted normal life in many parts of twin cities at Ranigunj, Banjara Hills, Gachibowli, Macca Masjid and Charminar, as floodwaters overwhelmed the areas. Many people were stranded, navigating through the rising water on Thursday.

- S. SURENDER REDDY, DEEPAK DESHPANDE, P.SURENDRA, R. PAVAN, GANDHI

# Emergency response teams on standby as rain disrupts Hyd

FROM PAGE 1

P. Sravya, a college student from Basheerbagh, said "The road in front of the Bikanervala outlet was completely flooded. I saw two elderly people pushing their two-wheeler through the water because it was too slippery to ride."

Traffic movement was severely impacted. Around 3.30 pm, vehicles crawled near NMDC due to waterlogging. This affected the stretch from Mahaveer Hospital to SD Eye Hospital.

Traffic police and GHMC workers managed to clear waterlogging at VST, but several other locations remained inundated. A tree collapsed in Old City and another fell on an autorickshaw in Khairatabad.

Srinivas, Rachakonda DCP, said, "We have cleared waterlogging in LB Nagar with the help of NDRF, GHMC and our traffic teams. Traffic was slow at HUDA point, Chaitanyapuri and Nagole road, but it is now under control." Sai Manohar, DCP Cyberabad, added, "The traffic situation is under control now. We deployed an additional force of 40 personnel in major areas."

Meanwhile, many people took shelter under flyovers in Secunderabad to escape the rain. In another incident, lightning struck the retaining wall of the Srigidha NVR Arcade terrace on dairy farm road, Tarnaka.

Meanwhile, the managing director of HMWSSB, Ashok Reddy, directed officials to take precautions to prevent public inconvenience. Emergency response teams were put on high alert, warning boards were placed near open manholes and sewerage supervisors were stationed at critical points.

HYDRAA and DRF teams worked to remove the 28 trees that had fallen and cleared water stagnation across the city. There were 48 water stagnation complaints. Around, nine catch pit blockages were addressed.

# IMD forecasts rain, temperatures drop

RACHEL DAMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Following Thursday's rain, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast more rainfall over the next few days, with a drop in temperatures by 2-4°C expected. Thursday saw rain providing much-needed relief from the scorching summer heat. According to the Telangana Development Planning Society (TGD-PS), several parts of Hyderabad recorded significant rainfall. The highest rainfall was reported at GHMC head office in Himayyannagar, at 91 mm, followed by Malakpet (90 mm), Saroonagar (89.5 mm), Goshamahal (88 mm) and Musheerabad (87.8 mm).

The IMD has issued an orange alert for the districts of Adilabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Kumaram Bheem Asifabad and Kamareddy, warning of possible hailstorms.

Additionally, a yellow alert has been placed for Jagtial, Karimnagar,

# REVANTH ASKS OFFICIALS TO BE ON HIGH ALERT

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy directed officials to be on high alert in view of downpour in the city and other parts of the state, as well as predictions of more rainfall.

In a media statement on Thursday, Revanth Reddy asked officials to take necessary relief measures and ensure people do not face any hardships. He instructed Chief Secretary A. Santhi Kumari to review the situation and take steps to avoid inconvenience to the people in the low-lying areas.

He ordered the GHMC, police, HYDRAA and other departments to work in coordination to ensure that there is no waterlogging on the roads, traffic jams and power outages. Power officials are instructed to resolve power supply problems and restore the services. District collectors, police officers and officers of all departments are also put on high alert in the wake of heavy rains in several districts.

# CHARMINAR PLASTER PIECE BREAKS, FALLS ON TEMPLE ROOF

PRATHYUSH NALLELLA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

A piece of Charminar's plasterwork broke from one of its minarets on Thursday, as heavy rain lashed the city. It fell on the sheet roof of the Bhagyalakshmi temple. There was no damage to the temple, and no one was injured.

The ornamental piece in the shape of lotus petal, made of plaster, fell from the third balcony of the south-eastern minaret, above the temple. It was stated to be from the Nizam era, and not part of the original monument. Police said the incident

occurred at around 4 pm, and said not many people were around since it was raining heavily. "The piece fell to the edge of the temple's shed, but caused no damage to the temple. Visitors were not near Charminar because it was raining," said a police constable from the Charminar police station.

"Sometimes hairline cracks in the stucco absorb water and increase weight. It leads to detachment," said an official of the Archaeological Survey of India, who requested not to be named. The official said the piece was an outer plaster layer and is not a structural part of Charminar. "This is a

minor issue. Restoration will be carried out soon," the official added.

Plaster pieces of Charminar's minarets falling down are not new. In 2010, the same lotus petal ornamental piece fell off from the same south-eastern minaret. No one was injured, and ASI authorities claimed the piece was not a structural part of Charminar and said the repair will be done in a week. ASI authorities said the ornamental layer dates back to 1924, when the Nizam re-plastered the monument. "In the last 10 years, only some plastering work has been done, not on the entire Charminar," the official added.

# MONSOON | JOY Youngsters enjoyed rain, heading out on bike rides

# Citizens embrace sudden rain

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

In Barkatpura, home to several colleges, students emerged from campuses just as the rains intensified, adding a buzz of excitement to the area. Similar scenes unfolded across other college zones in the city.

Groups of youngsters also made the most of the showers by heading out on bike rides. One such group — Omar, Shaikh, Yesh, Phalak, Nandani, and Tanisha — set off from Basheerbagh, revelling in the rain.

With the rain cooling the city, residents and tourists flocked popular hangout spots such as Durgam

Cheruvu, KBR Park, and Hussainsagar, where people gathered along Tank Bund, NTR Marg, and Necklace Road.



The unexpected summer shower brought joy to the citizens, who were seen playing near Charminar on Thursday.

Many were seen clicking photos, snacking on street food, or purchasing coal-roasted corn from roadside vendors.

## CLASSIFIEDS

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**11.2 ACRES**, Mango Orchard, Owner House, Watchman House (2 Borewells Full Water) For Sale With All Facilities. 60KM From Secunderabad Jubilee Bus Stand, 20KM sft. from Siddipet, 6KM to Karimnagar Highway, Konapally Village. 1 Acre 60 Lakhs, Sathish Ph: 9866928444. (HYHA/2526/C00014)

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**COMMERCIAL**

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## SHORT TAKES

DONATIONS TO IIT  
TAX-FREE UNDER  
SEC. 80G OF I-T ACTDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Donations to IIT Hyderabad (IITH) will now be tax-exempt under Section 80G of the Income-Tax Act, following its recognition as an institute of national eminence by the Centre.

Previously, donations were eligible for only a 50 per cent tax deduction. Effective March 27, the 100 per cent deduction is expected to enhance IITH's appeal to philanthropists and corporate donors, encouraging greater contributions towards academic excellence, research, and technological innovation.

IITH Director Prof. B.S. Murty welcomed the move, urging corporates, alumni, and well-wishers to support education, indigenous technology, and entrepreneurship. Dean, alumni and corporate affairs, Prof. Mahendrakumar Madhavan added, "Giving is a joyous feeling, and this full tax waiver makes contributing to IITH's research and development even more rewarding."

AI WILL ENSURE  
SMOOTHER REG.  
PROCESS

FROM PAGE 1

The AI will also track and manage footfall at sub-registrar offices, directing buyers and sellers to offices with lower congestion on a given day. This will ensure a smoother and more efficient registration process. Furthermore, the system will prevent double registrations and block transactions related to properties located in buffer zones, Full Tank Levels (FTLs) of lakes, tanks, and nalas by identifying such survey numbers and restricting their registration.

The online slot booking system will provide greater convenience, allowing buyers, sellers, and witnesses to schedule appointments as per their preferred date and time, eliminating long queues. Officials believe this initiative will improve efficiency, reduce the role of middlemen, and streamline the overall registration process.

By implementing this AI-powered system, the state government aims to enhance transparency, reduce delays, and ensure a hassle-free property registration experience for citizens. The structured slot-booking mechanism is expected to alleviate the heavy rush at registration offices, making the entire process more systematic and accessible for people.

STUDENTS  
SHOWCASE WORKS  
ON SOCIAL ISSUESDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Students of Classes VII to IX from 30 schools presented over 100 projects on climate change, e-teasing and inclusion of the differently abled as part of the compassionate citizenship programme. Developed by the Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA) and integrated into Telangana's moral education curriculum, the initiative will soon be expanded to 3,000 schools.

The projects' display, held on Thursday in Hyderabad, brought together students from government, private, corporate, KGBV and residential schools. Through fieldwork, interviews and community engagement, students explored real-world issues, documented challenges and proposed practical solutions. Their reports included insights from victims, officials and community elders, along with documented actions taken individually and collectively.

Addressing the students, Telangana Education Commission (TEC) member Prof. P.L. Vishweshwar Rao emphasised the need for education to extend beyond academics to foster compassion, equality and secularism. He highlighted creativity and imagination as key drivers of societal progress.

Prizes and certificates were awarded by peace activist Gufran Siddiqui, climate activist Nikita Naidu, gender experts Amina Nilofar and Jyotirmaya Jandhyam, women's rights activist Noor Jahan Siddiqui and inclusion resource persons Dhananjay and Sumaira. The event was dedicated to the memory of Egbert Samraj, Dr Anand Raj Varma, Omim Maneekshw Debara and Naheed Banu, former presidents of COVA Peace Network.

Cong. BC leaders meet Rahul,  
Sonia to seek 2 more berths

They point out that state Cabinet currently has only two BC ministers

L.VENKAT RAM  
REDDY | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

A delegation of Telangana BC leaders from Congress, including ministers, MPs, MLAs and MLCs met AICC leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in Delhi on Thursday, seeking two additional ministerial berths for the community in Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's ministry amid reports of an imminent Cabinet expansion. The leaders also met Union minister for social justice Virendra Kumar Khatik, urging the Central government to approve two Bills passed by the Telangana Assembly to enhance BC reservations in education, employment, and local bodies to 42 per cent.

Present at the meeting were ministers Ponnamp Prabhakar and Konda Surekha, MPs Anil Kumar Yadav and Balram Naik, MLAs Adi Srinivas, Beerla Ilaiah and Makkani Singh Raj Thakur, along with TPCC chief B.



A delegation of Telangana BC leaders of Congress, including ministers Ponnamp Prabhakar and Konda Surekha, MPs Anil Kumar Yadav and Balram Naik, MLAs Adi Srinivas, Beerla Ilaiah and Makkani Singh Raj Thakur, along with TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud meet AICC leader Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi on Thursday, seeking two additional ministerial posts for the community in Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy-led state government amid reports of Cabinet expansion. — DC

Mahesh Kumar Goud.

The delegation pointed out that the Cabinet currently had only two BC ministers. With six vacancies in the Cabinet, they insisted that at least two representatives from the community be included in the upcoming expansion thereby reinforcing the party's commitment to BC welfare and political empowerment.

Highlighting the Congress government's commitment to social justice, they said that a caste census was recently conducted in Telangana, and two crucial Bills were passed in the Assembly to enhance reservations.

Speaking to media after the meeting, the BC leaders claimed that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi gave them a patient

hearing and responded positively to their demands. Goud stated, "The Congress high command is carefully considering all aspects before expanding the Cabinet. Rahul Gandhi has pioneered the caste-based surveys in Telangana."

He said that Rahul Gandhi had appreciated protests by BC organisations at Jantar Mantar in

Delhi on Wednesday, demanding the Centre's nod for Telangana's 42 per cent BC quota.

Prabhakar criticised the BJP, saying, "The BJP is conspiring to deny justice to Telangana's Muslim community. Even in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi's home state, OBC reservations apply to Muslims. If the BJP-led central government is sincere, they should include the 42 per cent BC reservations in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution."

He also urged BJP leaders, Union minister of state Bandi Sanjay and Malkajgiri MP Etala Rajendar to act responsibly. "Are you trying to delay BC reservations under the guise of religion? Muslims were included in EWS reservations in BJP-ruled states. Telangana has gathered field-level data to justify BC reservations, approved by the Planning Department and the BC Commission," Prabhakar stated.

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Revenue and housing minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy launches a paddy procurement centre at Nayakangudem in Kusumanchi mandal of Khammam district on Thursday. — DC

BRS restricted paddy  
cultivation: PonguletiP. SRINIVAS | DC  
NALGONDA, APRIL 3

Revenue and housing minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Thursday criticised the previous BRS government for trying to restrict paddy cultivation and asserted that it had no moral right to question the agricultural policies of the current Congress-led government.

The minister said that the BRS government had tried to dictate crop patterns to farmers and failed to deliver on key promises.

"KCR went so far as to say that cultivating paddy was akin to farmers hanging themselves. That government also failed to fulfil its crop loan waiver promise during its 10-year tenure," he stated.

Speaking after inaugurating an Indira Kranti Patham paddy procurement centre at Nayakangudem in

Kusumanchi mandal of

Khammam district, Srinivas Reddy assured farmers that the Congress government will continue operating paddy procurement centres until the last grain was procured from them. He said the increased paddy production was the result of improved irrigation facilities, and the government is committed to extending irrigation to all cultivable land.

Highlighting the Congress government's flagship initiatives under Indiramma Rajyam, the minister said ₹20,687 crore in crop loans had been waived, benefiting over 25.65 lakh farmers.

He also pointed out that Telangana was the first state to provide a ₹500 bonus per quintal for premium variety paddy in addition to the minimum support price (MSP). A total of ₹1,700 crore in bonus was paid to farmers for the monsoon crop season.

HC faults Waqf Board for not  
taking control of IbadatkhanaVUJJINI  
VAMSHIDHAR | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka of the Telangana High Court on Thursday upbraided the Telangana Waqf Board for not complying with the court orders dated December 23, 2024, directing it to take control of the Ibadatkhana at Darulshifa.

The judge observed that the conduct of the board appeared like it was against the poorer sections of the Muslim community, and was working for the people in authority or those dictating terms to them.

Justice Bheemapaka also observed that the board was basically ignoring its duty with regard to protecting the rights of each sub-sect for whom it is dedicated. The judge was dealing with a review petition filed by one Mir Hasnain Ali Khan, challenging the orders of the court to take control of the Ibadatkhana.

The court had on December 23, 2024, ordered the board to take control of the Ibadatkhana bearing Municipal No.s 22-2-638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 22-2-645 to 650 and por-

tion of 664, 22-2-664, 22-2-666 and 667, 22-2-636 and 637 and in due course constitute a managing committee taking an equal number of members from both the sects of Shia Imamia Isna Ashari community — Akbhari and Usooli — and stem the rot over the selection of eight persons.

The court had also faulted the proceedings issued for the constitution of the 2023 working mutawalli committee of the Ibadatkhana, which had prohibited Shia women from performing religious functions there.

Hence, the court had directed the Waqf Board to take control of the establishment and give an opportunity to all sects in the new committee. In its December 2024 order, the court had also faulted the board's conduct in allowing one Capt. Syed Hadi Sadiq,

self-styled president of the mutawalli committee in 2018, to demolish the then existing Ibadatkhana together with the five mulgies attached to it. It was brought to the notice of the court that the Ibadatkhana was demolished but no construction permission was obtained. On enquiry with the GHMC, it came to light that the then president, along with his associates, had purchased small extents of land in municipal nos 22-2-645 to 650 and portion of 664, 22-2-664 and other numbers and approached the GHMC for residential permission. Individual permissions were obtained for the small extents of land. It was also brought to the notice of the court that no mulgies were constructed. They were built by the wakifs for the upkeep and maintenance of

Ibadat khana.

A review petition was filed by one of the nominated members of the 2023 committee.

Senior counsel L. Ravichander, representing him, argued that the court would not have issued a writ with such directions and the issue should have been relegated to the Waqf tribunal in view of the alternative remedy that was available.

He submitted that the Supreme Court, in no uncertain terms, had made it clear that in relation to all Waqf matters, the court of first instance should be the Waqf tribunal and the High Court and the civil court should not straightaway entertain the petition.

The judge was not satisfied with the arguments. Faulting the conduct of the board in delaying compliance with the court orders, Justice Bheemapaka cited excerpts from the Quran especially Jasmal Ul Quran, Surah 2; Al-Baqarah Section 25, and recalled the saying of Allah "Whoever usurps the land of somebody unjustly, his neck will be encircled with it down the seven earths."

HC threatens to suspend HCA body  
SRH threat to pull out of RGICS  
is tip of the iceberg: Ex-playersL. RAVICHANDER  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Justice C.V. Bhaskar Reddy of the Telangana High Court on Thursday started hearing a writ plea requiring a serious probe into the affairs of HCA (Hyderabad Cricket Association) and the need for a full-fledged CBI inquiry based on the allegations made in a writ petition filed by TCA (Telangana Cricket Association) alleging financial and administrative malpractices.

The petitioner contended that it was evident by the forensic audit report and the findings of the TCA as single-member committee, led by Justice L. Nageshwar Rao, that there was prima facie evidence of financial mismanagement in the association.

Counsel for the TCA argued that a detailed inquiry by a competent authority was required, particularly given the multiple complaints and ongoing investigations by different agencies into HCA's affairs.

The judge also heard Ashok Anand, counsel for HCA.

Adjourning the matter to April 15 at the instance of HCA, Justice Bhaskar Reddy also found the need to hear the Board of

COUNSEL FOR the TCA argued that a detailed inquiry by a competent authority was required, particularly given the multiple complaints and ongoing investigations by different agencies into HCA's affairs.

Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on the matter.

It is contextually relevant to point out that the TCA moved the Mumbai High Court for directions against the BCCI for recognising the TCA as an independent unit for encouraging cricket in Telangana.

The issue also gains significance in view of the recently reported skirmish between the HCA and the local IPL team SRH though the waters are reportedly calm.

The latest development is that Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) has entered the picture and invited SRH to make Andhra its headquarters. Justice Bhaskar Reddy pointed out that the court will not hesitate to take the extreme step of suspending the present governing body of Hyderabad Cricket Association.

NEERAJ KUMAR | DC  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The alleged intimidation, coercion and blackmailing tactics by the top brass of Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) which drew wholesome condemnation from Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), which threatened to relocate their home base, appears to be the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

Hundreds of first class cricketers, international players and former office-bearers of the association are being denied free tickets despite being entitled to them. Ostensibly, these tickets are being cornered by the incumbent office-bearers during matches.

A number of cricketers and former office-bearers, including Sheshu Narayan and Vijayanand in their joint memorandum to the government, claimed there was a mega fraud in the name of complimentary tickets of which the HCA president was allegedly the kingpin.



File photo of Youth Congress activists burnt an effigy of HCA president Jagan Mohan Rao against the illegal sale of IPL tickets in front of the Hyderabad Cricket Association. — DC

It is to be noted that the issue of demanding more tickets from the franchise came to light with the HCA locking one of the corporate boxes.

The email by SRH general manager T.B. Srinath to the HCA read: "You locking the F3 Box which was given to the 'Away' team (Lucknow SuperGiants) owner, Mr

Goenka, a few hours before the last IPL match and opening it up after we pleaded with you, is purely blackmail. We fail to understand how such an act cannot be considered as blackmail and coercion, especially just a few hours before the start of the game."

It is not just about F3 box, the HCA office-bearers hold sway over corporate boxes from F7 to F16 as their private boxes. Like all the clubs in HCA, the office bearers default as owners of clubs and get 12 free tickets. But, they still have a hold over corporate boxes, each of which has 20 seats. These tickets are sold in black, they alleged. The former players and administrators have urged Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to appoint an independent agency to probe the unhealthy practices and fraudulent methods being adopted by the present HCA body.

They also sought a Director General vigilance probe into the murky affairs.

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SHORT TAKES

**BOMB SCARE CREATES PANIC AT COLLECTORATE**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

A fake bomb threat to the collector at the Medchal Malkajgiri collectorate created panic in the office, according to Shamirpet sub-inspector R. Dashrath.

He said Medchal-Malkajgiri collector Gautham Potru received an email at 7.37 am, warning that a bomb had been planted in the office and that it should be vacated by 3.30 pm and not doing so would lead to an explosion.

The collector informed the police, who rushed to the bomb squad with the local police. On carrying out a meticulous two-hour search operation, it was found that it was a hoax.

The email is known to have been sent by a fake ID with the name 'Muppa Laxman Rao'. The police have registered a case and further investigation into the incident is underway.

**DGP: SYNERGY BETWEEN DEPTs VITAL**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Director General of Police (DGP) Dr Jitender on Thursday interacted with the Telangana cadre IAS officers of the 2023 batch at the DGP office as part of their ongoing orientation programme in Hyderabad.

During the session, he discussed the importance of coordination between the police and other government departments to enhance citizen welfare and public service delivery. He stressed the need for seamless inter-departmental collaboration to ensure the well-being of the people of Telangana. Dr Jitender highlighted how effective coordination can help address public concerns efficiently and foster a proactive governance framework. He urged the officers to work closely with law enforcement agencies to create a safer and more responsive administrative system. The interaction was part of broader efforts to strengthen cooperation between government departments and improve governance for benefit of citizens.

**ANAND: ELABORATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SHOBHA YATRA**

M. SRINIVAS I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Police commissioner C.V. Anand on Thursday said that elaborate security arrangements had been made for the Sri Rama Navami shobha yatra on April 6. He was speaking after a coordination meeting with officers from related departments here, and said 20,000 personnel would provide security for the Yatra.

Anand said the Yatra, started in 2010, had gained fame across the country. The yatra proceeds from the Sitarambagh temple to the Hanuman Vyamshala at Ramkote near Koti. En route, it will cover Mangalhat, Puranapul Gandhi statue, Jummera Bazaar, Siddhambur Bazaar, Afzalgunj, Gowliguda and Koti. "We are making significant security arrangements all along the route to prevent any untoward incidents. The people and the festival organisers should cooperate with the police for peaceful conduct of the yatra," he said.

He requested organisers to make arrangements from midnight. Keeping in view the past experiences, and considering that the yatra routes were quite narrow, making it difficult for large vehicles to pass, the panel members were asked to arrange a trial run.

**5 I-T officials, CA in CBI net after probe**

Trapped while taking bribes from taxpayers

MOULI MAREEDU I DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

A nine-month long investigation into the alleged irregularities in the income-tax (I-T) department that led to the arrest of five income-tax officers (I-TOs) and a chartered accountant (CA) for misusing their powers and collecting kickbacks from taxpayers marked one of the major operations by the CBI's ACB wing in Hyderabad in the last one year.

The anti-corruption bureau of the CBI of Telangana has registered 10 cases in the last one year. All these cases are under investigation and some of the cases have been sent to trial to get conviction of accused officers.

Interestingly, the CBI obtained complaints from victims against officers from income-tax (IT), GST and customs wings about demanding bribes. One of the complaints in the I-T department was by its own employee. This led the CBI to undertake a thorough investigation and crack the whip against errant IT officers.

Sources said that one

**I-T DEPARTMENT CASES**

**JUNE 3, 2024:** CBI registers case against senior tax assistant of the income-tax department Quamar Ali Khan for demanding bribes. The CBI initiated a probe and arrested five I-T officers and a CA for misusing taxpayers' details.

**MARCH 27, 2025:** CBI conducted raids and found that the I-T officers collected the bribe amounts through digital payments.

**RGIA CUSTOMS OFFICERS**

**January 2, 2025:** CBI officers registered cases against Vinay Kumar and Mukesh Kumar, inspectors, customs and central excise; Santosh Kumar, assistant manager of ministry of finance, for accepting bribes from a passenger in RGIA. A CBI investigation is underway.

**GST OFFICERS**

**August 12, 2024:** The CBI registered cases against GST officials V. D. Anand Kumar and Manish Sharma alleging harassment and extracting ₹5 lakh for threatening to impose GST fine for alleged irregularity. Similarly, the CBI arrested a GST officer in Medak for demanding bribes from a businessman a few days ago.

Anand Ramasamy, salaried employee from Hyderabad, had brought the issue of illegal activities of I-T officers to the notice of CBI officers. Although he has been filing his returns for several years now, recently, he was approached by a senior tax assistant, Quamar Ali Khan on phone for examination of his old processed ITRs and called him to his office and demanded proof of exemptions that were

claimed. He sent all the hard copies of the proofs to his office address by post, but the I-T officer allegedly started demanding bribes. "The incident took place on June 3, 2024. Based on the complaint, the CBI registered cases and took up a probe. During the investigation, it was established that Quamar Ali Khan and other I-T officers had misused the data of taxpayers. This led to the

arrest of five more IT officers and a chartered accountant," sources said. Similarly, CBI officials are probing the case in which the RGIA customs officers took bribes from a passenger who had arrived from abroad. Meanwhile, many GST officers working in different locations are understood to have violated rules and collected bribes from businessmen in the name of GST related issues.

**SIT ON BETTING CASES TELLS IOs TO BRING FILES**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The special investigation team (SIT) formed by the state government to probe online betting app cases convened its first meeting on Thursday, calling all investigating officers (IOs) handling these cases to bring case files for review and further action.

The meeting, led by Director General, CID, Shikha Goel, was attended by SIT members including JGP M. Ramesh Reddy, SPs Ch. Sindhu Sharma (intelligence) K. Venkata Lakshmi (EOW, CID), S. Chandrakanth, additional SP and M. Shanker, DSP (EOW, CID).

"It was decided to call all investigating officers handling online betting cases across the state for a meeting at the state police headquarters in Hyderabad. They have been instructed to bring case files and relevant information in the prescribed format. The SIT will review investigations, develop standard operating procedures, and guide officers on all aspects of the probe," said Shikha Goel.

The SIT will also engage with other stakeholder agencies and conduct a time-bound probe into assigned or transferred cases.

Additionally, it will examine the online betting ecosystem to identify enablers and recommend regulatory measures to curb such activities. It will assess legal provisions, propose restrictions to prevent the organisation, promotion and advertising of online betting and gaming and suggest reforms in the public interest.

**Bills on bus route chart**



Bills are pasted on bus route chart board at a bus-stop on Lalapet Road in Secunderabad. — S. SURENDER REDDY

**HC dismisses plea on Agri Gold 'land' sale**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Justice C.V. Bhaskar Reddy of the Telangana High Court on Thursday dismissed a batch of writ petitions seeking registration of properties falling in the Agri Gold scam pool. Petitioner Sreedevi Karnati and her husband moved the High Court when the registration authorities refused to register the sale of properties in Kamsanpally, Rangareddy district, on the ground that they figured in the notified prohibited list.

The properties were allegedly purchased by the petitioners from authorised signatories of the management of Matangi Infra. The alleged original vendor is a company in the Agri Gold group.

Officials concerned from Agri Gold and

Matangi Infra informed the court that the transactions were based on forged documents that were created when the directors were in jail. It was also contended that there could not have been sale transactions as the properties were attached under the Protection of Depositors of Financial Establishments Act. Senior counsel B.S. Prasad, appearing for the petitioners, pointed out that the stated properties were not specifically mentioned in the notification of attachment.

Consequently, he argued that the registration authorities were legally bound to register and give effect to the commercial transaction between the vendor and the purchaser.

Senior counsel L. Ravichander, arguing contra, pointed out that all the properties of the companies were notified.

He referred to a division bench judgment of the court which required the parties concerned or related to approach the special court at Eluru. He also argued that fraud vitiates any action and a public law remedy is not available to the petitioners.

Agreeing with the action of the state in refusing registration, the judge dismissed the writ pleas. Justice Bhaskar Reddy also said that the Protection of Depositors of Financial Establishments Act provided for an effective alternative remedy and the High Court was not inclined to entertain such a writ petition.

**65-year-old gets lifer for raping minor**

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL, APRIL 3

In a landmark verdict, Judge G. Premalatha Reddy of the First Additional District and Sessions Court in Warangal on Thursday sentenced Chaparthy Sambaiiah (65) of Manugonda, Geesugonda mandal, to life imprisonment until death for the rape of a minor.

The court found Sambaiiah guilty under the IPC and the PoCSO Act, and also imposed a fine of ₹1 lakh. The court also directed that the victim be awarded ₹8 lakh in com-

pensation, in accordance with victim support provisions. The case, registered under Crime No. 305/2024 at the Geesugonda police station, was investigated by investigating officer G. Babu Lal and ACP B. Thirupati.

**5 MEDICOS SUSPENDED FOR RAGGING**

Five MBBS students suspended for ragging junior Days after police registered cases related to ragging, the Nagarkurnool Government Medical College management on Thursday suspended three

medical students for harassing their juniors. The college's anti-ragging committee, led by senior officials, held a meeting and decided to take disciplinary action. Based on their findings, the management suspended three third-year MBBS students and two second-year MBBS students. Officials stated that the suspended students had been barred from academic activities and directed to vacate their hostel premises immediately. Their parents have also been informed about the action. The incident occurred a

few days ago when three students allegedly ragged a first-year MBBS student on campus. Police registered cases against them after learning that they had assaulted the junior, filmed the act, and forcibly seized his mobile.

**CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS ON ADVOCATE QUASHED**

Justice Juvvadi Sridevi of the Telangana High Court quashed criminal proceedings against an advocate involved in a 2020 protest by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) near the

Telangana Assembly. The judge held that peaceful protests were protected under the Constitution and that continuing the case would amount to an abuse of legal process. The judge was dealing with a criminal petition filed by K. Mahesh, accused of being part of an unlawful assembly during a demonstration in March 2020. The protest, held at Osmania Gate when the Assembly session was underway, involved 20-30 ABVP activists blocking traffic and attempting to enter the premises.

**3 KIDS MURDER: MOM, BOYFRIEND SENT ON REMAND**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

A court on Thursday sent Rajitha, accused of killing her three children, and her boyfriend Shiva, for whom she allegedly committed the murders, to judicial remand.

The Sangareddy police accused Rajitha of murdering her children so that she could marry Shiva, her Class 10 batchmate.

She had met Shiva after several years at a reunion and started an affair with him.

Shiva had reportedly agreed to marry her but did not want the children.

After allegedly strangling her children, Rajitha claimed that the three had died due to food contamination.

Rajitha confessed to have committed an offence during the questioning.

Police have obtained call data of Rajitha and Shiva Kumar and questioned them one by one as part of investigation.

Based on PME reports, police questioned Rajitha explaining the reasons for the death of her three children.

Police also obtained Rajitha's WhatsApp calls, chat and conversation in which she had regular contact with her boyfriend Shiva who assisted to kill her three children.

**15-year-old murdered, prime suspect detained**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Attapur police detained one suspect for allegedly murdering a 15-year-old and dumping his body at a secluded spot in Attapur, on Thursday.

According to Attapur inspector K. Nageshwar Rao, the minor was killed near Mir Alam Tank. After locals noticed the body at around 7 am, they alerted the police by dialing 100. The police team reached the spot and circulated pictures and other evidence from the scene through WhatsApp groups for identification. The parents of the victim reached out to the police confirming that he was their child.

The minor was a school dropout and his father works

in a band. The deceased's father said, "It was nearly unimaginable. I had met him last afternoon, before leaving for a show. He used to go out with people from our neighbourhood. He has clearly been murdered." According to the police, the minor would go around with his neighbours. On Wednesday night, an altercation broke out between them. As a result, the prime suspect Faisal allegedly struck the victim's head with a stone. There were two others present on the scene when the incident occurred. However, only the prime suspect has been detained by the police. A case was registered and the body of the victim was shifted to the Osmania Hospital for post-mortem examination.

**SHRADHANJALI**

**Smt. Pramila Sama**  
DOB: 06/05/1942 DOD: 03/04/2025  
In Loving Memory  
Sama Family, Velloor Family & Kothapally Family  
(S/2526/D00009)

**IN FOND REMEMBRANCE OF**

**ADI NOWROJI MEDHORA**  
03 Dec 1930 - 04 Apr 2021  
Chief Engineer Retd., Irrigation Dept., Govt. of Andhra Pradesh  
A Tribute of Respect and Love  
Inserted by: Katy Medhora (Wife), Viraf, Aazer, Phiroze (Sons), Parijatha, Upjeet (Daughters-in-law), Natasha, Aarish & Alison, Sanaya, Anaita (Grandchildren).  
Ph: 9849191045  
(B/2425/D00105)

**OBITUARY**

**ANNE PHILOMINA AMBROSE**  
W/o B. Ambrose, Moulati.  
DOB 26 July, 1951 - DOD 3 April, 2025  
The burial service will be held on 4th April, 2025 at Christian Cemetery, Bandlaguda, Keesara.  
Inserted by: Family Members  
(S/2526/D00010)

**17th DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

**VUPPALANCHI SURESH KUMAR**  
D.O.B: 9.11.1953 D.O.D: 4.4.2008  
Days are passing into years. Your love and affection, memories will be always with us.  
Inserted by: Wife: Vuppalanchi Rani, Son: V. Phani Kishore, Daughter-in-Law: V. Prathiba, Daughter: A. Spandana - Son-in-Law: A. Sarath, Grand Children: V. Sahasra, A. Saadya, A. Nirek  
(S/2526/D00010)

**9TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late Sri Nuchu Mallesh Yadav**  
Prop: Sri Raghavendra Theaters (Malkajiri)  
DOD : 04-04-2016  
Inserted by: Wife: Nuchu Yadamma, Sons - Daughters-in-laws: N. Srinivas Yadav - Nirmala, N. Balakrishna - Sunitha, N. Ramakrishna - A. Saran, N. Laxman - Mamatha  
(B/2425/D00105)

**43rd ANNIVERSARY**

**T.M. NARAYANA SWAMY**  
D.O.B. 04-06-1982  
You will always remain in our Hearts.  
We miss you  
Inserted by:  
N. MANI PRAKASH (LAST SON), MRS. VIMALA MANI PRAKASH (Daughter-in-law)  
Ph: 9390055466  
(S/2526/D00011)

**20th DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late. Smt. CHEERA VARAMMA**  
W/o Late. C. Pandu  
DOD: 15-04-2005 (99th age) - 04-04-2025  
We live with your memories & Blessings  
Inserted by: Cheera Family  
(S/2526/D00004)

**SHRADHANJALI**

**Keyur Kanubhai Parikh**  
S/o Kanubhai Parikh & Meenaben Parikh  
Inserted by:  
Forever Friends Group  
Chandrakant (Kakubhai) & Rita Kadakia, Umesh Bhai & Nimisha Dharua, Rajesh & Smita Dharua, Anil & Priti Gandhi, Rajesh & Anupa Dharua, Nilesh (Lemon) & Shruti Dalai, Mahendra (Gopal) & Sangeta Shah, Sangya (Saba) & Shruti Sakaria, Mukesh & Shramita Gandhi, Ashesh (Pappu) & Nipa Parikh, Vikram (Tinu) & Swati Bani, Mehru (Lalo) & Pinka Dalai, Asha & Mantra Kadakia, Dharmesh & Deepa Parikh, Shobha Dalai, Sitala Kadakia

**50th Death Anniversary**

**Sri Pandharinathji Jagtap**  
Expired on: 4th April 1975  
You will always be remembered in our hearts forever.  
Dilip Kumar Jagtap & Dr Jyothi (Son & Daughter-in-law) & Jagtap Family  
M : 9440046112  
(S/2526/D00011)

**Second Year Remembrance**

**Sri TV Padmanabhan**  
4th April 2023  
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there. Deeply Loved & Missed by:  
Family Members  
944044261, 7093321712  
(S/2526/D00004)

**9TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late Sri Nuchu Mallesh Yadav**  
Prop: Sri Raghavendra Theaters (Malkajiri)  
DOD : 04-04-2016  
Inserted by:  
Grand Sons - Grand Daughters: Shashank- Divya, Anirudh, Rohan, Prerana, Ayushi, Sujan, Shreyansh, Krishav & Ayraa.

**9TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late Sri Nuchu Mallesh Yadav**  
Prop: Sri Raghavendra Theaters (Malkajiri)  
DOD : 04-04-2016  
Inserted by:  
Grand Sons - Grand Daughters: S. Amithesh - Kathyayani, S. Avinash - Niharika, S. Abhilash, Simran, P. Pranith, P. Karthik, P. Bhavani, A. Trishala, A. Pranaya & Harshith

**II BESNU II**

**Keyur Kanubhai Parikh**  
BESNU : Today, 4th April 2025.  
From : 5.30 to 6 PM at Pragati Mahavidyalaya Degree College, Hanuman Tekdi, Hyderabad.  
In Grief:  
Kanubhai Parikh (Father), Meenaben Parikh (Mother), Mudangi Parikh (Wife), Harsh, Darshi (Sons), Chintan Parikh (Brother), Vaishali (Bhabhi), Jigna Shah (Sister), Namdakhsh Shah (Jijji), & Samant Parikh Partner.  
Firm : Parikh Brothers Hyderabad  
(S/2526/D00004)

**IN REMEMBRANCE**

**Smt. N. NAGESH KUMARI**  
(W/o Late Dr. N. Ramamurthy)  
(04.04.1939 - 30.12.2019)  
N. Madhusudana Rao & Family  
Dr. Raj N & Family

**SHRADHANJALI**

**KEYUR PARIKH**  
S/o Kanubhai & Meenakshi Parikh (Secretary Khadayatya Samaj)  
Your memory lives strong with us & shall live forever  
May your soul rest in peace  
Sri KHADAYTA SAMAJ  
Hyderabad - Secunderabad Committee Members

**2nd Death Anniversary**

**Smt. Chintamadaka Bhagya Lakshmi**  
DOD: 04-04-2023  
Husband: C. Copal Swamy, B.E.(Ele) Rtd. C.E/TSTRANSCO  
Sons: C. Shiva Prasad, SBI, C. Hari Prasad SGS Teacher, Daughter: C. Uma Devi, Daughters-in-law: C. Vara Lakshmi, C. Lavanya Kumar, IOB Grand Sons: Rudransh, Devansh, Venkata Sai Grand Daughter: Nicky Brother's-in-laws: C. Narayana, Rtd Bank Manager C. Shankaraiiah, Rtd DSP CoSisters: C. Lakshmi Bai, C. Krishnaveni

**9TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Late Sri Nuchu Mallesh Yadav**  
Prop: Sri Raghavendra Theaters (Malkajiri)  
DOD : 04-04-2016  
Inserted by:  
Daughters - Son-in-laws: S. Padmavathi - Narsing Rao, P. Madhavi - Balraj, A. Saritha - Santhosh

EVENTS TODAY

- Chiaroscuro: Crafted lifestyle exhibition**  
Time: 11 am  
Venue: Crafts Council of Telangana
- India Art Festival: Contemporary art fair**  
Time: 11 am  
Venue: King's Kohinoor Convention
- Seed Festival (Vithanala Panduga)**  
Time: 10 am  
Venue: The Earth Centre
- Sutraa Stories: Fashion exhibition**  
Time: 11 am  
Venue: Taj Krishna
- Workshop on basics of photography**  
Time: 4.30 pm  
Venue: Kalyan Cricket Academy Kukatpally
- Workshop on learning cricket**  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Our Sacred Space
- UPCOMING EVENTS**
- World Health Day celebrations**  
Time: April 7, 3 pm  
Venue: B.M Birla Science Centre
- Parkinson's disease awareness programme**  
Time: April 11, 2 pm  
Venue: KIMS, Secundrabad

SHORT TAKES

POLICE DETAIN 108, ARREST STUDENT

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Gachibowli police registered a case and detained 108 outsiders, and a student from the University of Hyderabad (UoH), on Thursday. While the outsiders, mostly from political parties, were taken into preventive custody, a case was registered against the student for allegedly damaging public property. All of them including the student, were released by the police in the evening.

According to Gachibowli police, the complaint was lodged by the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIC), which alleged that the student destroyed an excavator on the campus.

The Cyberabad police also denied reports that its personnel had caned students during protests on the university campus, following the release of several videos of the incident.

In a press release, the police said a few persons in the group of protesting students were "pushed away" and that both men and women police personnel on duty tried to snatch the rope they were holding with "bare minimum force."

On the day the incident had occurred, Madhapur ACP sustained injuries. Police had taken 53 persons into preventive custody on Monday.

BRS IT CELL MEMBERS BOOKED FOR MISLEADING

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Gachibowli police on Thursday registered a case against BRS IT cell incharges Dr Krishank Manne and Kothanum Dileep for allegedly circulating "misleading" videos related to the University of Hyderabad land issue on the political party's Instagram and Twitter handles.

According to Gachibowli sub-inspector Mahesh Goud, the complaint was lodged by NSUI leader Bagannagari Arundawaj Reddy, 32, who alleged that the members of the BRS IT cell allegedly circulated morphed videos to mislead the public, on the evening of April 2.

The complainant attached 10 videos with his complaint copy and sought action against those spreading misinformation.

Taking cognisance of this, the Gachibowli police registered a case against the duo for alleged criminal intimidation by anonymous communication; making, publishing or circulating any statement or report containing false information, rumour or alarming news; wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot; promoting disharmony, enmity, or hatred; and agreement between two or more people to commit an illegal act.

Police said investigations were underway. A senior official told the Deccan Chronicle that the two accused would be served notices soon.

Revanth forms GoM to solve land issue

Bhatti promises to comply with SC orders, supply all information to apex court in stipulated time

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday constituted a committee with group of ministers (GoM) to hold consultations with the executive committee of the University of Hyderabad (UoH) and stakeholders to recommend a way forward on Kancha Gachibowli land issue.

The GoM will comprise Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and ministers D. Sridhar Babu and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

The GoM has been asked to hold consultations with the UoH executive committee, joint action committee (JAC) of UoH comprising students unions, teaching and non-teaching staff besides various civil society groups, students delegation and all stakeholders concerned.

The move came hours after the Supreme Court directed the government on Thursday to stop the "alarming deforestation activities" in Kancha Gachibowli land until further orders.

Earlier, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti and minister Sridhar Babu said that the state government would fully comply with the Supreme Court's orders on the Kancha Gachibowli land issue. They reiterated that all information would be submitted to the apex court within the stipulated time, reaffirming their faith in the judicial system.

In a joint statement issued on Thursday, they said that justice would prevail and directed officials, including the additional DGP (intelligence) and Cyberabad police commissioner, to exercise restraint and avoid harsh measures against students who are protesting.

Sridhar Babu criticised the BRS, calling out its "hypocrisy" in claiming to protect UoH land if it returned to power. He clarified that the Congress government had no intention of encroaching on the varsity land and assured that not even an inch of it would be disturbed.

He accused BRS leaders of misleading students by using fabricated images and manipulated videos to provoke unrest through social media. "The BRS is attempting to use students as pawns for political gains," he stated, condemning their alleged deceitful tactics.

The minister further criticised BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao for resorting to personal attacks on Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. He demanded an apology for the "baseless" remarks against the Chief Minister, arguing that the government was focused on industrial development and job creation, while the opposition is engaging in false propaganda to hinder progress.

The minister clarified that the 400-acre land in Gachibowli had no connection to the UoH.

The land is legally owned by the government, as affirmed by both the High Court and the Supreme Court.

The TD government in the undivided Andhra Pradesh had allocated it to a private company, but it was the Congress government that revoked that decision and protected the



HCU students celebrate after the court issued a brief stay on Telangana government's action in Kancha Gachibowli. — R. PAVAN

Despite rain, students in UoH celebrate victory

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Days after protests and an alleged police lathicharge, students at the University of Hyderabad (UoH) erupted in celebration on Thursday after the Supreme Court ordered a halt to all developmental activities in Kancha Gachibowli.

Despite heavy rain, students gathered outside the main gate, singing songs against the government and celebrating what they called their first victory in

the fight to protect university land. Earlier, on Thursday, around 20 students, led by UoH Students' Union general secretary Nihad Sulaiman, began a relay hunger strike, demanding an immediate stop to deforestation and the removal of bulldozers from the campus. Post the judgment, they ended the strike and said they will have to continue if the government does not pay heed to the SC's ruling. They also called for the withdrawal of heavy police deployment near

the university's east campus. Though the High Court had temporarily paused the project on Wednesday, students alleged that work had continued overnight. The Supreme Court's intervention, however, put an indefinite halt to the process. The students welcomed the verdict, urging the government to permanently allocate the land to UoH instead of selling it to corporates. They also demanded the withdrawal of cases filed against protesting students.

BRS warns bidders of Gachibowli land

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday warned potential bidders against bidding for any portion of the 400 acres of Kancha Gachibowli land during the proposed action. When the BRS returns to power, it will reclaim every inch of the 400 acres and develop it into an eco-park, he said.

"The decision that the BRS will fight against the sale of land, and protect and develop it as an ecological park on the lines of Central Park in Manhattan, was taken by KCR who discussed the issue with experts and others. This decision was taken for the future generations," Rama Rao told a news conference.

He said the government had 14,000 acres that the BRS government had acquired. "If the government does not reverse its stand, 'BRS will march to



BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao shows a picture of bulldozers lined up in Kancha Gachibowli

UoH with the full force of people of Hyderabad," he said. Rama Rao also questioned the silence of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on the issue and asked if CM A. Revanth Reddy could not "spend 10 minutes to think like a human being about future generations?" The BRS leader also slammed Deputy CM for his comments that images of animals in the Kancha Gachibowli land were artificial intelligence-generated, when the place had a lot of wildlife.

University land. When students protested, the plan was scrapped. "Now, they are pretending to protect UoH lands that were never under threat in the first place," they remarked.

The ministers urged BRS to abandon its "anti-progress mindset" and align with the aspirations of the people instead of spreading "lies and deceit." They asserted that the real objective if BRS was 'to create unrest and obstruct industrial progress' in the state.

BJP WELCOMES SC'S STAY ON KANCHA GACHIBOWLI

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The BJP welcomed the direction from the Supreme Court to the Telangana government to stop cutting trees on in the 400-acre Kancha Gachibowli. BJP Telangana president and Union minister G. Kishan Reddy said the apex court direction was the result of sustained protests carried out by the student community in general, particularly from the University of Hyderabad. He advised the state government to release the students who were arrested for staging protests to preserve the forest.

BJYM activists, led by its state president Sevela Mahender, launched a signature campaign and candlelight demonstration in the city with the spirit of the 'Jal Jangal Jameen' movement in support of UoH students.

AI content turning out as new political protest tool

MRIITIKA BANNERJEE | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

AI content has clearly become a political tool in the protest of University of Hyderabad (UoH). One particularly sinister image, shared by a political party, shows a caricatured graphic of the Chief Minister surrounded by machines and dead animals, a reference to the fake dead deer video that's gone viral. The picture of the deer, claimed to have died during land clearance, was actually from 2019. Some deleted the image, but others let it linger.

The tool, while powerful, is blurring the line between metaphor and message as AI here is offering immediacy, but is also opening the door to confusion. Mislabelled or misused visuals risk undermining genuine protest.

One image showed deer and a peacock facing a row of JCBs beneath a still blue sky. It wasn't real, it was AI-generated. It didn't claim to be true, but it moved people, as artificial intelligence became a new medium for social media protest. Another viral image shows a row of JCBs following deer, peacocks and other animals, many believe it to be real. A post on the Reddit Hyderabad page even calls it a great click, unaware it was AI-generated. The image has gained popularity but further blurs the line between what is real and what isn't. The protest over the auction of 400 acres of wild land and its



AI-generated image of deer and peacock facing JCBs sparks social media protest, highlighting the power of digital imagery.

proposed clearing for IT parks has triggered anger on campus and outside. Students and activists began using AI to create visuals. The tools allow anyone to generate powerful images quickly, some posters imagined destruction, while others projected warning. These weren't meant to prove harm, but to show what it might look like. AI offered a new way to express concern. In minutes, protestors could produce visuals that might otherwise take days. The tools levelled the field, art became more accessible and thereby the reach widened. Rachana Reddy, a representative from NSUI HCU, acknowledged the tension around how the protest was being represented online. "HCU never called us or ABVP," she said. "There's internal politics. We've been eliminated from campus politics, but we were always there for the cause. However, there are these exaggerated

media images being used as a vendetta by opposition parties."

Many of the visuals, she added, had nothing to do with the protestors themselves. They originated outside campus and were used by others to push political blame. Beyond the images, the political consequences were growing. Public voices, including actor Prakash Raj, YouTuber Dhruv Rathee and commentators like Nayini Anurag Reddy began sharing the AI images to describe the situation as a national environmental concern.

A viral thread asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to intervene, and another post broke down how the damage could be reversed. Even AI accounts like Grok joined the conversation, not to create visuals this time but to describe the biodiversity lost and call for conservation over development. The protest has gone visual.

HC takes up three PILs on land case

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Amid the controversy over the 400 acres of land in Survey No. 25 of Kancha Gachibowli, Arepalle Umesh Chand Ambedkar, president of University of Hyderabad Student's Union and another, approached the Telangana High Court on Thursday complaining against police deployment on the university campus and preventing students from taking up protests against felling of trees in the vicinity. They also sought a direction to stay GO No. 54, through which the Telangana government had alienated the 400 acres of land in Kancha Gachibowli to the TGIISC for the purpose of developing plots and selling them. Further, the union sought a direction to declare the 400 acres as belonging to the University of Hyderabad.

The Court admitted the PIL and issued notices to the government directing them to respond by Monday. Apart from that, S. Niranjan Reddy, senior counsel appearing for the petitioner Vata Foundation in a separate PIL, sub-

mitted that the state government had blatantly violated the oral orders passed by the HC on April 2 to stop felling of trees in Kancha Gachibowli. It continued with the deforestation and clearing of land work till Thursday morning. He submitted photographs and filed an interim application seeking action for violation of court orders and continuation of destruction works. Further, senior counsel informed the court that the Supreme Court had granted stay on any work on the land. He said that the Rajendranagar police had detained a student of the university, when he was trying to take a video of the work that was underway. The division bench of acting CJ Sujoy Paul and Justice Renuka Yara issued notices to the government. Gade Praveen Kumar, appearing for the Union government, submitted that the Union ministry has also sought a report on the issue and action would be taken, based on the report. The HC adjourned the 3 PILs to April 7 for further hearing and directed the government to ensure that no work is done on the lace till that day.

CENTRE TO ACT ON THOSE WHO RAZED FOREST

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Bhupender Yadav, Union minister for environment, forests and climate change, on Thursday declared that the Centre would take action on those responsible for the uprooting of trees and destruction of the environment in the 400 acres of Kancha Gachibowli land.

Yadav said, "An unfortunate incident happened in Hyderabad. I did not understand what this enmity with trees was and the need to set up lights and go in at night with a large number of bulldozers and bring down 400 trees. We will take action on those responsible."

The minister was responding to a supplementary question during Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha from BRS MP V. Ravichandra who said hundreds of trees were being felled and wildlife was being destroyed in Kancha Gachibowli.

When Ravichandra was speaking, Congress MPs objected saying that the supplementary question had nothing to do with the subject of the original question that the minister had replied to earlier.

HC registrar gave alarming picture: SC

FROM PAGE 1

In case any of the directions issued by us are not complied with in true letter and spirit, the Chief Secretary of the state shall be held personally liable," the bench warned.

Meanwhile, the court asked Chief Secretary (presently A. Santhi Kumar) to file an affidavit answering specific queries. Earlier in the day, the bench had passed an interim order staying the tree-felling in the area and directed the registrar (judicial) of the Telangana High Court to inspect the site and submit a report.

The court intervened in the matter after the amicus curiae K.

SC POSED 8 QUESTIONS FOR CHIEF SECRETARY ON KANCHA GACHIBOWLI MATTER

<p><b>WHAT WAS the compelling urgency to undertake the developmental activities, including removal of trees from the alleged forest area?</b></p>	<p><b>WHETHER the state has obtained environmental impact assessment certification?</b></p>	<p><b>WHETHER requisite permissions from the forest authorities, or any other local statutes were obtained for felling the trees?</b></p>	<p><b>HAD THE EXPERTS committee inspected the said land? What was the necessity to deploy huge machinery and to fell the trees in an urgent manner?</b></p>
<p><b>WHAT IS THE NECESSITY of having officers of the GHMC and three others (GO dated 15 March 2025) for constituting an experts committee constituted by the State of Telangana, as per directions of the Supreme Court to identify the forest lands in as much as prima facie they have nothing to do with the identification of forests?</b></p>			

Parameshwar in the judgment passed in the "TNGodavaramanThirumulpad" case, brought to the notice of the court the news reports which depicted felling of

trees in the land near the University of Hyderabad by deploying JCBs. When the matter was taken up at 3.45 pm, the court noted that the registrar (judicial) of the High Court had

filed a report, which revealed that huge development activity was being undertaken in the area. The court said that the report of the High Court's registrar (judicial) pre-

sented an "alarming picture". The court specifically referred to pictures showing peacocks and deer fleeing from the region amid the destruction activities.

FARMERS APPLIED FOR GI TAG IN 2022

FROM PAGE 1

Jannareddy Venkata Reddy Horticulture Research Station in Mahabubabad district and the Sri Konda Laxman Telangana Horticulture University also joined the efforts of Thimmampet Mirchi Farmers Association. Modem Vidyasagar, former sarpanch of Thimmampet and a member of the Thimmampet Farmers' Association, told Deccan Chronicle that the Journey had begun six years ago when 300 farmers formed a union, which saw 200 more join them. In 2022, the association applied to the Indian Patent Office in Chennai for a GI tag, which was granted after nearly three years of painstaking efforts. The chilli is in

high demand in global markets like China, the UK, the USA, Germany, and other European countries due to its distinct characteristics. The GI tag is expected to further enhance the market presence of Chapata chilli.

Almost 20,000 farmers in Warangal, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, and Hanamkonda districts are cultivating this Chilli in over 6,738 acres. The GI tag will now allow these farmers to market their produce with a distinct identity, further boosting its reputation both locally and internationally, he added.

At present, the market price of Chapata chilli is around ₹300 per kilogram, which may touch ₹450-₹500 per kg, post the GI tag.

DECCAN Chronicle

4 APRIL 2025

Will new Waqf law create problems or solve them?

Legislatures make, unmake or amend laws to reflect the requirement of the times. While doing so, they are required to take a balanced approach to the issues they address in the larger context, instead of pushing a partisan agenda. The legislature cannot randomly swing the pendulum to one side in one moment, and the other the next. Such an approach does no good for society; especially one like India with its myriad diversities. Unfortunately, this happens in this country quite often.

The first comprehensive act to deal with the management of the waqf properties was brought in only in 1995. Waqf, as per the definition in the law, means the permanent dedication by any person, of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognised by the Muslim law as pious, religious or charitable. Since it is made as a permanent deal with a religious purpose, the role of the secular state should be limited to ensuring that the property is managed as per the wishes of the person who dedicates it. The 1995 Act, however, went beyond this brief and vested quasi-judicial powers with the Waqf Boards, which are essentially a body comprising only Muslims. Section 40 of the Act authorised the boards to collect information regarding any property which it has reason to believe to be waqf property and decide the question. The boards also had the power to direct the district magistrates to implement their decisions. This is akin to the boards becoming the complainant, investigator, jury and judge, which is at variance with the principles and practices of Indian jurisprudence.

This power has caused misery to a large number of people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, across the country and needed to be changed. The new law scraps this section fully, and the boards will now have to prove its case before a government official if it were to take possession of the property. The provision allowing appeals against the order to high court in 90 days is also welcome.

Under the guise of righting this wrong, and mitigating several others, the NDA government has undermined a number of settled legal principles and even the Constitution by bringing in the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025. Most unsettling is the structure of the Central Waqf Council and State Waqf Boards as defined in the new bill. While the earlier law would have only Muslims in these bodies which are to manage properties that are dedicated to purposes sanctioned by Islamic faith, the new one has mandated that they have non-Muslims as members on the specious plea that it would make them more efficient. From the looks of it, the bill violates Article 26 (c) and (d) of the Constitution, which allow every religious denomination to own and acquire movable and immovable property; and to administer such property in accordance with law. This is an unwarranted interference in the running of a religious minority in the country, as is the limiting the right to donate property as waqf to only persons who have been practising Islam for five years.

The provision that empowers a government official to decide the waqf nature of a property, instead of a tribunal, is also unsustainable as disputes should be settled as per the tenets of the civil law, not administrative law. Given a new-found urge among the Hindu zealots to look for a religious symbol under very prominent Muslim place of worship, and the tendency to defy the mandates of the Places of Worship Act, 1991, there is a justifiable fear among the Muslims if this law could be used as a ruse to divest them of their properties, as several of them were previously covered by the now scrapped "waqf by user" provision. The new bill has come as a mixed bag, liable to be questioned in court. It appears that it will serve the purpose of the ruling dispensation but it is to be seen if it solves more disputes than it could possibly generate.

Hear grievances in Naxal belt

A day after Union home minister Amit Shah announced that the government had halved the number of districts most affected by Left-Wing Extremism from 12 to six, the outlawed Communist Party of India (Maoist) proposed a conditional ceasefire, suggesting the telling impact of the government's counter-insurgency operations in Naxal-affected states.

The most affected districts include Bijapur, Kanker, Narayanpur and Sukma in Chhattisgarh, West Singhbhum in Jharkhand and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra. In Chhattisgarh alone, counter-insurgency operations by central and state governments have killed more than 400 Maoists in the last 15 months, putting the Maoists on the back foot in their stronghold.

The conditions put forth by the Maoists for the ceasefire include halting anti-Naxal operations in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana and stopping the establishment of new camps for armed forces. Police officials believe that the ceasefire offer could be a ruse to reduce the intensity of anti-Naxal operations and use the time to regroup and reararm. As such, the Chhattisgarh government rejected the conditions and stated that it was ready for unconditional peace talks with the Naxalites.

Naxal activities peaked in the late 1990s and early 2000s, culminating in an assassination attempt on the then Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, N. Chandrababu Naidu. In response, the Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy government modernised the police force, invested in improving road connectivity to interior regions to deny safe havens to the Naxalists, and expanded welfare programmes to wean local support away from the insurgents.

Following the success of Andhra Pradesh's strategy, all Naxal-affected states followed the AP model, resulting in a considerable decline in the influence of Left-Wing Extremism in India. However, the government and politicians should not forget that discrimination and a lack of avenues to express resentment could promote extremist tendencies among victims. Freedom of expression, with reasonable restrictions as guaranteed in the Constitution, is the only way to prevent extremism from taking root among the people.

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Subhani



War cry in N-E India after Yunus' embrace of China



Wasbir Hussain

In what looks like a calculated provocation, the head of Bangladesh's interim government, Muhammad Yunus, has ignited nothing short of a firestorm with his brazen pitch to China, framing Bangladesh as the "only guardian of the ocean" for India's landlocked Northeast. During his four-day visit to Beijing last week, Yunus didn't just indulge in desperate lobbying for Chinese investment — he dangled the strategic vulnerability of India's eight northeastern states, suggesting that China could exploit the region's geographic isolation through Bangladesh's ports. This was an open invitation to China to expand its operations in Bangladesh territory along India's strategic east and northeast region.

In doing so, Yunus was not indulging in diplomacy, or whatever he knows of it, to further Bangladesh's economy. His move of embracing China and acting like the head of a vassal state is actually a geopolitical jab at India's underbelly, the "Chicken's Neck", the strategic 21-km corridor linking the N-E to the rest of India.

Dhaka's treachery led to a swift and ferocious response from both political leaders and ordinary people in the Northeast — a war cry echoing from Tripura to Assam. Tripura barman scion Pradyot Deb Barman, by far the most vocal tribal voice from the state located at a stone's throw from Bangladesh territory, said, without mincing words, that India should snatch the sea route by breaking up Bangladesh.

Barman, who is the founder of Tipra Motha, the state's largest tribal-dominated political party, an ally of the BJP, said people belonging to tribal groups like the Tripuri, Khasi, Garo and Chakma who inhabit Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts have been keen on joining or merging with India since

1947. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, one of the country's top BJP leaders, branded Yunus' remarks "offensive" and "condemnable", warning of "deeper strategic considerations". Sarma suggested the need to work on "alternative routes" linking the Northeast to mainland India, including building underground communication linkages by overcoming engineering challenges. It is imperative to take a look at what the Assam CM has exactly said: "This remark (by Yunus) underscores the persistent vulnerability associated with India's strategic 'Chicken's Neck' corridor. Historically, even internal elements within India have dangerously suggested severing this critical passageway to isolate the N-E from the mainland physically." He added: "So it's imperative to develop more robust railway and road networks both underneath and around the Chicken's Neck corridor. Additionally, exploring alternative road routes connecting the N-E to mainland India, effectively bypassing Chicken's Neck, should be prioritised. Though this may pose significant engineering challenges, it's achievable with determination and innovation."

The outrage in the Northeast isn't simple rhetoric; it's rooted in real fear of encirclement by China through a Bangladeshi proxy. Even the Opposition Congress condemned Yunus' action, with party spokesman Pawan Khera saying Bangladesh was "actually inviting China to encircle India". An unelected leader at 84, Muhammad Yunus has clearly overestimated his leverage by acting against India, a country that helped give birth to his own nation in 1971. What Yunus is doing here, after the snub he got from the Trump administration in the US and India giving refuge to ousted Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, and ignoring Dhaka's plea to deport her home, is to weaponise geography, revive old separatist dreams and challenging India's security establishment.

In fact, Yunus left Dhaka for China last week on Bangladesh's Independence Day itself. As President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were sending congratulatory messages to Dhaka to mark the day and recalling 1971, the Bangladeshi leader had already arrived in China's southernmost island city of Hainan. Was the visit, when Yunus met Chinese President Xi Jinping, therefore, meant to signal a shift in Dhaka's strategic calculus away from India and towards Beijing?

What are some of the pull factors of Bangladesh towards China? The economy in Bangladesh has been battered due to inflation, there is rising debt and the ongoing costs of hosting over one million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar has become too much for Dhaka to bear. As China is Bangladesh's largest trading partner, Beijing offers an enticing opportunity with the promise to take care of some of those gaps. During the visit, the two sides signed eight agreements, including deals to expand Mongla Port and another on the new China Industrial Economic Zone.

However, despite China being Bangladesh's largest trading partner, Dhaka's exports to Beijing are insignificant as the trade deficit reached close to \$17 billion last year. All said and done, Yunus heads a government that is unaccountable to the electors in a country in which political instability has been common. Now, if Bangladesh hands over Mongla port development work, the Chittagong Port

The outrage in the Northeast is rooted in real fear of encirclement by China through a Bangladeshi proxy. Even Congress condemned Yunus' action. Pawan Khera said Bangladesh was 'actually inviting China to encircle India'.

expansion project and the development of the Teesta river, to China, it will be nothing but a hasty step ahead of the elections that will be held within less than a year from now.

For the record, in June last year, less than two months before her ouster, Sheikh Hasina visited India. After the meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, New Delhi decided to send a technical team to Bangladesh to kick-start a mega project to conserve and manage the Teesta river, and also decided to move ahead to start negotiations on a comprehensive trade pact and boosting defence ties. The two sides had then signed 10 agreements providing for bolstering ties in a range of key areas such as the maritime sphere, blue economy, digital domain, railways, space, green technology, health and medicine. Is this history now? One has to wait and watch.

The big question also is: Can Dhaka actually afford to totally antagonise India? The answer is a clear "no" because its geographical proximity makes it a neighbour that cannot be brushed aside. But having said that, Bangladesh seems to have invested heavily on China to the extent that it has allowed Beijing to set up a submarine base at Pekua in Cox's Bazar after having procured or received two submarines from China and adding it to its naval infrastructure. Yunus does not know the mind of the masses really as he has never tasted electoral victory.

In the political maze that is Bangladesh, looking only northwards towards China and ignoring its closest neighbour India that was instrumental in helping it attain freedom can cost Dhaka dearly. But anything can happen in a country whose people, or a section of it, can vandalise and bring down the statues and all symbols of its founding father, Sk Mujibur Rahman, just because he was Sheikh Hasina's father.

Wasbir Hussain, author and political commentator, is editor-in-chief of Northeast Live, Northeast India's only satellite English and Hindi news channel. Views expressed are personal.

LETTERS

WAQF BILL PASSED

The BJP government is creating history by introducing new legislation to amend nonsensical laws forced by the Congress government (LS passes Waqf Bill after 12-hour debate, April 3).

Article 370 was not in the interest of our country, and the Waqf Act was designed in such a manner that no one could question. Hats off to the BJP government.

Harish Kumar Agarwal  
Hyderabad

The Opposition's claim that the Waqf Amendment Bill was against the interest of Muslims is ridiculous. Parties that have built their identity on fake support for the Muslims just to gain their votes and make money for their dynasties now speak of Muslims' welfare.

Dr K. Srinivasa Rao  
Hyderabad

The opinion of citizens has not been adequately considered. The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) had introduced a method where public opinion could be submitted via emails, but it was not made public. Why is the Union government so keen to interfere in the religious affairs of minorities?

Syed Iqbal Hussain  
Hyderabad

EXEMPLARY CARTOON

Subhani aptly exemplifies the woe of hardships of the film fraternity facing fundamentalists, in his cartoon (April 3).

Parcha Devi  
Hyderabad

FREE TICKETS ROW

The Hyderabad Cricket Association, already neck deep in charges of inefficiency, nepotism and corruption is again embroiled in controversy over free tickets with Sunrisers Hyderabad (Suspend HCA chief: Cong., April 3). This is not only tarnishing the image but also adversely affecting the development of cricket and progress of cricketers in the state.

Govind Kumar  
Hyderabad

HARMONIOUS LIVING

Human life and the environment should coexist harmoniously. It is the responsibility of the government to protect ecosystems and preserve nature, and maintain biodiversity for future generations (HC stays felling trees in Kancha Gachibowli areas, April 3).

Pranava Kumar V.  
Hyderabad

Email your letters to  
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editor@deccanmail.com.

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



ED ex-chief on PM's eco advisory body sets off much buzz

Former Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief Sanjay Kumar Mishra has been appointed a full-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). Yes, an investigator is now advising on economic policy. Are we running out of economists, or is the economy now a case for forensic analysis?

Before we jump to conclusions, let's give credit where it's due. Mishra's tenure at the ED was marked by high-profile investigations and a no-nonsense approach to financial malfeasance. His experience in navigating the murky waters of economic offenses could bring a fresh perspective to the EAC-PM. After all, understanding the underbelly of financial crimes might offer unique insights into the loopholes that plague our economy.

But here's the rub: Is this appointment a testament to a dwindling pool of economists willing to step into advisory roles? The untimely demise of Bibek Debroy, the former chairman of the EAC-PM, left big shoes to fill. Debroy was not just an economist; he was a polymath who seamlessly blended economic theory with cultural scholarship. Replacing such a towering figure is no small feat.

The reluctance of seasoned economists to enter the fray of policy advising is palpable. The political landscape can be treacherous, and the role of an economic advisor often involves walking a tightrope between academic integrity and political pragmatism.

It's no wonder that professionals might hesitate to dive into such turbulent waters.

Moreover, the current ensemble of economic advisers seems to lack the heft and gravitas that figures like Debroy brought to the table. While fresh perspectives are invaluable, the absence of seasoned economists raises questions about the depth of economic discourse within the council.

So, what does Mishra's appointment signify? Is it an acknowledgment that our economy needs a watchdog's scrutiny, someone adept at identifying and plugging financial leaks? Or is it a subtle nod to the idea that traditional economic strategies need a shake-up, perhaps through the lens of law enforcement experience?

A SIGN OF CHANGING PRIORITIES IN PMO?

A diplomat as the Prime Minister's private secretary? That's a move worth talking about. Nidhi Tewari, a 2014-batch IFS officer, has just been appointed to this key role, a position usually dominated by IAS officers. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is shaking things up.

At just 24, Tewari secured the 96th rank in the UPSC civil services examination, a feat that set her on a trajectory through India's diplomatic ranks. Her recent role as deputy secretary in the PMO has evidently prepared her for this significant step. But this appointment raises an interesting question: is

the government signaling a shift in how Narendra Modi manages both domestic and foreign policy?

Traditionally, this role has been the domain of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, the generalists who navigate the vast machinery of governance. The IFS, on the other hand, is typically the cadre of diplomats, the nation's face to the world. This appointment suggests a subtle yet intriguing shift in the PMO's dynamics.

In an era where foreign policy and economic diplomacy are deeply linked to domestic priorities, having an IFS officer in this position might be a strategic masterstroke.

Trade deals, global alliances, and India's international standing are now as crucial as internal governance. And let's not forget — Modi's global outreach is a key part of his leadership style.

This isn't the only unconventional appointment in the PMO. We've seen a trend of bringing in expertise from outside the usual IAS-dominated circles. If this continues, we might be witnessing a quiet but significant shift in the way India's highest office functions.

CHIEF SECY'S ANSWER TO PREJUDICE

Let's be honest — India's obsession with fair skin runs deep. It's in our movies, our marriage ads, and even in casual compliments. But when Kerala Chief Secretary Sarada Muraliedharan was hit with a colourist remark, she didn't just brush it off — she

turned it into a masterclass in self-assurance and dignity.

Responding to a social media comment comparing her leadership to that of her predecessor (and husband) in terms of "black vs white", Muraliedharan didn't play the victim. Instead, she reclaimed blackness. She called it powerful, all-absorbing, universal. "Black is the all-pervasive truth of the universe," she wrote. A statement so poetic that it almost makes you wonder why society ever tried to vilify it in the first place.

The IAS Association stood firmly behind her, rightly calling out the pettiness of judging an officer's competence by skin colour.

But the fact that such a defence is needed in 2025 speaks volumes. Prejudice against dark skin isn't just a remnant of the past — it's alive, loud, and insidious. And it's not just about colour; it's often intertwined with sexism, class bias, and deep-seated social conditioning.

Muraliedharan's response wasn't just about shutting down one nasty remark — it was about flipping the script entirely. It was a reminder that confidence is the best answer to ignorance. Maybe it's time the rest of us followed her lead.

Love them, hate them ignore them at national peril, is the babu guarantee and Dilip's belief. Share significant babu escapades dilipcherian@hotmail.com.

SHORT TAKES

**VEERA HANUMAN VIJAYA YATRA ON APRIL 12**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal have announced that the annual Veera Hanuman Vijaya Yatra will be conducted on April 12 to mark Hanuman Jayanti. The procession will start from Gowliguda Hanuman temple and conclude at Tadband Hanuman temple. Organisers have urged the Hindu community to participate in large numbers to make it a grand success.

Addressing a press conference, VHP state president Narasimha Murthy, prachar pramukh Pagudakula Balaswamy and Bajrang Dal state convener Shivaramulu called on the state government to ensure adequate police deployment for the smooth conduct of the rally.

**HEALTH DAY FETE TO BE CELEBRATED ON APRIL 7**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Academy for Science, Technology and Communication (ASTO), in collaboration with the G.P. Birla Archaeological, Astronomical and Scientific Research Institute, is organising World Health Day celebrations on April 7 at 3 pm at the Bhaskara Auditorium, B.M. Birla Science Centre, Hyderabad. Dr K. Srinath Reddy, a distinguished professor at the Public Health Foundation of India, will deliver the Prof. V. Ramalingaswami Memorial Lecture on the topic "Public Health: Broadest Bridge Between Science and Society".

Dr Evita Fernandez, CMD of the Fernandez Foundation, will deliver the keynote address titled "Birthing a Better Future, Navigating the New Realities of Maternity Care".

**CENTRAL GOVT PENSIONERS TO STAGE PROTESTS**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Central government pensioners across the country are set to protest against a recent amendment to pension rules passed as part of the Finance Bill in the Lok Sabha. The National Coordination Committee of Pensioners' Organisations has announced that protests will be held at various locations, including a demonstration at Kendriya Sadan in Koti, Hyderabad. Pensioners allege that the new amendment allows the government to categorise pensioners based on their retirement dates, affecting the uniform implementation of Pay panel benefits.

**TRANSPORT UNIONS TO HOLD NATIONAL MEET ON APRIL 12,13**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The seventh triannual conference of the Bharatiya Private Transport Majdoor Maha Sabha, a key national federation representing transport unions, will be held in Hyderabad on April 12 and 13. Delegations from 26 states, comprising more than 1,000 delegates, are expected to attend the meet. Around 400 members will part in the subsequent executive meeting.

According to Ravi Shankar Alluri, general secretary of the maha sabbha, the organisers have made extensive arrangements. "We have about 42,000 members in Greater Hyderabad alone," he noted.

**Doctors call for faster detection, monitoring**

People cautioned against consuming raw meat and eggs

SHRAMANSI KAUSHIK | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Doctors and public health experts have raised concerns over poultry handling practices following the death of a two-year-old girl from Andhra Pradesh from bird flu, allegedly after consuming raw chicken a few weeks ago. If spotted early, treatment is relatively easy with the use of anti-virals.

Telangana's public health department has confirmed that no human cases of H5N1 (highly pathogenic avian influenza) have been reported in the state. "We are conducting surveillance as per Centre's guidelines. Active surveillance is being carried out within a three-km radius of an outbreak, while passive surveillance covers up to seven km. Testing for poultry farmers is being conducted in outbreak zones," said Dr Ravindra Naik, director of public health. The animal husbandry department has reported that approximately two lakh birds have been culled in the state. "We have identified four affected areas — two in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, and one each in Nalgonda and Rangareddy districts. All birds within a km radius of these locations are being culled. Additionally, we are closely monitoring unusual bird mortality. Samples have been sent to Bhopal and the reports are likely to be received within 48 hours," said a senior department official. The official further advised people against consuming raw meat and eggs. "Despite thousands of birds being culled, people living in close proximity have remained asymptomatic. We have tested and isolated individuals wherever necessary. Poultry farmers have been educated about safety measures, including biosecurity protocols such as restricting access to farms, preventing contact with wild or stray animals, vaccinating livestock, and ensuring adequate nutrition.

**SYMPTOMS OF BIRD FLU**

**SIMILAR** to any other flu infection.

**INCLUDE** fever, cough, cold, runny nose, vomiting and pain.

**IN WORST** case scenario, there is a possibility of acute respiratory distress syndrome in lungs.

**DOCTORS SAY**

- Early detection is important.
- Genotypic tests like viral panels can confirm infection.
- Anti-viral medication usually yields positive outcomes.



We are conducting surveillance as per Centre's guidelines. Active surveillance is being carried out within a three-km radius of an outbreak, while passive surveillance covers up to seven km. Testing for poultry farmers is being conducted in outbreak zones.

—DR RAVINDRA NAIK, director of public health. Reporting sick birds is crucial despite economic concerns.

—DR SUNEETHA NAREDDY, infectious disease expert

District-level meetings with farmers have also been conducted. Additionally, movement of poultry from other states, particularly from Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka, remains restricted," the official added.

Choutuppal, Chityal, and Abdullahpurmet were identified as hotspots, but officials have assured that preventive measures have contained further spread. These areas are along the Vijayawada route. Dr Suneetha Nareddy, an infectious disease expert, emphasised the importance of early detection and surveillance in managing bird flu. "Testing is straightforward — genotypic tests like viral panels can confirm infections, and treatment with oseltamivir usually yields positive outcomes. While bird flu vaccines are not widely available, culling infected poultry remains the primary control measure. The virus primarily spreads from birds to humans through inhalation or direct contact, with human-to-human transmission being rare," she said. Governments must prioritise poultry surveillance, periodic testing, and public hygiene awareness, she added. "Reporting sick birds is crucial despite economic concerns. Proper disposal

**People try to turn way from chicken in Hyd**

SAALINI LOKESH | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Chicken sales have begun dropping against the backdrop of reports of bird flu, with customers demanding details of hygiene. Some people like gym regulars are eating chicken albeit by taking extra precautions. Many have quit non-veg items, at least for the time being.

"We raise our hens with care for two months. We follow all standard safety protocols. Sales have fallen, as many customers are getting influenced by the fake news being generated on WhatsApp about chicken and eggs," said Anjali, a poultry farm owner from Peri. "Food isn't just a meal for me. It is tied to my routine. The bird flu news, especially after a death, has made me cau-

tious. I ensure that the chicken is cooked well," said gym-goer Mohammed Basha.

"Chicken must be cleaned properly, ideally with salt and turmeric, and cooked thoroughly. We can't always be sure about the source or the bird's health. We've stopped eating non-veg," said Sneha Trivedi, a content strategist. "Sales go up and down. Summer slows things anyway. Mutton costs ₹851 per kg and chicken ₹281. Regulars still come, but bird flu stories are keeping others away," said Krishna, who runs a shop near Secunderabad railway station.

"People think online meat is cleaner, but they don't see the actual freshness. We give customers fresh chicken, right in front of them," he said.

of culled birds, hand hygiene, and thorough cooking of poultry can minimise risks. While large-scale human outbreaks are unlikely without mutations, proactive

monitoring can prevent potential crises. The lesson from past pandemics is clear — early intervention reduces long-term impact," Dr Nareddy said.

**Drinking water pipeline leaking in Musheerabad**

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3



A persistent water pipeline leak near the Government Primary and High Schools in Musheerabad has been causing major inconvenience for over a year, with thousands of litres of drinking water going to waste daily. Despite repeated complaints from residents, school staff, and health workers, no concrete action has been taken by the HMWS&SB.

The leaking pipeline, located just metres from the Government Urban Health Centre (UHC), has not only led to severe water wastage but is also disrupting traffic flow in the busy locality. Constant water flow on the road has caused slippery conditions, increasing the risk of accidents. Locals say vehicles have skidded multiple times due to the wet surface.

Bhagyalakshmi, a staff member at the UHC, expressed frustration, saying, "We and the school staff have filed several complaints over the past year, but nothing has changed. Patients coming to the hospital find it difficult to even enter due to

Drinking water leaking on the main road under Musheerabad metro rail station.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

the waterlogging." She added, "When drinking water is wasted like this in the middle of the city, what message are we sending with campaigns about water conservation?" Irshad Hussain, a resident, echoed similar concerns. "The flowing water is causing traffic congestion and even accidents due to skidding. We've alerted the authorities multiple times, but they only say repairs will be done soon. Nothing has been fixed."

When contacted, G. Rama Krishna, general manager (operations & maintenance), HMWS&SB, acknowledged the problem. "This is an old pipeline in Circle 2. Despite repeated repairs, the sockets keep leaking. However, a new pipeline has been laid from Sagarjal Hospital to Chilkalguda, and 90 per cent of the work is complete. We expect to finish the remaining portion within a week."

**Breast cancer awareness**



Director of TG Cyber Security Bureau Shikha Goel at the breast cancer screening and awareness camp at Telangana state police headquarters on Thursday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

**ATMs lose out in ease of payments via UPI**

V. SHIVANI REDDY and AISHWARYA GANDEED | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

In an era dominated by QR code payments, the once-bustling Automated Teller Machines, popularly known as ATMs, are now slowly becoming a thing of the past. With more people opting for cashless payments through UPI and other online platforms, the demand for cash withdrawals has reduced considerably, hinting at a rapid shift towards a cashless practice.

According to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, the total number of ATMs, cash recycler machines (CRMs) and white label ATMs (WLAs) deployed by public sector banks in Telangana has slightly dropped. In 2024, there were 19,867 such machines deployed in the state, compared to 21,319 in 2022, and 20,945 ATMs alone in 2021. A senior SBI official

**DROPPING PATRONAGE**

THE RISE IN DIGITAL payments is evident from RBI data, which shows that the number of QR codes in India increased from 25.01 crore in February 2023 to 64.97 crore by February 2025.

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THROUGH UPI, people can transfer up to ₹1 lakh daily, and through net banking, they can send up to ₹10 lakh.



explained that digital transactions offer higher transaction limits than ATMs, making them a more preferred choice. "ATM withdrawals are typically limited to ₹ 20,000-₹50,000 per day, while platinum account holders can withdraw up to ₹ 1 lakh. However, through UPI, people can transfer up to ₹1 lakh daily, and through net banking, they can send up to ₹10 lakh," said the

official. This apart, the UPI payments made through mobile phones is the most convenient form across the world.

The rise in digital payments is evident from RBI data, which shows that the number of QR codes in India increased from 25.01 crore in February 2023 to 64.97 crore by February 2025. This rapid adoption has reduced people's

dependence on cash and encouraged businesses and vendors to transition to cashless transactions.

"Many banks have cut down their ATMs due to the impact of UPI payments," said Mengam Srinivas Rao, a former general manager at a cash management company. "After Covid-19, the upgrade in technology has also shifted people to digital payments, causing a

loss of human touch in financial transactions."

Many people now prefer mobile transactions due to its convenience.

"If there's no cash in an ATM, we have to go to another one. To avoid this, it's easier to use mobile transactions and more-over UPI is handy as you can make payments from anywhere," said N. Raghavendra, a resident of Vanasthalipuram. Another resident of Hayathnagar, Vijayalakshmi said, "Earlier, we struggled with vendors and ride-hailing apps, who wouldn't provide small change, but UPI payments have made it easy to pay in exact amounts."

However, those unfamiliar with digital transactions face difficulties. "I don't know how to use UPI, and when I try to withdraw cash from an ATM, it's often out of service or there is no cash in the machine. I rely on my

children for digital payments," said S. Manjula, a homemaker. Lower foot-fall at ATMs also led to decrease in security and maintenance.

"Previously, banks deployed security personnel at ATMs and maintained them well. But now, many ATMs lack security, and some have been shut down entirely," said N. Sravya, a government employee.

On the issue of ATM security and maintenance, Srinivas Rao said, "ATMs are not well maintained like before. Banks are cutting costs by reducing the number of security personnel at ATMs."

Despite the decrease in ATM usage, cash recycling machines (CRMs) continue to be used for both depositing and withdrawing cash — mostly by business people. Officials claim CRMs are popular as it allows people to both deposit and withdraw cash.

**JR COLLEGES TO REOPEN FOR NEW ACADEMIC YEAR ON JUNE 2**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Board of Intermediate Education said junior colleges would reopen for the new academic year June 2. Releasing the academic calendar, the board said half-yearly exams will be held from November 10 to 15, and pre-finals from January 19 to 24, 2026. Institutions are expected to maintain 220 working days. Practical exams for IPE-2026 will be conducted in the first week of February, and theory exams are scheduled for the first week of March.

The Board said Dasara holidays will be from September 28 to October 5, and Sankranti holidays from January 11 to 18, 2026.

**INTER BOARD INVITES ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR AFFILIATION**

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TGBIE) has issued a notification inviting online applications for the extension of provisional affiliation which includes the sanction of additional sections, for 2025-26.

Applications will open from April 5, and the last date to apply without late fee is April 4.

Junior colleges, including composite colleges, may apply online using Form-II.

Full reports in deccanchronicle.com

**HC slams Sircilla collector for overstepping authority**

L. RAVICHANDER HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

Justice Anil Kumar Jukanti of the Telangana High Court strongly criticised Rajanna Sircilla collector Sandeep Kumar Jha for overstepping his authority by orchestrating a criminal complaint against Vanapatla Kavita, a land acquisition victim from Anupuram. The collector initially failed to appear before the court despite explicit instructions to do so. Justice Kumar warned the additional advocate general that the court would issue a warrant if the collector did not appear by 2.15 pm. The court questioned whether the collector was prepared to face jail for contempt. Earlier, a writ plea was filed

by Kavita challenging displacement due to the Mid-Manair project. Despite a High Court order directing the authorities to include her in the rehabilitation scheme, her name was omitted. When she pursued contempt proceedings over the non-compliance, the collector allegedly retaliated by instructing officials to initiate civil and criminal cases against her. The Vemulawada tahsildar filed a complaint, leading to a criminal case against Kavita for alleged misrepresentation before the court. During the hearing, Justice Kumar reprimanded the collector for his conduct, questioning how he could unilaterally decide that the court's order was erroneous. The judge inquired why any

alleged misrepresentation by Kavita had not been raised earlier. The hearing, which lasted nearly two hours, concluded with the collector admitting his mistake and offering an unconditional apology. The court reserved its verdict.

**HC TAKES UP CONTEMPT CASE**

The Telangana High Court will continue to hear a contempt case against the directorate of animal husbandry, alleging failure to establish animal birth control centres. A panel, comprising Justice Abhinand Kumar Shavili Justice Tirumala Devi Eada, was dealing with a contempt case filed by advocate P. Sree Ramya, who alleged that the authorities



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had disobeyed orders passed by the court. Earlier a PIL was filed challenging the actions of government and the department's approach in managing stray dogs. The petitioner alleged that instead of implementing the animal birth control (dogs) Rules 2001, the authorities were resorting to culling. The court ruled that the animal welfare board must ensure strict compliance with the rules. During the

hearing of the contempt case, the government pleader for animal husbandry said that in compliance with the directions of the court in PIL, 112 ABC centres had been set up. The petitioner contended that only 42 centres were established. The petitioner sought time to verify the claims. The panel posted the matter after four weeks.

**HC TAKES UP REVERSAL OF ACTION AGAINST COP**

The Telangana High Court will continue to hear a writ appeal filed by the Centre against an order that overturned disciplinary action against K. Murugesan, CISF head constable. A panel comprising acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and

Justice Renuka Yara, was dealing with a writ appeal pertaining to Murugesan, who was penalised for allegedly collecting ₹1,000 from a proclaimer operator and a truck driver while on duty in November 2010. Following an internal inquiry, he was found guilty and was imposed disciplinary action. His appeals and revision petitions were repeatedly denied, leading him to challenge the decision in the High Court. Murugesan said the inquiry officer had failed to examine key witnesses, including the complainant, depriving him of the opportunity to cross examine them. The driver, who was with Murugesan at the time, provided a statement in his favour, which was ignored.

The single judge found serious lapses and observed that the inquiry officer relied on assumptions rather than evidence. Citing Supreme Court precedents, the judge reaffirmed that disciplinary actions must be based on legally admissible evidence. The failure to allow cross-examination and the omission of a favourable witness testimony were deemed violations. The Centre filed a writ appeal, arguing that the authority had acted within its powers and that the inquiry findings should not have been disregarded. The panel granted the Centre a week to submit the inquiry proceedings and witness statements.

SHORT TAKES

**KERALA HC STAYS PROCEEDINGS AGAINST RAMDEV**

Kochi, April 3: The Kerala High Court on Thursday stayed all proceedings in a lower court against Yoga guru Baba Ramdev, his associate Acharya Balakrishna and their company Divya Pharmacy in a "misleading" advertisement case. Justice V G Arun stayed the proceedings in the Palakkad magisterial court for three months, senior advocate Ajith Kumar (Sasthamangalam), appearing for Ramdev and others, confirmed. The interim order was issued on the plea moved by the company, Ramdev and Balakrishna seeking quashing of the proceedings against them in the case. The proceedings against them were initiated on a complaint by the Drugs Inspector, Palakkad.

**UDUMALA BALA IS NEW VIZAG ARCHBISHOP**

Visakhapatnam, April 3: Papal Ambassador to India and Nepal Leopoldo Girelli, officially installed Udumala Bala as the new Archbishop of Visakhapatnam during a Eucharistic celebration at the St. Peter's Cathedral Grounds in Gnanapuram on Thursday. "While Warangal is my Dhanya Bhoomi, Vizag is now my Punya Bhoomi," Archbishop Bala said in his first address, describing his transition as a spiritual journey. "Together, let us build a better Vizag, a better Andhra Pradesh, and a better India," the new Archbishop underlined. The solemn occasion drew more than 25 bishops and archbishops from across the country, including Cardinal Anthony Poola, Archbishop of Hyderabad, and Bishop Emeritus Gali Bali, who delivered the homily. In his address, Archbishop Girelli praised the vibrancy of the Archdiocese of Visakhapatnam, which serves over one lakh Catholics.

**Katchatheevu ceding was unlawful: DMK**

**Calls islet sole breadwinner area of TN fishermen**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

DMK MP T.R. Baalu on Thursday said that the ceding of Katchatheevu islet to Sri Lanka was 'unconstitutional', and asked the Centre to take steps for its early retrieval. Raising the issue during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Baalu said that on Wednesday the Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously passed a resolution, moved by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, urging the Centre to retrieve the Katchatheevu islet. Katchatheevu was ceded by India to Sri Lanka by way of agreements in 1974 and 1976. The DMK MP quoted a Supreme Court order which had said that ceding of land territory should not be



The Katchatheevu islet.

— BY ARRANGEMENT

done unless Parliament approves and ratifies it. "Ceding of Katchatheevu happened in 1976. They have not consulted the state government or Parliament. Without Parliament ratification, this (ceding of Katchatheevu) is unconstitutional. It has to be

retrieved quickly," Baalu said, adding that Katchatheevu is the 'sole breadwinner area' of Tamil Nadu fishermen and its ceding is unconstitutional. Stalin on Thursday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take immediate steps for retrieving

the Katchatheevu island from Sri Lanka to ensure permanent protection of the traditional fishing rights of the state's fishermen in the Palk Bay area. Writing to Modi, Stalin cited the Assembly resolution passed on April 2, 2025 seeking retrieval of Katchatheevu island from Sri Lanka, and underscored that the origin of the problem was the Indo-Sri Lankan treaty (Katchatheevu Agreement). "The government of Tamil Nadu has been steadfast in opposing the Katchatheevu agreement right from the beginning. The Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu had strongly opposed the ceding of Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka in Parliament in 1974.

**Centre hoodwinks Kerala's Christian community: Oppn**

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 3

The ruling CPM and Opposition Congress in Kerala rejected the claim made by Centre that the Waqf amendment bill passed in Lok Sabha contained provisions to resolve the Munambam issue. Over 600 families in Munambam have been on an indefinite agitation for the last 150 days for the reinstatement of their revenue

rights regarding a 400-acre stretch of land where their houses are located, which has been declared an asset by Kerala's Waqf Board. Kerala law minister P. Rajeev criticised the Centre for allegedly deceiving the Christian community. He said the Act lacked provisions guaranteeing a permanent solution to the Munambam land issue. He said the Act applied only to Waqf properties owned by the government. As the Act will be imple-

mented without any retrospective effect, properties owned by private individuals were exempted. "The Centre is misleading Christians by claiming that the Waqf Act was introduced for their benefit," he said. Opposition leader V.D. Satheeshan said the amendment to the Waqf Bill is part of the Sangh Parivar agenda to harm the rights of a religious community. He opined the Munambam issue can only be resolved within the state itself.

**Bengaluru Metro passengers not giving up priority seats**

M.B. GIRISH | DC BENGALURU, APRIL 3

A six month long observations by Namma Metro's Security Squad personnel have come across a staggering 14, 162 instances of passengers not offering priority seats meant for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, pregnant women and those passengers with infants followed by 11, 925 cases were the playing of loud music by commuters. Not giving priority seats and playing loud music were the most common inconvenience observed by Security Squad on

moving trains during non-peak hours. In all, 27,000 violations have been observed by Security Squad personnel attached to Namma Metro i.e. Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL). The observations were made by Security Squad personnel from September, 2024 to March 25, 2025. However, the personnel of Security Squad of Namma Metro have not imposed fines on erring commuters, so far and officials in Namma Metro told Deccan Chronicle on Thursday imposition of fines on erring commuters range from ₹500

to ₹10,000. On the imposition of fines on erring commuters, BMRCL officials stated "If security squad personnel feel there is a violation and complaint from a passenger then definitely erring commuters will be fined." In some cases Security Squad personnel have issued stern warnings aimed to discourage such behaviour. Apart from not giving priority seats and playing loud music causing inconvenience to fellow commuters, the Security Squad personnel have noticed 554 cases of consumption of eatables while travelling in Metro.

**KANNADA WRITER NARAYANA DIES**

Bengaluru, April 3: Writer P.V. Narayana, who has been leading the Kannada movements for over 50 years, died here on Thursday due to age-related ailments. He was 82 years old. Narayana was born in 1942 in Akkirampura village in Tumakuru district. A scholar, Narayana held two Masters in Arts, Kannada and English. He studied in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Mysuru and Dharwad. As a translator, Narayana brought to Kannada over 22 works from English and Telugu. He taught Kannada at Vijaya College in Bengaluru for 30 years. — PTI

NATION

SHORT TAKE

**RAJNATH URGES ARMY TO ADAPT TO GEOPOLITICS**

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday asked top Army commanders to keep the changing geopolitics and unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war in mind while devising their strategies. On the current situation along the northern borders with China, defence minister expressed full confidence in the troops and complemented the armed forces for standing firm and vigil and the same should continue. Defence minister on Thursday addressed the Army Commanders' Conference, an apex level biannual event, which is being held in New Delhi from 01st April to 04th April. He said that doctrinal changes whenever required should be made to make the Armed Forces future ready. Singh said that keeping in mind the present dynamic geo-strategic changes and the ongoing global security scenarios with the uncertainties the armed forces should prepare a dynamic perspective planning addressing both the long term and short term challenges. In the present global context the importance of Military Intelligence incorporating the modern technology cannot be stressed upon more, he said. He stressed upon the present geo-strategic uncertainties and the complex world situation which effects everyone globally. He stressed upon that the present world is an inter connected world and such incidents whether happening in our neighborhood or far off countries will effect everyone. "Unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war will be part of the future conventional wars. Cyber, information, communication, trade and finance have all become an inseparable part of future conflicts. This necessitates that Armed Forces will have to keep all these facets in consideration while planning and formulating strategies," he said.

**SC nullifies WB's 26K teacher appointments**

**Selection process voided due to violations, court rules**

RAKESH K. SINGH | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

In a major setback to the West Bengal government, the Supreme Court on Thursday invalidated the appointment of 25,753 teachers and other staff in state-run and government-aided schools, saying the entire selection process is "vitiated and tainted" beyond resolution. Raising a serious question on the propriety of the state administration in recruitment, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjay Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar upheld a Calcutta high court verdict dated April 22, 2024, annulling the appointments. Pronouncing the judgment on as many as 127 petitions relating to the Calcutta high court verdict, the CJ said: "In our opinion, this is the case where the entire selection process is vitiated and tainted beyond resolution. Manipulations and frauds on a large scale, coupled with the attempted cover-up, have dented the selection process beyond repair and partial redemption. The credibility and legitimacy of the selection are denuded." The verdict said: "We find no valid ground or reason to interfere with the direction of the high court that the services of tainted candidates, where appointed, must be terminated, and they should be required to refund any salaries/payments received. Since their



West Bengal school employees react after SC upholds Calcutta High Court's verdict invalidating 25,753 teacher appointments in schools. —PTI

appointments were the result of fraud, this amounts to cheating. Therefore, we see no justification to alter this direction." For candidates who were untainted, it said the selection process was rightly declared null and void due to the "egregious violations and illegalities", as it violated Articles 14 (equality before the law) and 16 (equality of opportunity in matters of public employment) of the Constitution. CJ Khanna, however, said that the "candidates who are already employed need not be asked to refund or restitute any payments made to them". The judgment said: "As such, the appointments of these candidates are cancelled."

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**MAMATA REFUSES TO ACCEPT SC VERDICT**

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, APRIL 3

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday refused to accept the Supreme Court verdict that upheld a year-old Calcutta High Court order of termination of the 2016-appointment of 25,752 teachers and non-teachers in the School Service Commission (SSC) jobs scam. "The CM said, "We have the highest regards to the judiciary. There is no question about it. We don't have any allegations against any judge also. We respect each of them. But as a citizen, I can't accept the judgment. An angry TMC supreme also held BJP and CPM responsible for their bid to "collapse the education system" of the state through the legal battle against her government. She further offered support to the job losers legally by setting up a forum for them and decided to meet them on April 7 at Netaji Indoor Stadium.

**Teachers call verdict a death sentence**

GOUTAMI SENGUPTA | DC HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

The jobs of 25,752 people have been cancelled as the Supreme Court quashed the entire panel for recruitment to the 2016 West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) on Thursday. Teachers, whose names were on that panel, called the verdict equivalent to death sentence. They were clueless as to why the

qualified and the non-qualified could not be separated even after submitting all documents to the probing agencies. Aditi Basu, a teacher at Bharati Bhavan Girls High School in Dakshineswar, who had been selected from the controversial panel said, "We have been working for six years. All of a sudden, at 10.45 am today (Thursday) the verdict says that the whole panel is cancelled. This is like a

death sentence for me. The verdict has affected thousands of people like me. We will decide the next steps together." Razia Khatun, who was named in the 2016 panel, cannot imagine that such a verdict will be announced after a long legal battle. A physics teacher, she said, "How many times can a person take the exam? What is the guarantee that we will pass again? Our lives have gone into darkness."

The only person excluded from the cancelled list is Soma Das, on "humanitarian" grounds, since she is suffering from cancer. The Supreme Court upheld the verdict of the Calcutta High Court's verdict in this case. When the division bench of Justice Debangshu Basak and Justice Mohammad Shabbir Rashidi of the Calcutta High Court delivered their verdict, Das' job was not terminated.

**EASTERN RAILWAY**  
**OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL CHIEF PERSONNEL OFFICER**  
 17, Netaji Subhas Road, Eastern Railway, Kolkata-700001

**RE-ENGAGEMENT OF RETIRED GAZETTED OFFICERS**

**NOTIFICATION**

Applications are invited from retired Gazetted Officers of Signal & Telecommunication department and Electrical department for re-engagement as per Railway Board's letter No. 2024/E(GR)/38/1 (2024/NFR/Officers/Re-engagement/001) dated 25.08.2024 & 08.11.2024. Details of post, vacancy and eligibility criteria are as under :-

Department	Name of the post	No. of vacancy	Applicants eligible
Signal & Telecom	Consultant (Signal & Telecom)	04 (Signal & Telecom Department only)	Retired Gr. B (L-8 & L-9) Gazetted Officers of Signal & Telecom Department
Electrical	Consultant (Electrical)	12 (Electrical Department only)	Retired Gr. B (L-8 & L-9), JTS (L-10), STS (L-11), JAG (L-12 & L-13) Gazetted Officers of Electrical Department

The detailed notification along with duty list against the identified posts and prescribed format is available in website : [www.er.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.er.indianrailways.gov.in)

Principal Chief Personnel Officer, Kolkata

**STORES E-PROCUREMENT**

E-procurement Tender Notice No. S/01/2025-26 Dated: 01-04-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works.

**SN.1. Tender No. 61/25/5074A/OT/01/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 11-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Joggle fish plates 60kg to RDSO Drg. No. T-5849 (Alt-1) per set consist of two Fishplates two clamps to Drg. No. RDSO T-5854 and two clamps to Drg. No. RDSO T-5854/1 and two bolts and nuts to Drg. No. T-11525 with Single Coil Spring washers to Drg. No. T-10773, IRS Specification for Fishplate (Warranty Period: Upto 30 months from the date of supply) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UJAM Linking] Item: 3100466, FISH PLATES Sub Item: FISH PLATES Item Type: Goods (supply) Qty-2070 Set for JITENDRA KUMAR, NFR (Assam), P.L.No-60090133.

**SN.2. Tender No. 40/25/0555/OT/02/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 15-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Microprocessor controller for roof mounted AC package unit for LHB coaches as per RDSO specification no. RDSO/PE/SPEC/AC/0139 2009 (REV-1) as per Drg. No. Nil specn: RDSO SPECIFICATION NO. RDSO/PE/SPEC/AC/0139 2009 (REV-1) [Warranty Period: 30 Month after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp. No, Stages: 0] [UJAM Linking] Item: 3100369, Microprocessor controller for roof mounted AC package unit for LHB coaches and double decker coaches Item Type: Goods (supply) 1) Qty-8 Nos. for Pandu GSD, NFR (Assam), 2) Qty- 1 Nos. for New Jalpaiguri/ GSD, NFR (West Bengal) 3) Qty- 10 Nos for Dibrugarh Town/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), 4) Qty- 10 Nos for New Bongaigaon/Workshop/Depot, NFR (Assam), P.L.No- 45212119.

**SN.3. Tender No. 40/25/0548/OT/03/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: 60 KVA Transformer 750v/415v, 3-Phase, 4 wire vector configuration STAR- STAR to RDSO Specification No. RDSO/PE/SPEC/AC/0080-2007 (Rev.2) [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UJAM Linking] Item: 2400035.60 KVA Transformer, Item Type: Goods (supply) i) Qty-01 Nos for Kathiar GSD, NFR (Bihar), ii) Qty: 06 Nos for New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam), iii) Qty: 06 Nos for Dibrugarh Town Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam), iv) Qty: 07 Nos for Pandu GSD, NFR (Assam), P.L. No- 47200110.

**SN.4. Tender No. 61/24/5679/OT/04/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Fabrication and supply of 60 Kg Web Switch Expansion Joint (TWSEJ) to RDSO Drg. No. T-8822 with latest alteration if any [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp. Yes, Stages: 1] [UJAM Linking] Item: 3100042, Improved Switch Expansion Joint Sub Item: Improved Switch Expansion Joint for 65 mm Gap (Max) Item Type: Goods (supply), i) Qty-421 Set for Jitendra Kumar, NFR (Assam), P.L.No- 600608360175.

**SN.5. Tender No. 37/24/0665B/OT/05/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Upgraded High Capacity Draft Gear Arrangement including Draft Gear follower for BOXNHL/BCNHL wagons Drg No. RDSO Drg No WD-81010-S-03, Alt-12, Item -19, Mat. Spec-RDSO Spec No.- WD-71-BD-15 Rev-01 of Nov-17 [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp: No, Stages: 0] [UJAM Linking] Item: 3100317 Upgraded High Capacity Draft Gear for BOXNHL/BCNHL Wagons Item Type: Goods (Supply) i) Qty-50 Nos for Pandu GSD, NFR (Assam), ii) Qty: 1335 Nos for New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam), P.L.No- 38134676.

**SN.6. Tender No. 70/24/0476A/OT/06/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 24-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Bolt MS Hex Head M 16x50 with Nut Material Spec: steel IS 1363 (Part. 1): 2023 for b alt & IS 1363 (Part-3): 2018 for nut, property class 4.6 for bolt and 5 for nut [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] i) Qty: 6000.00 Kg for Dibrugarh Town Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam) ii) Qty:11000.00 Kg for New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam) iii) Qty:19000.00 kg for New Jalpaiguri GSD,NFR (West Bengal), iv) Qty 400 kg for Pandu GSD,NFR (Assam) P.L.No:- 73031379.

**SN.7. Tender No. 37/25/0563A/OT/07/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Modified Elastomeric and Design B as per RDSO STR No- WD-20-Misc-95 (Rev-5) Drawing-WD-21109-S-02 alt.2.Mat.Spec.-As per drawing & RDSO STR No.QMS-5: 2000 Rev-1 [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] [UJAM Linking] Item: 3100309,Elastomeric Pads Sub Item: Elastomeric Pads Design- B Item Type: Goods (Supply), i) Qty: 4406 Nos. for Dibrugarh Town Workshop Depot NFR (Assam), ii) Qty: 5237 Nos for Pandu GSD, NFR (Assam) iii) Qty: 7041 Nos for New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam) . iv) Qty: 15437 Nos for New Jalpaiguri GSD, NFR (West Bengal), P.L. No- 38106322.

**SN.8. Tender No. 30/25/5178A/OT/08/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Hose connection for Air Spring Suspension bogie Drawing No.- SKETCH K1054 Alt-NIL or latest Mat. Spec:- RDSO-STR-C-K-407 (Rev-04) (Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery) [Inspection Agency: TPI, Stage Insp.: No, Stages: 0] (UJAM Linking) Item: 3100396 Air suspension control equipments for air spring assembly system with ICF/LHB Type Bogie to RDSO Spec. No.No.CK407 (Rev-4) Sub Item: Air suspension control equipments for air spring assembly system with ICF/LHB Type Bogie, Item Type: Goods (supply) i) Qty- 2161 Nos for Dibrugarh Town Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam), ii) Qty- 1922 Nos for New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, NFR (Assam), iii) Qty: 125 Nos for New Jalpaiguri GSD, NFR (West Bengal) P.L.No- 33503333.

**SN.9. Tender No. ML255039/OT/09/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 16-06-2025  
 Brief Description: 1. SUPPLY OF IGBT BASED 3-PHASE DRIVE PROPULSION EQUIPMENTS TO CLW SPECIFICATION NO RDSO/2008/EL/SPEC/0071, REV.5. issued in JUNE 2016 or latest to CLW P.L. No-29741075 Detailed description as per attached document. Qty- 01 set 2. COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT [AMC] OF IGBT BASED 3-PHASE DRIVE PROPULSION EQUIPMENT TO SPECN. NO CLW/AMC/C-D & D/01 ISSUED IN MARCH-2016, Qty-01 Set.

**SN.10. Tender No. 61/24/5413A/OT/10/2025-26**  
 Closing/Opening date: 21-04-2025  
 Brief Description: Elastic Rail Clip MK-V with flat toe for 60 kg UIC/52 kg rail section to Drg. No. RDSO T-5919 with specification conforming to IRS -T-31-2021 with latest amendment, if any with alt no 2 with latest alterations, if any [warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery] [Inspection Agency: RITES NON-TPI, Stage Insp.: NA, Stages: 0] (UJAM Linking) Item: 3100558 ELASTIC RAIL CLIPS) Item Type: Goods (Supply), Qty: 883352 Nos for SSE/P.Way/TD/Bongaigaon, NFR (Assam) P.L. No 60110028.

Note: For full details of tender notice and tender documents, tenderer may log on to the website ([www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)). Prospective bidder who intend to participate in above tender are required to log on themselves with the above website and submit their offer electronically, if they are already registered with IREPS. In Case they are not registered with IREPS, they are advised to obtain class-III Digital Signature Certificate from the certifying agencies under Govt. of India IT Act 2000 and participate in the above tenders.

PCMM, Maligaon

**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
 Serving Customers With A Smile

SHORT TAKES

**SHAH TO VISIT J&K FOR 3 DAYS FROM APRIL 6**

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, APRIL 3

Union home minister Amit Shah will be visiting Jammu and Kashmir for three days from April 6, to discuss the progress made on various Centre-sponsored developmental projects and other important issues with the local government functionaries. He will also hold a public meeting in Jammu.

The official sources in Jammu said that Mr Shah is also likely to visit some of the border areas and hold separate review meetings with senior officials of various security agencies and the local administration in the twin capitals of Jammu and Srinagar.

However, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is likely to hold a one-on-one meeting with the Union home minister during his three-day visit, had said on Tuesday that it (the visit) is not linked to the anti-militancy operation underway in J&K's frontier district of Kathua and its neighbourhood.

**NO AUCTION FOR SATELLITE SPECTRUM**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

The government on Thursday clarified in Parliament that satellite spectrum would be allocated administratively rather than through auction, aligning with global practices. Communication minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, who informed this in the Rajya Sabha, also gave a detail on the security protocols in place for satellite communication providers, including mandatory establishment of earth station gateways in India, operational control centres on Indian soil, and ensuring all traffic for Indian customers passes through domestic gateways.

Replying to supplementaries during Question Hour, the minister said "We cannot auction an asset which is not fully in our control. This applies not only to India but all countries on earth" and also explained the technical differences between mobile and satellite communications.

**MODI TO TAKE PART IN BIMSTEC SUMMIT TODAY**

FROM PAGE 1

Modi declared that the two nations had discussed the establishment of a security dialogue between their respective security agencies.

"We have agreed that our agencies will collaborate closely to combat human trafficking and illegal migration," Modi said, adding that the two nations will also work together to combat terrorism and money laundering. Modi also announced the strengthening of links in the fields of tourism, culture and education between India's northeastern region and Thailand. He mentioned India has started giving free e-visas to Thai tourists. He also conveyed his condolences to the families of the victims of the recent earthquake that affected parts of Thailand, including the capital Bangkok, resulting in casualties.

**CO-OPERATION NOT SUBJECT TO CHERRY-PICKING**

FROM PAGE 1

The Prime Minister said, "From Thailand, I will pay a two day visit to Sri Lanka from April 4-6. This follows the highly successful visit of President (Anura) Disanayaka to India last December. I am confident that these visits will contribute to strengthening our close relationships."

Jaishankar, battling for cooperation among all member nations of the grouping at the 20th Bimstec ministerial meeting in Bangkok reiterated the importance of India's north-eastern region for connectivity within Bimstec and warned against "cherry-picking" in what is being seen as a jibe at Dhaka and Yunus. "India is aware of its special responsibility in regard to Bimstec. We, after all, have the longest coastline in the Bay of Bengal, of almost 6,500 km. India shares borders not only with five Bimstec members and connects most of them but also provides much of the interface between the Indian sub-continent and Asean."

**Waqf Bill changes not against Muslims: Govt**

Sonia says Centre pushed Bill without enough talks

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Union minority affairs minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday strongly dismissed Opposition claims that the rights of Muslims are being undermined by the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025. Introducing the Bill in the Rajya Sabha after its passage in the Lok Sabha with a vote of 288-232, Rijiju emphasised that the legislation seeks to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of Waqf properties.

"The proposed legislation has nothing to do with religion and deals strictly with property matters," Rijiju stated. He highlighted that Waqf properties have significantly increased from 4.9 lakh in 2004 to 8.72 lakh currently, stressing the Bill's goal of completing the tasks left unfulfilled by previous governments.

Addressing concerns about representation, Rijiju assured that only Muslims can become 'Waqifs' and dismissed claims of non-Muslim dominance in the Central Waqf Council as unfounded. He also sought the Opposition's cooperation in passing the Bill.

However, the Congress sharply criticised the bill,



Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, party president Mallikarjun Kharge and LoP Rahul Gandhi during the general body meeting at Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan in New Delhi on Thursday.

describing it as a "brazen assault" on the Constitution. Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi accused the government of pushing the Bill through Parliament without adequate discussion, suggesting it was part of a deliberate strategy by the BJP to maintain societal polarisation.

"The Waqf Amendment Bill was bulldozed through. It is very much part of the BJP's deliberate strategy to keep our society permanently polarised," Mrs Gandhi told Congress MPs at a meeting in Parliament's Central Hall.

Gandhi further criticised the government's approach to constitutional

principles, citing concerns over the One Nation, One Election Bill and the non-implementation of the women's reservation bill. She accused the Modi government of trying to undermine the constitutional framework and democratic values.

Congress MPs, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, attended the meeting, during which Sonia Gandhi urged her party colleagues to continue highlighting issues related to democratic governance and civil rights.

The Opposition MPs also protested in the Rajya Sabha, wearing black attire to express their dissent over the Waqf Bill.

**CHINA TOOK OVER 4K SQKM OF INDIA TERRITORY: RAHUL**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday claimed that China had taken over 4,000 square kilometers of Indian territory and that reciprocal tariffs or import duties imposed by the US would 'completely devastate' the Indian economy. The BJP hit back at Gandhi over his remarks during the Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, saying "not an inch of land" had been given to China under BJP rule and it was under Congress rule that China had occupied Indian territory. The BJP also said it is the country's good fortune that the Prime Minister of this country is Narendra Modi before whom the world bows.

He slammed the government over the celebration of the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties by India and China. "I was shocked some time back to see that our foreign secretary (Vikram Misri) was cutting a cake with the Chinese ambassador. What exactly is happening to this land?" he asked.

**MORE TARIFF CUTS LIKELY SOON, SAY OFFICIALS**

FROM PAGE 1

Cambodia is the second in the list, attracting 49 per cent duty followed by Vietnam (46), Sri Lanka (44), Myanmar (44), Bangladesh (37), Thailand (36), Indonesia (32), Taiwan (32), Indonesia (32), South Africa (30), Pakistan (29), India (27), South Korea (25), Japan (24), Malaysia (24), and the European Union 20 per cent.

An import duty lower than its competitors gave a relief to the Indian stock markets, which escaped the global market bloodbath. The Sensex and the Nifty ended 0.4 per cent lower, compared to a 4.67 per cent plunge at US Nasdaq at 10 pm IST on Thursday, a 2.7 per cent fall at Dow Jones, taking out nearly \$2 trillion from US stock market, three per cent fall at Japan's Nikkei and a 1.5 per cent dip at China's Hang Seng.

Commenting on the US tariffs, a commerce ministry official said, "The US reciprocal tariffs are a mixed reaction for India and not a setback. I think the commerce ministry is analysing and will take care of the impact on the tariffs to grow trade and investments for both the economies."

According to a statement issued by the commerce ministry, "The baseline duty of 10 per cent will be effective from April 5 and the 27 per cent from April 9. Certain sectors are exempted from these duties include pharma, semiconductors and energy products."

**Sibal, Rijiju in war of words**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

During the discussion on the Waqf Bill, a war of words broke out between MP Kapil Sibal and Rijiju. "When it is my land, then who are you to make law for that," Sibal said. He mentioned that there are over 10-lakh acres of land in Hindu (religious) institutions in four states. "In the Hindu religion, the self-acquired property can be given to sons and not daughters," Sibal said.

Rijiju objected to the wrong comparison of religious land of Hindus in four states with that of Muslims. The minister attacked Sibal for creating confusion and raising issues but not staying back to listen to the replies of ministers concerned. He said Sibal cre-

ated confusion by comparing properties of Waqf with those of other religious bodies.

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman mentioned that the government appointed officials to manage religious bodies which manage these (Hindu) properties.

Sibal said that he was making the same point that these properties are maintained by the government and also the Waqf statutory bodies have people who are government appointed. Chiding the minority affairs minister, Sibal said, "The minister does not know the difference between a trust and Waqf. Waqf property belongs to God and cannot be sold. It can be donated for graveyards, schools, etc. Once the land is donated, it cannot be

taken back, unlike trusts," he said. The content and intent of the Waqf bill put a question mark on the government, said RJD Member Manoj Jha, asking it to not hurry with the Bill and send it to a select committee of Parliament again.

Participating in the debate, CPM John Brittas said the Bill is a summary assault. This "attacks the basic tenets of India's Constitution, where it is secularism, where it is democracy and equality. There is a cardinal violation happening, he said. YSRC's Y.V. Subba Reddy and BJP's Muzibulla Khan opposed the bill.

All religions must be treated with respect and the government must prevent India from shifting to a totalitarian state, SP's Ram Gopal Yadav said.

**Parliament Panel flags delay in MGNREGA pay**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has raised concerns over delays in wage payments under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and called for urgent reforms in the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) to ensure better support for vulnerable sections of society.

The panel in its eighth report on MGNREGA that was tabled in Parliament on Thursday, highlighted that delays in wage payments continue to be a significant issue, affecting lakhs

of rural workers dependent on the scheme for livelihood.

The report said that despite digital advancements, workers often face long waiting periods for their wages, exacerbating financial distress.

It urged the government to address systemic bottlenecks, improve fund allocation, and ensure timely payments. The panel also expressed concerns over the declining budgetary allocation for MGNREGA and the increasing demand for jobs under the scheme. It recommended revising the wage structure to match inflation and strengthening grievance redressal mechanisms to protect workers' rights. The report also

pointed out issues such as the lack of proper job card issuance, the need for better social audits, and the importance of including more women beneficiaries in MGNREGA employment. Further, it emphasised that material shortages and administrative delays at the state level must be addressed to ensure seamless implementation of the scheme.

In its ninth report 'Impact of National Social Assistance Programme on the Poor and Destitute in the Villages', which provides financial assistance to senior citizens, widows, and persons with disabilities, the parliamentary panel flagged inadequacies in pension amounts.

**PAYLOAD | MARKET Pact inked between Paras Defence & Space Technologies and MicroCon Vision**

**Defence firm to use Israeli drone camera tech**

New Delhi, April 3: An Indian defence firm has signed an MoU with an Israeli company to bring advanced drone camera technology to the country, officials said on Thursday. The pact has been inked between Paras Defence and Space Technologies and MicroCon Vision of Israel, part of Controp and the Rafael Group, an official statement said. The collaboration will position Paras Defence as the exclusive supplier of advanced drone camera technology in India at "much lower cost", it said.

The Indian firm will bring indigenous content in these drone cameras and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) payloads, improving the country's self-reliance while lowering costs, the statement said. It will offer two models, whose usual import price is "around ₹20 lakh and ₹40 lakh per unit", the statement said. Paras Defence "anticipates 50-60 per cent price reduction for each model", making advanced surveillance technology more accessible to Indian defence forces and for commercial

applications. "MicroCon will serve as Paras Defence's exclusive supplier for drone cameras, which include ISR payloads and electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) seekers, while Paras Defence becomes MicroCon's exclusive partner for ISR operations in India.

"This aligns with MicroCon's strategy to expand its footprint in the country, which is witnessing accelerated growth in its drone market," the statement said. "This collaboration represents a major leap forward in India's defence capabilities," the statement quoted Paras Defence MD Munjal Sharad Shah. "We are committed to supporting India's strategic goals and are proud to partner with MicroCon in this groundbreaking endeavour," Shah added. The MoU is focused on expanding both the com-

**Chhath puja**



Devotees perform rituals after taking a holy dip in the Ganga river during the Chaiti Chhath puja festival in Patna on Thursday.

**LS confirms imposition of Prez rule in Manipur**

VINEETA PANDEY | DC NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

The Lok Sabha early on Thursday confirmed the imposition of President's Rule in Manipur, adopting by voice vote a resolution titled "Consideration on the Proclamation issued by the President on the 13th February 2025 under Article 356 (1) of the Constitution in relation to the State of Manipur." The decision received support across party lines, although Opposition members expressed concern about the implications for democracy and criticised the Central government for its handling of the situation.

Union home minister Amit Shah addressed the House at around 2.50 am and asserted that normalcy had largely returned to Manipur, with no reported incidents of violence in the past four months. He emphasised the government's intent to convene a

joint meeting of warring groups to find a lasting resolution that would allow displaced people to return home. A rehabilitation package is also under consideration for those affected by the turmoil. "We have to focus on rehabilitation, reconstruction, and compensation," Shah said, adding that camps for the displaced are adequately stocked with food and medicines, and both primary and technical education are being provided, partly online.

While urging the Opposition not to politicise the issue, Shah contended that the unrest was triggered by interpretations of a High Court judgment, rather than partisan interference. He stated that over 260 people have died since the violence began in May 2023, with 80 per cent of casualties occurring in the first month. Comparing current circumstances with past incidents, Shah cited historical clashes involving various ethnic communities in Manipur. "On average, Manipur was shut down for 212 days a year due to blockades in previous regimes," Shah noted. "Since we came to power, there has been no blockade for six years." Earlier, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor initiated the discussion, supporting the imposition of President's Rule while demanding the restoration of peace, stability, and inclusivity in Manipur. He criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting the state.

**Kharge hits back at Thakur for his 'wild allegations' at him**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

A visibly upset leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday raised the issue of "wild allegations" hurled at him by BJP Lok Sabha MP Anurag Thakur and dared the BJP MP to prove the charges or else resign. Several opposition parties also staged a walkout from the House on the issue. Referring to certain remarks, now expunged, by the Hamirpur MP in the lower house on Wednesday during the discussion on the Waqf bill, the Congress president said the remarks have damaged his reputation.

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar observed that constitutionally highly positioned persons have been subjected to insinuations with no remorse. He emphasised that parties have to take responsibility for how to rectify and save their reputations.

Raising the issue before the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, Kharge said his life has always been an open book, and he has always upheld the highest values in public life. He said though the remarks have been expunged but the "damage has been

done." He said the issue has been picked up by the media and on the social media.

"I expect an apology from the Leader of House, that is the very least the ruling party can and must do. If Thakur cannot prove his allegation, he has no right to be in Parliament, he should resign ... And if it is proved, I will resign," Kharge said. He also challenged the BJP MP to prove that he or his children have occupied even an inch of Waqf land. He also said that no one has ever pointed fingers at him in his 60-year-long political life.

"I am such a person ... If these BJP people want to intimidate me and make me bow down then let me remind them that I will break but will never bow down," Kharge said. Parliamentary Affairs minister Kiren Rijiju, who was given the floor, said, "We heard the anguish and the words expressed by the Leader of the Opposition. I have stated earlier, also as a colleague, we must have high regard for each other and Mallikarjun Kharge."

However, the minister could not complete his remarks due to disruptions by some Opposition party MPs.



Jagdeep Dhankhar

**DHANKAR: PARL STANDS AS OUR NORTH STAR**

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 3

Extending greetings on the occasion of Rajya Sabha Day, chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday said the council of states stands dignified as the House of Elders, the distinguished upper chamber of our parliamentary democracy. Dhankhar, who is also the Vice President, said the Upper House endures as a distinguished forum where provincial perspectives and specialized expertise converge to enrich our national trajectory.

"As the quintessential edifice of India's federal architecture, this venerable institution ensures comprehensive representation, equilibrium in governance, and the cultivation of contemplative sagacity," said Dhankhar.

He also recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remark made during the 250th session, when he had said that the Rajya Sabha may be designated as the second house, it remains unequivocally paramount in its significance.

"The Parliament stands as our Polaris, our unwavering North Star, illuminating the path forward during the nation's most formidable challenges, serving as a beacon of guidance through turbulent times... This commemorative occasion beckons us to consecrate ourselves anew to preserving the illustrious traditions that ought to characterize this magnificent institution which, unlike the Lok Sabha, maintains its perennial continuity. The gravitas of this institution and the erudition of its distinguished members remain of transcendent importance, he added.



SHORT TAKES

**BULGARIAN GOVT SURVIVES NO TRUST MOTION**

Sofia, April 3: The Bulgarian government, led by Rosen Zhelyazkov, survived a vote of no confidence on Thursday, launched over its foreign policy, BTA news agency reported. The no-confidence motion, initiated by the Vazrazhdane party and backed by lawmakers from Velichie and MECh, failed to secure the necessary majority. The vote ended with 54 members in favour of the motion and 150 against. For the motion to pass, it needed the support of more than half of the MPs in the 240-seat legislature.

**RUSSIAN ARMY INTENSIFYING MALI ASSISTANCE**

Moscow, April 3: Russia's Army is intensifying its cooperation with Mali, Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said on Thursday during a visit to Moscow by the African country's foreign minister. Russia is pushing its influence in Africa, as it seeks to deepen ties outside the West amid its Ukraine offensive and is this week hosting foreign ministers from Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. "Defence cooperation is developing intensively: our servicemen are actively cooperating with Mali's military, personnel training is being carried out," Lavrov said.

**ACTIVISTS FLY INDONESIA PRESS FREEDOM LIMIT**

Jakarta, April 3: Indonesian activists on Thursday decried a new regulation allowing police to monitor foreign journalists and researchers working in the country, a move they say would limit press freedom. The new rule said a police letter is needed for foreigners doing their work "on certain locations", though it does not specify which sites. The National Police said the new rule was necessary to "maintain state sovereignty over Indonesian territory and to provide protection for foreigners in Indonesian territory".

**MANY KILLED IN RESTIVE CENTRAL ETHIOPIA: LOCALS**

Addis Ababa, April 3: Ethiopian local authorities said on Thursday that "many civilians" were killed last week by militias in the restive Oromia region, without giving more details. Oromia, the country's most populous region, has since 2018 been in the grip of an insurrection by the Oromo Liberation Army, with peace talks failing to yield progress. The central region, which contains capital Addis Ababa, is racked by conflicts including political schisms, land disputes, and ethnic strife. The attack occurred on Friday.

**JAPAN'S YAKUZA NUMBERS HIT NEW LOW: POLICE**

Tokyo, April 3: Membership of Japan's yakuza criminal underworld hit a new low of 18,800 in 2024 after years of decline, falling below the 20,000 mark for the first time, police data showed on Thursday. Yakuza forces have been dwindling since 2005, due in part to a stricter crackdown. Despite that decline, "some of their activities are becoming more and more opaque, with their sources of funding diversifying", the National Police Agency warned. "The fact remains unchanged that yakuza is a threat to our society."

**MYANMAR JUNTA HEAD IN THAILAND ON RARE TRIP**

Bangkok, April 3: The head of Myanmar's military government arrived in Thailand on Thursday for a regional summit, making a rare international trip as his country recovers from a devastating earthquake that killed thousands. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has been shunned by much of the West for overthrowing the democratically elected government of Aung Saan Suu Kyi. He has not been allowed to participate in meetings of another regional organisation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean).



Ukrainian rescuers work to extinguish a fire at the site of a missile attack in Ukraine's Kryvyi Rig. — AFP

**Ukrainian forces hole up in Kursk monastery**

Kyiv, April 3: Moscow's troops were waging fierce battles on Thursday in Russia's western Kursk region against Ukrainian forces, including hundreds holed up in a monastery, in an effort to rout them from Kyiv's last major foothold in sovereign Russian territory, war bloggers said. Ukrainian troops stormed across the border into Russia last August and seized almost 1,400 square km (540 square miles) of Kursk in an attack which took Moscow by surprise. Kyiv said it aimed to hold onto a slice of the region to use as a bargaining chip in future negotiations to end the war. Russia responded by sending in heavy reinforcements, including North Korean soldiers, and within weeks the area under Ukraine's control had shrunk dramatically. The latest battlefield maps from Deep State, a Ukrainian open-source data project, show that Kyiv holds just a narrow sliver of Kursk. Russia's defence ministry and pro-Russian war bloggers reported heavy battles underway in Gornal, Guevo and Oleshnya, neighbouring villages that hug the border with Ukraine's Sumy region. Mash, a Telegram channel close to Russia's security services, said Ukraine was trying to organise its defence on the highlands around Gornal, where it said more than 300 soldiers were hunkering down in the Gornalsky St. Nicholas Belogorsky monastery. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine and Reuters could not independently verify the reports. The monastery's

**Putin betting Trump will give Ukraine sops**

Moscow, April 3: Russia is still counting on US President Donald Trump to deliver an acceptable peace deal in Ukraine, though it's prepared to continue the war if talks fail, according to people in Moscow familiar with the matter. The Kremlin is unconcerned by Trump's threat to slap punitive secondary sanctions on Russian oil over the lack of progress toward a ceasefire, the people said. Still, President Vladimir Putin realises that Trump represents his best chance of bringing the war to an end and wants to continue diplomacy, they said, asking not to be identified discussing internal policy. Having promised to achieve a rapid end to Europe's worst conflict since World War II, Trump declared he was "pissed off" with Putin over the week-end as his frustration boiled over at the pace of negotiations. He later

**US tariffs draw dismay as nations call for talks**

Tariff boost gives Xi a chance to deepen ties across the board

Frankfurt, Beijing, April 3: Sweeping new tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump provoked dismay, threats of countermeasures and urgent calls for talks to find ways to rescind the stiff new import taxes imposed on goods from countries around the globe. But responses on Thursday were measured, highlighting a lack of appetite for an outright trade war with the world's biggest economy. Trump said on Wednesday the import taxes, ranging from 10 per cent to 49 per cent, would do to US trading partners what they have long done to the US. He maintains they will draw factories and jobs back to the United States. "Taxpayers have been ripped off for more than 50 years," he said. "But it is not going to happen anymore." Trump's announcement of a new 20 per cent tariff on the European Union drew a rebuke from European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen, who said it was a blow to the world economy. "The consequences will be dire for millions of people around the globe," von der Leyen said. "Groceries, transport and medicines will cost more," she said while visiting Uzbekistan. "And this is hurting, in particular, the most vulnerable citizens." Trump's decision to boost tariffs on almost every country will deal a blow to China's economy. But it's also handing Xi Jinping a rare opening to deepen ties across the board, including with key US allies in Asia and beyond. Chinese officials moved quickly on Thursday to align with other nations after Trump unveiled US's steepest tariffs in a century, saying the US had been "looted, pillaged, raped, and plundered by nations near and far, both friend and foe alike." — Agencies

**U.S. COMMITTED TO NATO: RUBIO**

- THE United States is as committed to NATO as ever but demands that European allies spend substantially more on defence, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Thursday, while adding that the U.S. would give allies some time to do that.
- TESLA sales plunged again in Germany last month even as the broader electric car market rebounded, data showed Thursday, the latest sign of a growing backlash against billionaire owner Elon Musk.
- A GROUP of white Afrikaners was so opposed to majority Black rule when apartheid ended some three decades ago that they carved out a separatist enclave, the only town in South Africa where all residents are white. Now, the residents of Orania in the semi-arid Karoo region want US President Donald Trump to help them become a state.



Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen walks with Greenland's acting Prime Minister, Mute B. Egede, who has been replaced by Jens-Frederik Nielsen, in Nuuk, of Greenland, on Wednesday. — AP

**DANISH PM IN 'UNITY' GREENLAND VISIT AFTER US TAKEOVER THREATS**

● DANISH PRIME Minister Mette Frederiksen visited Greenland on Thursday in a show of unity with the autonomous Danish territory which US President Donald Trump has vowed to take over. Danish public broadcaster DR said many people expressed joy at seeing Frederiksen.

**US bans staff in China from romantic ties with citizens**

Washington, April 3: The US has banned government personnel based in China from having romantic or sexual relationships with Chinese citizens, the Associated Press reported citing people familiar with the matter. The policy was put into effect by departing US Ambassador Nicholas Burns in January shortly before he left China, and applies also to family members and contractors with security clearances, the news service said on Thursday, citing four people with direct knowledge of the matter whom it didn't identify. The Chinese foreign ministry referred questions to the US side in response to a Bloomberg News inquiry. The state department said it doesn't comment on personnel matters. The ban underscores Washington's increasing suspicion toward Beijing, as the two countries continue to wrestle over trade issues and global influence. China vowed to take firm countermeasures after US President Donald Trump announced new tariffs on the Asian nation and other trading partners at a White House event on Wednesday. A former US diplomat described the reported move in China to Bloomberg as severe, and added that enforcement mechanisms of such rules can be extreme, including the removal of an employee's security clearance, termination or even criminal charges. The policy covers US missions in mainland China, including the embassy in Beijing and consulates in Guangzhou, Shanghai, Shenyang and Wuhan. — Bloomberg

**Hungary announces ICC withdrawal as Bibi visits**

Budapest, April 3: Hungary on Thursday said it will quit the International Criminal Court, just as Prime Minister Viktor Orban hosted his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu, whom the tribunal has accused of war crimes in Gaza. The government announcement to start the year-long withdrawal process came as Orban welcomed Netanyahu in the capital Budapest on his first trip to Europe since 2023. Netanyahu, who faces an ICC arrest warrant that Hungary said it would not carry out, welcomed his hosts' "bold and principled" decision to leave the tribunal. Set up in 2002, the ICC, based in The Hague, seeks to prosecute individuals responsible for the world's gravest crimes when countries are unwilling or unable to do so themselves. "It's important for all democracies. It's important to stand up to this corrupt organisation," Netanyahu told a joint press conference with Orban. Orban said the ICC was "no longer an impartial court" but a "political court". — AFP



Palestinians evacuate the Shijaiyah neighbourhood following evacuation warnings issued by the Israeli Army, in Gaza City, on Thursday. — AP

**Thousands flee as Israel seizes Rafah**

Cairo, Gaza, April 3: Hundreds of thousands of fleeing Gazans sought shelter on Thursday in one of the biggest mass displacements of the war, as Israeli forces advanced into the ruins of the city of Rafah, part of a newly announced "security zone" they intend to seize. A day after declaring their intention to capture large swathes of the crowded enclave, Israeli force pushed into the city on Gaza's southern edge which had served as a last refuge for people fleeing other areas. Gaza's health ministry reported at least 97 people killed in Israeli strikes in the past 24 hours, including at least 20 killed in an airstrike around dawn in Shejaia suburb of Gaza City. Rafah "is gone, it is being wiped out," a father of seven among the thousands who had fled from Rafah. — Reuters

**UK BABY KILLER'S LAWYER PRESENTS 'FRESH' EVIDENCE**

London, April 3: A lawyer defending Lucy Letby on Thursday handed over "fresh" medical evidence to an independent body aimed at clearing the name of the former nurse, whose convictions have made her the most prolific child serial killer in modern UK history. Letby, 35, is serving 15 whole life sentences for the deaths of the babies at a neo-natal unit in the northwest of England where she worked between 2015 and 2016. Letby was convicted of murdering seven newborn babies and attempting to kill seven others at the Countess of Chester Hospital neo-natal unit. Her lawyer Mark McDonald delivered the findings of a 14-strong international panel of neonatologists and paediatric specialists to the offices of the Criminal Cases Review Commission. — AFP



Sergei Ryabkov

**RUSSIA SAYS U.S. STRIKING IRAN UNACCEPTABLE**

Moscow, April 3: Russia said on Thursday that threats of military strikes against its ally Iran were unacceptable and warned that attacking the Islamic Republic could lead to potentially catastrophic results if nuclear installations were bombed. US President Donald Trump threatened Iran on Sunday with bombing and secondary tariffs if Tehran did not come to an agreement with Washington over its nuclear programme, and the United States has moved additional warplanes into the region. Asked about Iran's nuclear programme and the dangers in the current situation, Russia's foreign ministry said that Moscow was committed to finding solutions to Iran's nuclear programme. — Reuters

**'Dark clouds' on Pakistan will 'soon evaporate': Imran**

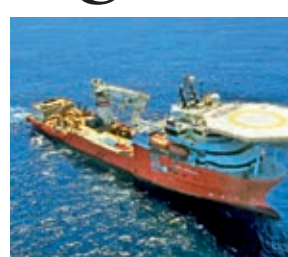
Lahore, April 3: Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan has expressed optimism about his release saying he will spend next Id with the masses as he asserted that the "dark clouds" overshadowing the country will "soon evaporate". The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supremo has been incarcerated since August 2023 and is currently held in Rawalpindi's high-security Adiala jail. A post on the 72-year-old Khan's X account on Wednesday said, "I have complete faith in Allah Almighty that the dark clouds overshadowing Pakistan will soon evaporate and our struggle will bear fruit." "I am certain that God will grant me success and I will celebrate the next Id with my people," Khan said. Khan said the "peon government" was determined to keep him imprisoned as they were obsessed with clinging to power. "They (military-backed Shehbaz Sharif-led government) know that the day I walk out of prison, their illegitimate rule will crumble. That is why they are relentlessly trying to break me." — IMRAN KHAN, Pakistan's former PM

**POOR | WEATHER**

**Malaysia min. did not say why prolonged delay was needed Search for missing MH370 suspended**

Kuala Lumpur, April 3: The search for the wreckage of the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 in the southern Indian Ocean has been suspended due to poor weather conditions and will only resume at the end of the year, transport minister Loke Siew Fook said on Thursday. Flight MH370, a Boeing 777, was carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew when it vanished en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in 2014, in one of the world's greatest aviation

mysteries. The minister, quoted by state news agency Bernama, did not say why such a prolonged delay was required. In the southern hemisphere, it is now autumn and poor wintry conditions are then expected to predominate for several months. The exploration company charged with searching for the wreckage of the plane, Ocean Infinity, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. "I think right now it's not the season. I think



Exploration company Ocean Infinity will receive \$70 million for the search for the wreckage of MH370 in the southern Indian Ocean. The search will resume at the end of the year. — Agencies

the southern Indian Ocean. The search is based on a "no find, no fee" principle, in which Ocean Infinity will receive \$70 million if the wreckage is successfully located. Responding to news of the long delay, Kelvin Shim, whose wife was on the ill-fated flight, said he was not surprised as the weather in the southern hemisphere was changing. "We have been waiting for more than 11 years, so this is just few more months... I can still wait," the 50-year-old said. — Reuters



## quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	76,295.36 -0.42
Nifty 50	23,250.10 -0.35
S&P 500*	5,449.48 -3.91
Dollar (₹)	85.44 -0.08
Pound Sterling (₹)	112.52 1.63
Euro (₹)	94.24 2.00
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	89,500.1353 -1.49
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	70.03 -6.56
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.497 0.013
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.076 -0.119

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## Tariff speak

India needs to understand the world has become more protectionist, so we have to be clever about trade. Looking east toward the Asean, looking southwest to Africa, and looking northwest to Europe all make sense. As the world breaks up into blocks, South Asia shouldn't be the odd region out.

—RAGHURAJ RAJAN  
Former RBI Governor

The maximum adverse impact on India's GDP growth will not be higher than 50 basis points. The US tariff hikes could have a favourable impact on the country's exchange rate as the dollar could come under pressure in the US with a likely rise in inflation.

—D K SRIVASTAVA  
EY chief policy advisor

While a loss in India's GDP is inevitable on higher tariff rate imposition, the country is likely to be relatively less impacted amongst the Asian economies as other countries have been hit by higher tariff rates than India or run a larger trade surplus with the US.

—ANUBHUTI SAHAY  
Head - India, Standard Chartered Bank

A report of South Korea, China, and Japan, agreeing to cooperate for talks to improve free trade in the region amid concerns over US President Donald Trump's import tariffs. The new tariffs announced by the United States are a signpost of one major geopolitical development.

—ANAND MAHINDRA  
Mahindra Group chairman

Though the US cited national security grounds to levy additional import duties, Donald Trump's duties clearly violate the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. They breach both most favoured nation obligations and the bound rate commitments. A WTO member country has all the right to approach the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism.

—ABHIJIT DAS  
International trade expert

# INDIA SHAKEN BUT NOT STIRRED

## Trump levies 27% tariff on India; higher tariff on Asian competitors places India in better position

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, APRIL 3

Despite a 27 per cent reciprocal tariff being levied by United States on India, the country is in a better position compared to its Asian peers like Bangladesh, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand in some of the large US-focused sectors.

While pharmaceuticals are exempted from tariffs, textiles have a better opportunity. Gems and jewellery, marine products and carpets will be hit badly, and the slump in demand in the US due to the increased tariffs and inflation will affect all the trading partners.

Notwithstanding India's engagement with the US on a bilateral trade treaty, the latter has imposed a 27 per cent tariff on Indian imports. The US is using reciprocal tariff as a weapon to force its trading partners to negotiate on their duties.

The calculation of average tariff imposed by India on US imports itself is erroneous. While the tariffs range between zero to 125 per cent, the average tariffs would be around 7.9 per cent as large volume goods are charged with lower duties.

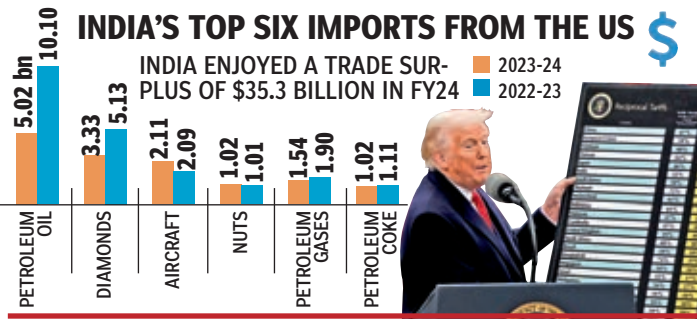
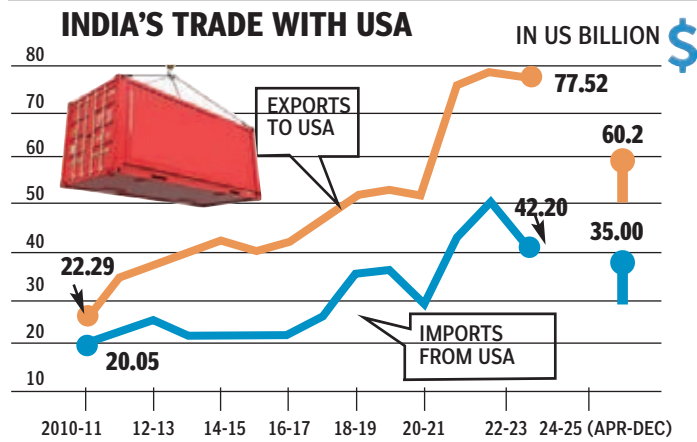
"Almost 60 per cent of goods imported from the US carry less than five per cent duty. In terms of import volumes, petroleum products, waste and scrap metal and coal are largest categories and the duties on these categories are lower," said Ajay Srivastava, founder, GTRI.

While this discounted tariff of 27 per cent is higher compared to the European Union at 20 per cent, UK at 10 per cent and Mexico and Canada, which have been exempted. These countries were also in the US list of "Dirty 15" along with India and China.

However, India fares better against its Asian peers. China with 54 per cent tariff, Vietnam 46 per cent, Bangladesh 37 per cent, Thailand 36 per cent and Cambodia 49 per cent. "For some sectors, the tariffs are beneficial and for some they are not. In sectors like textiles, footwear, chemicals, plastics electronics, machinery and toys, India stands to have a tariff advantage and pharma will be relieved due to the exemption given to select sectors. Gems and jewellery will bear the brunt of drop in demand, and Ecuador will gain in marine exports and we will lose to Turkey in carpets," said Ajay Sahai, director general of FIEO.

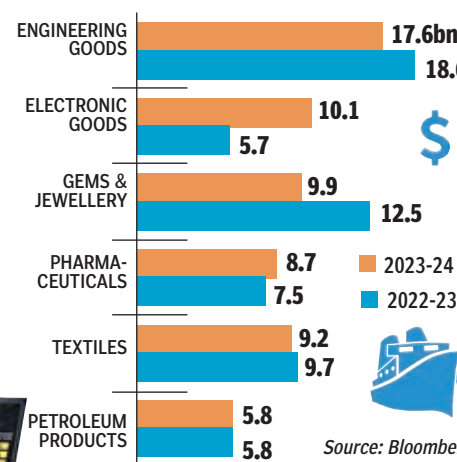
Provided, Trump's policy maintains some level of consistency, the protectionist tariff regime act as a catalyst for India to gain from global supply chain realignments. "However, to fully leverage these opportunities, India must enhance its ease of doing business, invest in logistics and infrastructure, and maintain policy stability," said Srivastava.

The basic tariff of 10 per cent on all trading partners will be imposed from April 5 and the additional reciprocal tariffs on countries will kick in on April 9.



## INDIA'S TOP SIX MERCHANDISE EXPORTS TO THE US

US IS INDIA'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER AND BIGGEST EXPORT MARKET



The US has levied a discounted tariff on India. They charge us 52 per cent. We charge them almost nothing for years and decades.

—DONALD TRUMP, US President

## Pharma biz exempted from reciprocal tariffs

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, APRIL 3

Pharma is among the very few sectors which are exempted from the US President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariff rage. For the time being, pharma companies can have a sigh of relief.

"Some goods will not be subject to the reciprocal tariff. These include copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, and lumber article, bullion and energy and other certain minerals that are not available in the United States," the White House said in a statement.

Among them, pharmaceuticals is major category that exports products worth \$8.2 billion to the US. This is 30 per cent of India's pharma exports valued at \$27 billion.

"As of now, the announcement is a big relief for the pharma sector. But, taking the inconsistencies into consideration, we do not know whether there will be a policy change later. It is



good that the administration recognises the importance of cost-effective Indian generic formulations and how much the US is dependent on them. If tariffs are levied on pharma, US consumers will be badly affected as prices of drugs will go up," said Ravi Uday Bhaskar, former director general of the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil).

The basic tariff of 10 per cent for all goods imported into the US will be levied on pharma products as well.

"We wait for more details and note that higher tariffs are not completely ruled out for the future of pharmaceuticals," Uday Bhaskar said.

## Indian markets remain resilient vs Asian peers

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, APRIL 3

Indian stock markets outperformed the Asian and European market peers impacted by US tariff announcement effective from April 9. The benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty-50 fell 0.35 to 0.42 per cent led by sharp fall in IT and auto stocks while pharma stocks rallied as the sector was spared from tariff burden.

The Sensex closed 322 points or 0.42 per cent down at 76,295 while Nifty-50 closed 0.35 per cent or 82.25 points down at 23,250.10. Broader markets outperformed with BSE mid-cap index up 0.31 per cent and BSE small-cap index gained 0.76 per cent.

In Asian market peers Japan's Nikkei 225 index fell 2.77 per cent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 1.52 per cent while China's Shanghai Composite fell 0.24 per cent. In the European market French CAC was down 3.31 per cent, German Dax fell 3.08 per cent while

## BEAR HUG

GLOBAL MARKET INDICES	FALL
Dow Jones (USA)	-3.72
S&P 500 (USA)	-3.64
Nasdaq Composite (USA)	-5.74
CAC (France)	-3.31
DAX (Germany)	-3.08
FTSE 100 (UK)	-1.55
Nikkei 225 (Japan)	-2.77
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	-1.52
Shanghai Composite (China)	-0.24
Kospi (South Korea)	-0.76
Nifty-50 (India)	-0.35
Sensex (India)	-0.42



US and Europe indices as on 9:30 pm IST  
Source: FC Research

UK's FTSE declined 1.55 per cent by 9.30 pm IST. The US market also opened deep in red with Dow Jones (-3.72 per cent), S&P 500 (-3.64 per cent) and Nasdaq Composite (-5.74 per cent) all showing sharp fall around 21.30 pm IST.

"India may emerge more competitive, not less, in a world of recalibrated global trade. Competitor nations face steeper tariffs and greater reliance on the US market as

Vietnam, China, and Mexico face more severe tariff pressures," said Tata Mutual Fund.

With the big event playing out, volatility may reduce in coming days, NSE's volatility index India VIX closed lower at 13.60.

"Worst is over from Trump side, here on it's going to be positive. If tariffs are higher on China, Bangladesh, Vietnam then India would benefit," said Prashant Khemka, founder, WhiteOak Capital Group.

## AUTO PARTS NOT IN RECIPROCAL TARIFF LIST: ACMA

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, APRIL 3

The Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) on Thursday said it remains hopeful that the ongoing bilateral negotiations between Indian and US governments will lead to a balanced resolution that benefits both economies.

Shradha Suri Marwah, ACMA president, said that auto parts, steel, and aluminum, already subject to existing tariffs, are not included in this new round of tariffs announced as part of the Liberation Day initiative on Wednesday.

The potential impact on India's auto component industry could be significant from tariffs.

According to ACMA data, the industry recorded a combined turnover of \$74.1 billion in FY24, with exports totaling \$21.2 billion. "The detailed list of auto components that will be subject to 25 per cent import tariff in the US is awaited," Marwah said.

## NO DIRECT HIT TO IT EXPORTS

IT services seem to be out of the purview of the US tariffs, semiconductor exports have received a breather, and the Indian electronics industry has an advantage over some of its Asian peers. The US government order does not specifically mention about services exports and hence IT services seem to have escaped the tariff torture for the time being. "IT services are out of purview of tariffs, however negative impact of global economy will see delayed revenue growth recovery, hence overall the impact is negative," finds Nuvama Wealth Research.

Semiconductors are exempted from the US reciprocal tariffs as of now. "Semiconductor supply chain is quite complex and disrupting it will have a major impact. I am glad, the US understands this," said Ashok Chandak, president of Semiconductor Association.

## GEMS BIZ COMES UNDER PRESSURE

Along with rising gold prices, higher US tariffs will affect the gems and jewellery exporters. The industry wants India's import duties to be brought down to negotiate with the US. The US is one of India's largest jewellery export markets, accounting for almost 30 per cent of the share. Indian jewellery exports to the US are over \$11 billion per year, while imports from the US are just \$1.92 billion. Indian gems and jewellery exports have been falling for the past few years due to shrinking demand and emergence of lab-grown diamonds. With gold prices moving up by around 40 per cent from the year ago period, jewellers are hit by slowing demand in domestic as well as overseas markets. GJEPC anticipates challenges in sustaining India's current export volume of \$10 billion to the US market.

## LOGISTICS BIZ TO GET MORE FUNDS

India's relatively lower tariff exposure compared to other markets could attract global manufacturers, boosting demand for industrial and warehousing infrastructure even as the reciprocal tariff announced by the Trump administration will create ripple-effects across economies, especially on those with the export-dependent industries, logistics industry experts said on Thursday. "India's relatively lower tariff exposure compared to other markets could attract global manufacturers, boosting demand for industrial and warehousing infrastructure. However, capitalizing on this shift will require strategic policy measures, stronger supply chain resilience, and a recalibration of export strategies," Anshul Singhal, Co-founder and managing director of Welspun One, explained.

## FARM EXPORTS LIKELY TO RISE

India could maintain or even expand its agricultural exports to the United States despite newly announced tariffs, as competing nations face even steeper duties, agricultural economist Ashok Gulati said on Thursday. Trump's 27 per cent tariff on Indian goods would have a limited impact on key agricultural exports like seafood and rice when compared to higher duties imposed on regional competitors, he said. "We should not look at the tariff increase in absolute terms, but see relative tariff increases with our competitors," Gulati said. He said while India faces 27 per cent tariffs, China faces 34 per cent, creating an 8 per cent differential advantage for Indian exporters. Other competitors face steeper barriers, with Vietnam at 46 per cent, Bangladesh at 37 per cent, Thailand at 36 per cent, he said.

## FUTURE | PERFECT

# Trump liberates world from American dependence

S. UMAMAHESHWAR  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 3

After days of uncertainty, it finally became clear at around 2 a.m. on April 3 (IST) that Indian exports to the United States will face a 26 per cent duty — 10 percentage points more than the base tariff that every import into America from any country would attract. Since every country will have to pay at least 10 per cent import duty to sell its products in the US, the penal tariff applicable to Indian products would be 16 per cent.

While investors may loathe a situation like this, where the leader of global

free trade is bent on dismantling it, a dispassionate analysis shows that India has escaped Trump's onslaught with relatively little damage compared to other Asian countries. China will have to pay an exorbitant tariff of 54 per cent, Vietnam 46 per cent, Sri Lanka 44 per cent, Bangladesh 37 per cent, Thailand 36 per cent, Indonesia 32 per cent, and Pakistan 29 per cent — giving India a considerable tariff advantage.

With a considerably lower tariff in Asia, India will have a distinct advantage in textiles and apparel over Bangladesh (which

faces a 37 per cent tariff) and in footwear over Vietnam (46 per cent) and Cambodia (49 per cent). Similarly, India will enjoy an advantage over Sri Lanka (44 per cent) and Thailand (36 per cent) in toys, leather goods, and home furnishings.

In electronics and chemicals, India will have an advantage over China, which will have to surmount a steep 54 per cent tariff wall. However, it will face intense competition from the European Union,

which will be subject to a 20 per cent duty — six percentage points lower than India's. Compared to countries like the United Kingdom and several Latin American nations, which face a 10 per cent import duty, India will be at a disadvantage of 16 percentage points.

Nevertheless, a coordinated approach by central and state governments, along with innovative steps by companies, could reduce the tariff disadvantage India faces with these countries. For instance, the central government could introduce next-generation reforms in legal redressal mechanisms and

improve logistics. State governments should reduce the number of interactions businesspersons have with officials. Corruption is also a major contributor to higher business costs in India.

Apart from the government, Indian companies too need to rethink their business strategies to become more agile and competitive. Currently, a considerable number of companies in India seek to own assets like land, which ties up valuable capital and does not contribute directly to production. If companies shift to an asset-light model — leasing land instead of

buying it — they could reduce costs. Poor cost-control measures and internal corruption, which reflect poor management, also increase costs and inflate product prices.

On the whole, Trump's reciprocal tariff policy has turned out to be manageable for India, with a significant upside. However, India must brace for the ripple effects of the flux in the global economic order or a potential global slowdown in the years to come. Trump called April 2 the "Day of Liberation." It is indeed so, but for the world, as he has liberated it from its dependence on America.



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**SHORT TAKES**

## Sale of Hundred stakes delayed

**London:** English cricket has delayed finalising the sale of franchise stakes in its Hundred competition to big-business investors from India and the United States because of issues like broadcast rights and sponsorship. Auctions held over a two-week period in February drew bids for the eight teams in The Hundred a format similar to Twenty20 and launched in England only in 2021 that are set to bring in around \$650 million to English cricket. Among the investors securing stakes in the franchises were Silicon Valley tech giants including Google CEO Sundar Pichai and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, and four Indian conglomerates already owning teams in the widely popular Indian Premier League. An eight-week exclusivity period was initially granted so the investors and the England and Wales Cricket Board could conclude the deals, and that was extended last week. Richard Gould, chief executive of the ECB, downplayed any concerns that the deals might be in danger and said he expects them to be finalised within the next month or so, perhaps sooner. "They are largely commercial discussions," Gould said in a video call. — AP

## Pak's Naqvi takes charge of ACC

**Dubai:** Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday assumed charge as the president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding Sri Lanka Cricket supremo Shammi Silva. The ACC presidency is rotated among the member nations and it was turn of Pakistan to take charge. Naqvi will remain president till 2027. Naqvi's first challenge will be smooth conduct of the men's Asia Cup, which will be held in T20 format. The tournament set to be held in September but venue is yet to be announced. "I am deeply honoured to assume the presidency of the Asian Cricket Council," Naqvi was quoted as saying in a media release. Naqvi promised to work collectively to accelerate game's growth in the region. "I am committed to working with all member boards to accelerate the game's growth and global influence. Together, we will unlock new opportunities, foster greater collaboration, and take Asian cricket to unprecedented heights. "I also extend my sincere thanks to the outgoing ACC President for his leadership and contributions to the ACC during his tenure," he said. — PTI

## Novotel, Quality script victories

**Hyderabad:** Quality Inn Residency and Novotel HICC registered victories and advanced to the semifinals of the 9th edition of the Hotels & Restaurants Association of Telangana State T20 cricket tournament being played at New Madies Cricket Ground in Moinabad. In the quarterfinals, Quality Inn Residency defeated Radisson Blu Plaza by 74 runs while Novotel beat Taj Vivanta by seven wickets with ease. In the semifinals, Dolphin (RFC) will take on Novotel HICC while Taj Krishna will face Quality Inn Residency. — PTI

## BRIEF SCORES

Quality Inn Residency 188/6 in 20 overs (Tufani Khan 105 — 56b, 18x4, 3x6) bt Radisson Blu Plaza 114 in 16.2 overs (Bhagat 34, Tufani Khan 2/19).  
Taj Vivanta 100 in 13.5 overs (Prasad Yadav 26, Ashok Milkpur 3/31, Chalapaty 4/29 (hat-trick)) lost to Novotel HICC 106/3 in 9.2 overs (Ashok Milkpur 28, Thofan 46 n.o., Sudharan 1/33).

## St Michael's win Champions Cup

**Hyderabad:** St Michael's emerged champions by defeating Rainbow FC 1-0 in the U-13 Champions Cup 7 conducted by Friends Club Bolarum at Alwal. Jaison scored the all-important goal for the winners. Earlier in the semifinals, St Michael's outplayed Olympian FC 3-0 with Jaison scoring a hat-trick while Rainbow FC edged out Knockout 1-0 as Joy scored the lone goal.

## THE RESULTS

Final: St Michael's bt Rainbow FC 1-0 — Jaison. Semifinals: Rainbow FC bt Knockout 1-0 — Joy; St Michael's bt Olympian FC 3-0 — Jaison 3.

# Miami turn heat on Celtics

**Los Angeles (USA), April 3:** The Miami Heat ended Boston's nine-game NBA winning streak with a 124-103 victory that pushed the reigning champion Celtics further behind Eastern Conference leaders Cleveland — who rallied to beat New York on Wednesday. Tyler Herro scored 25 points to lead seven players in double figures for the Heat, who fought off a late Celtics surge to notch a sixth straight victory. Boston connected on just 37.2 per cent of their shots in the first half in the face of stout Miami defense and the Heat extended their lead to 22 points early in the third quarter. The Celtics, led by 24 points from Jaylen Brown, cut the deficit to three, but Miami had pushed it back to 10 entering the fourth quarter.

After the Celtics pulled within four early in the final frame the Heat relentlessly pulled away again. The victory solidified Miami's position in the Eastern Conference play-in while the Celtics fell five games behind the Cavaliers atop the conference with six games left in the regular season. Donovan Mitchell scored 27 points and Jarrett Allen added 21 on impressive 10-of-11 shooting for the Cavs, who rallied from an early 15-point deficit to beat the Knicks 124-105 in Cleveland. After leading by as many as 15 points on the way to a 60-53 half-time lead, New York ran out of gas. New York's OG Anunoby made five of six from three-point range on the way to 19 first half points, but scored just four in the second half.



Miami Heat guard Tyler Herro (left) drives to the basket against Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown during the game on Wednesday. — AP

outscored the Knicks 38-25 in the third quarter to seize control. The Knicks remained three games ahead of the fourth-placed Indiana Pacers, who were fueled by 22 points and 10 assists from Tyrese Haliburton in a 119-105 victory over the Charlotte Hornets. **ROCKETS INTO PLAYOFFS** In the Western Conference, the Oklahoma City Thunder took their winning streak to 11 games with a 119-103 home victory over the Detroit Pistons. Most Valuable Player candidate Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 33 points, Jalen Williams added 23 and Chet Holmgren chipped in 22 points and 11 rebounds for the Thunder, who are assured of the top seed in the West. Behind them, the second-

placed Houston Rockets clinched a playoff spot in emphatic style, beating the league-worst Utah Jazz 143-105. The Rockets are three games ahead of the Los Angeles Lakers and Denver Nuggets — who fell 113-106 to the San Antonio Spurs as Denver coach Mike Malone rested all five of his regular starters one day after their double overtime loss to the Minnesota Timberwolves. The absentees included reigning MVP Nikola Jokic, who scored 61 points and played 53 minutes in Tuesday's defeat but has been nursing elbow and ankle injuries. In Dallas, Anthony Davis took an elbow to the eye early but came back to drive for the game-winner with 3.4 seconds left in the Mavericks' 120-118 victory over the Hawks. — AFP

# Shooter Esha takes aim at medal in World Cup

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3**

Esha Singh has her finger firm on the trigger and taken aim, at the big one — the World Cup. She will go bang-bang at the Tiro Federal Argentino de Buenos Aires shooting range in the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires on Friday, when the first precision qualification stage of the Women's 25m pistol event gets underway. This being the international shooting season's first World Cup, the Hyderabad girl is all geared up to turn in a good show in her hunt for a bright medal.



Esha Singh prepares for the ISSF World Cup in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The preparation has been on target. "I have been here for the last four or five days and am training well. It's going really good, the way it was at home, so I am happy. The jet lag was really bad the first few days but otherwise the range is good and people here are amazing when it comes to hospitality. The food here is very nice too," she told this newspaper from Argentina. However, "the weather is a challenging because it keeps changing every 6-7 hours. The mornings can be freezing cold and nights really humid. Our match is in the morning and it is expected to be around 8 degrees."

In tune with the temperature, the 20-year-old is approaching the event coolly. "I am here with a very calm and open mind, planning to enjoy myself. I will give it my best shot and see where I stand because it's the inaugural World Cup of the year and the first big event after last year's (Paris) Olympics," she says.

Starting today, the 20-year-old pistol shooter from Hyderabad will fire for India at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Argentina, followed by its second edition to be held in Lima, Peru, scheduled in the third week of April.

"I see players coming up, the really good ones. And I'm happy about it because when you see them around, it gives you a bit of motivation," she explains. Close on the heels of the Argentina assignment is the second World Cup of the year, in neighbouring Peru's capital of Lima. "Yeah, the next World Cup is immediate, starting on April 13, and I'm in for a long haul," Esha smiles as she clasps her pistol.

# Varun ends up 5th in WC final

**Buenos Aires (Argentina), April 3:** India's Varun Tomar and Ravinder Singh finished fifth and sixth respectively in the men's 10 metres air pistol final at the season-opening International Shooting World Cup in Argentina on Thursday. The duo qualified in seventh and eighth positions with identical scores of 580, Ravinder a spot ahead on more shots in the inner-10 ring. However both, especially Ravinder, after being in medal contention in the initial stages of the eight-man 24-shot final, bowed after the 16th and 18th shots respectively. Saurabh Chaudhary, the third Indian fighting for medals, finished 16th in qualification with a score of 577. Skeet competitions also got underway on the day with the first two rounds of qualifying comprising 25-targets each. India's Raiza

India's Varun Tomar and Ravinder Singh finished fifth and sixth respectively in the men's 10 metres air pistol final at the season-opening International Shooting World Cup in Argentina on Thursday. Overnight joint leaders Arjun (68-69-69) and Yuvraj (70-67-69) took their total score to 10-under 206 to extended their lead over the rest of the field to two strokes. Greater Noida's Saptak Talwar (67-72-69) climbed two spots to third position at eight-under 208 following his third round of 69. Delhi's Honey Baisoya and Chandigarh's Harendra Gupta carded scores of 72 to end the day in tied fourth place at six-under 210. Arjun Sharma (68) was the other player from Greater Noida in the top-10 as he closed the day in tied sixth place at five-under 211. — PTI

# ARJUN AND YUVRAJ STAY IN TOP SPOT

**Greater Noida, April 3:** Delhi-based Arjun Prasad and Chandigarh's Yuvraj Sandhu carded a matching three-under 69 to remain in joint lead after Day Three of the Adani Invitational Golf Championship here on Thursday. Overnight joint leaders Arjun (68-69-69) and Yuvraj (70-67-69) took their total score to 10-under 206 to extended their lead over the rest of the field to two strokes. Greater Noida's Saptak Talwar (67-72-69) climbed two spots to third position at eight-under 208 following his third round of 69. Delhi's Honey Baisoya and Chandigarh's Harendra Gupta carded scores of 72 to end the day in tied fourth place at six-under 210. Arjun Sharma (68) was the other player from Greater Noida in the top-10 as he closed the day in tied sixth place at five-under 211. — PTI

# Ritesh is fourth at schools chess

**DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, APRIL 3**



Ritesh Maddukuri

India's Commonwealth silver medalist Ritesh Maddukuri of Telangana secured fourth place in the Under 13 open category at the FIDE World School Chess Championships at Vrnjacka Banja in Serbia. He scored 6.5 points after nine rounds of competition. FIDE Master Yurasov Matfey of FIDE emerged champion with 7.5 points while Obidov Biloliddin of Uzbekistan and Baturin-Vinogradov Miroslav of FIDE, both with 7 points, secured second and third places respectively. Among other Indians were Samarth Sreeni Warrier, who finished 7th; Samanth Nataraj Naidu (17th), Eshwar Veerapan (Kazakhstan) 6.

Aiyappan (29th) and Aradhy Roy (37th).

## THE STANDINGS

1. Yurasov Matfey (FIDE) 7.5 points, 2. Obidov Biloliddin (Uzbekistan) 7, 3. Baturin-Vinogradov Miroslav (FIDE) 7, 4. Ritesh Maddukuri (India) 6.5, 5. Zharas Aldiyar (Kazakhstan) 6.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA FOREST DEPARTMENT.** Dated: 03.04.2025  
e-auction for Harvesting of standing Eucalyptus clonal plantations, sale and transportation of Pulp wood (Debarked)

The District Forest Officer, Bhadrachalam Kotagudem District of Telangana State Forest Department hereby notifies the Harvesting of standing Eucalyptus clonal plantations, sale and transportation of Pulp wood (Debarked) of approximate quantity of 8575 MT from Clonal Plantations in (VI) lots from Bhadrachalam Forest Division of Bhadrachalam Kotagudem District on 17.04.2025 through E - Tender cum E - Auction, in Telangana e-Auction Portal and the auction of unsold lots if any will be held on 26.04.2025 and 05.05.2025. Details of the auction can be seen at the website <http://auction.telangana.gov.in>.

**Auction Start Date and Time: 17.04.2025, 12:00 hrs to 15:00 hrs. Pre-bid EMD Submission Last Date and Time: 16.04.2025 - 12:00 hrs.** For any other details, contact to office of the District Forest Officer, Bhadrachalam Kotagudem District, Kotagudem, contact Nos. 8309954848/9849405993 (Technical Officer).  
Sd/- (G. Kista Goud, I.F.S.) District Forest Officer, Bhadrachalam Kotagudem District.  
DIPR RO. No: 12489-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26

**Telangana Tourism Development Corporation Limited**  
"Tourism House" # 3-5-891, Himayyannagar, Hyderabad-500029  
e-Procurement Tender Notice No. 01/SE/TG/TDC/2025-26, Dated: 03.04.2025

Sr. No.	Name of the work	Est. cost Rs. in Crores	Bid Downloading Start Date
1	Eegalapenta Arival Zone (Srisaikal Dam View Point) & Eegalapenta Promenade under Development of Somasila Wellness & Spiritual Retreat in Nallamala, Telangana under Special Assistance to State for Capital Investment (SASCI) Scheme.	8.36	08.04.2025
2	Development of Pilgrimage Amenities under PRASHAD Scheme at Parmasala (Alternate Proposal) Bhadrachalam, Bhadrachalam Kotagudem District.	3.63	08.04.2025
3	Development of 3D Projection Mapping on Ramappa Temple, Ramappa, Mulugu District under PRASHAD Scheme. (Short Tender).	4.60	04.04.2025

Bids are invited on e-Procurement platform from eligible contractors. Further details can be seen @ e-procurement market place [www.telangana.gov.in](http://www.telangana.gov.in)  
Sd/- Superintending Engineer TGTDCLtd, Hyderabad.  
DIPR R.O. No.: 12520-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Dy. Chief Engineer/workshop/Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through On Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

**Description of Work:** Construction and Installation of 01 STP of 50 KLD capacity and 02 BIOGAS plants at Wagon Repair Workshop Jhansi.

**E-Tender No.:** DY-CE-JHSW-75 **Earnest Money:** ₹ 238200/-  
**Approx Cost:** ₹ 17639314.36 (₹ One crore seventy six lakh thirty nine thousand three hundred fourteen and thirty six paise only)  
**Date of closing of Tender:** 06.05.2025 at 15:00 hrs **Cost of Tender Form:** ₹ : NIL  
**Date of Completion/period from issue acceptance letter:** 12 Months.  
For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) 586/25(DG)  
North central railways @CPRONCR @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDERING NOTICE**  
Dy. Chief Engineer/workshop/Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invite "Open Tender" through On Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

**Description of Work:** Construction of CoE (Centre of Excellence) of Draft Gear Shop, Construction of raised industrial flooring concrete platform with covered shed for keeping oil & greased materials in GSD Jhansi and Provision of flooring and channel work behind of steam shop in Wagon Repair Workshop Jhansi.

**Approx Cost (Rs.):** ₹ 27142169.18 (Rs. Two Crore Seventy One Lakh Forty Two Thousand One Hundred Sixty Nine and Eighteen paise only)  
**Earnest Money (Rs.):** ₹ 285700/- **Cost of Tender Form (Rs.):** NIL  
**Date of closing of Tender:** 06.05.2025 at 15:00 hrs.  
**Date of Completion/period from issue acceptance letter:** 12 Months  
For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) 587/25(A)  
North central railways @CPRONCR @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**No.-S/Tender & Bulletin/713** Date: 01.04.2025  
**E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 25/14 Dt. 01.04.2025**

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-procurement Tenders.

S.N.	Tender No.	Short Description	Qty.
1	30242620	Bogie Frame Arrangement for AC Mainline coaches	123 Nos.
2	20253143	Driver Seat & pedestal assembly	162 Nos.
3	20255007	Booster Arrangement (Fabricated)	12 Nos.
4	30242713B	AXLE BOX PIVOT BUSH	2975 Nos.

**Tender Opening Date:** For S.N. 1:- 15.04.2025, S.N. 2:- 25.04.2025, S.N. 3:- 05.05.2025 and S.N. 4:- 22.04.2025  
**Note:** The complete information of above tenders can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. <https://www.irps.gov.in>. For any change/corrigendum in tender, please visit this website regularly. No separate corrigendum/change will be published in news paper. 588/25 (MG)  
North central railways @CPRONCR @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**  
**No.M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-01, 04RS, 37RS Dt.01.04.2025**

For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager / Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai - 600 003, invites online tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works. For further details, please refer to [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in)

Sl. No.	Tender No./Name of the work	Value(Rs.)	Closing date/time
1.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-01	4690664.50	23.04.2025 (15.00 hrs.)
	Augmentation of OHE auxiliary transformer (AT) supply arrangements in connection with replacement of existing PI by EI (Indoor and outdoor) in AJJ-JTJ section of Chennai Division		
2.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-24-25-04RS	58293099.43	23.04.2025 (15.00 hrs.)
	Improvement / Upgradation of Existing OHE arrangements to fitness for running at 130 Km/h on GrA&B routes		
3.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-23-24-37RS	3546667.00	23.04.2025 (15.00 hrs.)
	Augmentation of OHE auxiliary transformer (AT) supply arrangements in connection with Provision of back up power supply at LC gates in Chennai Division		

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer/ Traction Distribution/Chennai

**TENDER Ref. No. HIL/BI/BIO/2/2024-25 DATED 13.03.2025**  
Online tender invited for the following item through website [https://hil.abprocure.com/EPROC\\_CPP](https://hil.abprocure.com/EPROC_CPP) portal.

Sr. No.	Description	EMD Rs.
1.	"DESIGN, FABRICATION / MANUFACTURING, SUPPLY, ERECTION, COMMISSIONING, TEST AND TRIAL RUN OF BIO-LARVICIDE PLANT Based on Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis (Bti)" LSTK (FY-2024-25), Event ID No. 57753	Rs. 20,00,000/-

Please visit our website [www.hil.gov.in](http://www.hil.gov.in)  
CBC 021011/0001/2526

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-Tendering Notice No. 2025-Mar-04** Dated : 01.04.25  
**E-Tender Notice**  
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering), N. C. Rly Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites "Open Tender" through On Line (E-Tendering) for the following works. The details of the tender are as under:

**SN : 1 Tender No.:** 2025-Mar-04-01 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 8899154.42  
**Description of Work:** Miscellaneous P. Way work in SSE/PW/IAH section under ADENLINE.

**SN : 2 Tender No.:** 2025-Mar-04-02 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 87392588.46  
**Description of Work:** Provision of Side Sheet, grouting to prevent seepage of water & Rain water Harvesting at various LHS in Fatehabad-Etawah section.

For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) Tenders can only be submitted through web portal [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) up to 15:00 hrs on 21.04.2025. 590/25 (D)  
North central railways @CPRONCR @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH**  
V. Ramalingaswami Bhavan, New Delhi  
**Adv.No.ICMR/Sc-F/01/ITR/2025-Pers.**  
**VACANCY CIRCULAR**  
Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), an Autonomous Organization under Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare invites online applications(s) up to 18th April, 2025 (extended) till 5:30 PM for the post of Scientist-F at Division of Innovation and Translation Research (ITR), ICMR Hqs., New Delhi, in Level 13A of Pay Matrix (Rs.131100-216600) Pre-revised GP: Rs. 8900/- and usual allowances as admissible to ICMR employees for appointment on regular basis under Direct Recruitment.  
For detailed advertisement, please visit ICMR website at [www.icmr.nic.in](http://www.icmr.nic.in) or <https://recruit.icmr.org.in>.  
Sd/- Assistant Director-General (Admn.)  
CBC 17152/12/0001/2526

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

**E-Tender No.:** JHS-TD-TENDERPSSA-2025-01  
**Description of work:** Appointment of Project Supervision Services Agency (PSSA) For Providing Project Supervision Services for the various construction sites/sections in connection with the work of Design, Supply, Erection, testing & Commissioning for Upgradation of existing 1x25 KV Electric Traction System into 2x25 KV Electric Traction System in Dhaulpur (Excl.) - Antri - Bina (Excl.) section of Jhansi Division of North Central Railway (312 RKM/936 TKM) in the jurisdiction of Electrical Traction Distribution Department of Jhansi Division (North Central Railway)

**Approx Cost (Rs.):** 45414809.42 **Earnest Money/Bid Security (Rs.):** 377100.00  
**Date of closing Tender:** 15.05.2025 15:00 pm.  
**Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter:** 18 Months  
**Bidding System:** Two Packet System

Tender online can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs on 15.05.2025. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) 601/25 (AS)  
North central railways @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**Tender Notice No. 74-W-CSP-24-25-09/10** Date: 02.04.2025  
**Open E-Tender Notice**  
Dy. Chief Engineer/Concrete Sleeper Plant, North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-TENDER for the following works up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. The details of the Tenders are as under:-

**S.No. 1 Tender No.:** 74-W-CSP-24-25-09. **Name of Work:** Day to day upkeep of production shed, Maintenance of lawn and other activities at CSP/SFG/PRYJ.  
**Approx. Cost of work (₹):** 4.46 Lakh **Earnest Money (₹):** ₹ 8,900.00

**S.No. 2 Tender No.:** 74-W-CSP-24-25-10. **Name of Work:** Execution of various activities in connection with production and handling of sleepers at CSP/SFG/PRYJ.  
**Approx. Cost of work (₹):** ₹ 188.23 Lakh **Earnest Money (₹):** ₹ 2,44,100.00  
**Completion Period:** For S. N. 1 & 2 :- 12 Month  
**Date of Opening of tender:** For S. N. 1 & 2 :- 28.04.25

**Note:** (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tender will be uploaded and shall be available up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening on Website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in). (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entry in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. Tenderers are required to submit Annexure-V online on IREPS Module. (5) For detailed information, please refer the tender document uploaded on website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in). (6) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit/Bid Security in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or e-payment gateway only. (7) In case of any difficulty/helpdesk on the website of IREPS may be approached. (8) Tender can be submitted online up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening and will be opened after 15:00 hours. (9) Suppliers of Goods and/or services would be subject to GST Act, and Rules as applicable from time to time. (10) The Railway reserves the right to amend/postpone/cancel any tender/s without assigning any reason hereof. 596/25 (MG)  
North central railways @CPRONCR @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

ORANGE	PURPLE
Nicholas Pooran, LSG <b>189</b>	Noor Ahmad, CSK <b>9</b>
Sudarshan Sai, GT <b>186</b>	Mitchell Starc, DC <b>8</b>
Jos Buttler, GT <b>166</b>	Varun C, KKR <b>6</b>

### Short takes

#### Rabada back home for personal reason

South African pace bowler Kagiso Rabada has returned home from the IPL due to personal reasons, his franchise Gujarat Titans announced on Thursday. The Titans, though, have not specified the duration of Rabada's absence from the IPL 2025, where he has played two matches.

"Kagiso Rabada has returned to South Africa to deal with an important personal matter," the Gujarat outfit said in a statement.

Rabada appeared against Punjab Kings and Mumbai Indians, grabbing 1 for 41 and 1 for 42 respectively in those matches.

The 29-year-old was not picked for Gujarat Titans' match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Wednesday.

Arshad Khan was drafted into the eleven in place of Rabada, and the left-arm pacer picked up the key wicket of Virat Kohli early in the innings.

In the absence of Rabada, GT could be relying on his South African teammate Gerald Coetzee or Afghanistan all-rounder Karim Janat.

#### Surya is not leaving Mumbai, says MCA

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) on Thursday refuted reports that Suryakumar Yadav was planning a switch to Goa for the upcoming Ranji Trophy season along with some of his teammates, saying that India's T20 skipper was committed to representing the state.

Mumbai opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has already announced his decision to switch to Goa from Mumbai.

A media report had claimed on Wednesday that Suryakumar could leave the Mumbai Ranji side, led by Ajinkya Rahane. Suryakumar had, in fact, himself rubbished the report on his X handle.

"MCA officials have spoken with Surya this morning, and can confirm that these rumours are completely baseless and untrue. Surya Kumar Yadav remains committed for Mumbai and takes immense pride in playing for Mumbai," MCA secretary Abhay Hadap said.

# IYERON WILL

## Kolkata's Venkatesh silences critics as Sun sets in the East

Kolkata, April 3: Venkatesh Iyer answered his critics with a match-winning 60 off 29 balls, propelling Kolkata Knight Riders to a convincing 80-run win in the Indian Premier League here on Thursday.

Angkrish Raghuvanshi's classy 50 (32b, 5x4, 2x6) in an 81-run stand with skipper Ajinkya Rahane (38 off 27) laid the foundation, while Iyer and Rinku Singh (32 not out off 17b) provided the late fireworks with a blistering 91-run partnership (41b) to lift KKR to 200/6 — their highest total of the season.

Seamer Vaibhav Arora set the tone by removing the dangerous Travis Head (4) and Ishan Kishan (2) in successive overs to return with impressive figures of 4-1-29-3.

Harshit Rana dismissed Abhishek Sharma (2), leaving SRH reeling at 9/3 in 2.1 overs, while Andre Russell and Sunil Narine also chipped in with a wicket each to make it 66/5 inside 10 overs.

Varun Chakravarthy then cleaned up the lower order taking two wickets in two balls en route to his 4-0-22-3 as SRH crumbled to 120 all out — their explosive batting lineup lasting just 16.4 overs.

The defending champions thus returned to winning ways after losing two of their first three match-

es and will next face Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, SRH, enduring their third straight defeat, head home to take on Gujarat Titans on Sunday.

After being reduced to 9/3 in 2.1 overs, Nitish Reddy (19) counterattacked Arora with two fours and a six, while Kamindu Mendis (27 off 20 balls) lifted hopes by taking on Andre Russell with a pick-up shot over deep square leg.

But Russell struck back to remove Reddy before Sunil Narine (1/30) accounted for Mendis in the 10th over, reducing SRH to 66/5 at the halfway mark and effectively ending their chase.

Earlier, KKR's new-look opening pair continued to struggle, with Quinton de Kock (1) and Narine (7) once again falling cheaply after Pat Cummins opted to bowl first.

Rahane and Raghuvanshi steadied the innings, countering early movement with intelligent shot selection.

Rahane's back-to-back pull-shot sixes off Shami and Cummins broke the shackles, as KKR reached 53/2 after the powerplay.

Raghuvanshi showcased his stroke-making prowess with exquisite drives and a stunning reverse hit past backward point, reaching his fifty in 30 balls.



Kolkata Knight Riders batter Venkatesh Iyer celebrates his half-century against Sunrisers Hyderabad during the IPL match at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Thursday. — AP

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
PBKS	2	2	0	0	4	+1.485
DC	2	2	0	0	4	+1.320
RCB	3	2	1	0	4	+1.149
GT	3	2	1	0	4	+0.807
KKR	4	2	2	0	4	0.070
MI	3	1	2	0	2	+0.309
LSG	3	1	2	0	2	-0.150
CSK	3	1	2	0	2	-0.771
RR	3	1	2	0	2	-1.112
SRH	4	1	3	0	2	-1.612

## Pant, Rohit look to bounce back

Lucknow, April 3: Two stalwarts of Indian cricket — Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant — will be hoping to overcome their lean patch when Mumbai Indians face Lucknow Super Giants in a clash between two struggling teams in the Indian Premier League here on Friday. Five-time champions Mumbai Indians have not really clicked so far this season, with just two points from three games.

India captain Rohit's form with the bat has put the MI team management in a tight spot. The same is for LSG skipper Pant whose extended dry run is not helping matters for the home side.

With both the teams almost identically placed with a solitary win each in three games, the contest could boil down to who exploits the conditions better on the day.

Given that the curators haven't been providing tailor-made pitches to the home sides — something that has caused frustration of the coaches and

players in some franchises — the team that gets a head-start with the bat or ball in the power play overs could call the shots.

The prolonged absence of MI pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah due to injury and the management maintaining a stoic silence on his return is only adding to the frustration of the Hardik Pandya-led side.

MI, though, found success in the handy pace of left-armers Ashwanth Kumar, who single-handedly demolished defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders with excellent figures of 4/24 in three overs in their win at home on March 31.

With MI finally giving a commanding performance against KKR at the Wankhede, it was South African keeper-batter Ryan Rickelton, who guided them to victory in the chase of a sub-par total. Rohit and Suryakumar Yadav will have big roles to play in a side that doesn't really bat deep.

### SCOREBOARD

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** Quinton de Kock c Zeeshan Ansari b Cummins 1, Sunil Narine c Klaassen b Shami 7, Ajinkya Rahane c Klaassen b Zeeshan Ansari 38, Angkrish Raghuvanshi c Harshal Patel b Kamindu Mendis 50, Venkatesh Iyer c Aniket Verma b Harshal Patel 60, Rinku Singh not out 32, Andre Russell run out (Klaassen) 1. Extras (lb-8, w-3) 11. Total (for 6 wickets in 20 overs) 200.

**Fall of Wickets:** 1-14, 2-16, 3-97, 4-106, 5-197, 6-200.

**Bowler:** Mohammed Shami 4-0-29-1, Pat Cummins 4-0-44-1, Simarjeet Singh 4-0-47-0, Zeeshan Ansari 3-0-25-1, Harshal Patel 4-0-43-1, Kamindu Mendis 1-0-4-1.

**Sunrisers Hyderabad:** Travis Head c Harshit Rana b Vaibhav Arora 4, Abhishek Sharma c Venkatesh Iyer

b Harshit Rana 2, Ishan Kishan c Ajinkya Rahane b Vaibhav Arora 2, Nitish Kumar Reddy c Narine b Russell 19, Kamindu Mendis c (sub)Anukul Roy b Narine 27, Heinrich Klaassen c Ali b Arora 33, Aniket Verma c Venkatesh Iyer b Varun Chakravarthy 6, Pat Cummins c Harshit Rana b Varun Chakravarthy 14, Harshal Patel c and b Russell 3, Simarjeet Singh b Varun Chakravarthy 0, Mohammed Shami not out 2. Extras (lb-3, w-5) 8. Total (all out in 16.4 overs) 120.

**Fall of Wickets:** 1-4, 2-9, 3-9, 4-44, 5-66, 6-75, 7-112, 8-114, 9-114.

**Bowler:** Vaibhav Arora 4-1-29-3, Harshit Rana 3-0-15-1, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-22-3, Andre Russell 1-4-0-21-2, Sunil Narine 4-0-30-1.

## SAI CAME UP IN DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

Bengaluru, April 3: Opener B. Sai Sudharsan felt exposure to 'difficult conditions' during his current stint with IPL side Gujarat Titans has contributed immensely to him evolving as a T20 batter.

Sudharsan played a fine innings of 49 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in GT's eight-wicket win here on Wednesday night.

"It's my fourth year (in the IPL), so I feel it has given me a lot of experience. I got exposed to a few difficult conditions. I got exposed to a lot of

fast bowling in the nets with GT," Sudharsan said in the post-match press meet.

"I feel the most important thing which has helped my evolution or the way I've improved my T20 batting is the game-time I get here and the practice time I get here with the Titans, with the bowlers, all quality international bowlers," he added.

Sudharsan now sits on the second place in the run-markers' chart with 186 runs. "So, I feel that has helped me even from the nets, I would say. I

got exposed to a lot of things, a lot of difficult conditions. I've learnt a lot in these three years. I feel it has helped me understand the game better and the basics of the game as well," he said.

RCB head coach Andy Flower said losing four wickets in the first seven overs made it tough for his side. "We played very aggressively in the power play and lost some wickets, lost three wickets in the power play. Four wickets in power play," he said.

— PTI

## Liverpool close to title with win

London, April 3: Liverpool moved closer to the Premier League title with a 1-0 win in the Merseyside derby against Everton on Wednesday, while Manchester City beat Leicester 2-0 to bolster their bid to reach the Champions League.

With just eight games left, Liverpool sit 12 points clear of second-placed Arsenal, who beat Fulham 2-1 on Tuesday.

Arne Slot's side had lost their previous two games in the League Cup final against Newcastle and the Champions League last 16 against Paris Saint-Germain.

But they got back on track in their march towards a record-equalling 20th English title, and first since 2020, in Slot's maiden season in charge.

Having gone over two months without a goal, Diogo Jota was Liverpool's hero as he ended his drought in the 57th minute, slotting home from Luis Diaz's flick.

It was an especially sweet win for Liverpool after their stormy 2-2 draw at Everton in February, which featured a last-gasp equaliser for David Moyes' team.

At the Etihad Stadium, City coped just fine without Norway striker Erling Haaland, who will be sidelined for up to seven weeks after suffering an ankle injury in Sunday's FA Cup quarterfinal win at Bournemouth.

Pep Guardiola's men took just two minutes to go in front against second-bottom Leicester, who have lost seven successive league games.



Liverpool's Diogo Jota (right) celebrates with Curtis Jones after scoring against Everton during their English Premier League match at Anfield in Liverpool on Wednesday. Liverpool won 1-0. — AP

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