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**BJP IS IDEOLOGICAL, MASS-BASED PARTY SAYS JP NADDA**



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**WHAT IS 'HANDS-OFF' PROTEST THAT HAS SPREAD ACROSS US**



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**GUJARAT TITANS BEAT SR HYDERABAD BY SEVEN WICKETS IN IPL**

## TMC's bid to steal saffron edge on Ram Navami processions

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA

With the aim to deny the BJP any advantage which could yield political dividends in next year's Assembly elections, the Trinamool Congress on Sunday clambered up on the Ram Navami bandwagon. Even as Hindu-tva outfits brought out Ram Navami processions across West Bengal, Trinamool MPs, MLAs and councillors came out in their respective areas leading Ram Navami processions and chanting "Jai Shri Ram" slogans.

All processions took place amid heightened security amid concerns of potential unrest, as leaders from both the BJP and TMC took part in the festivities. Both the

BJP and the TMC mobilised a large number of people. Trinamool's Muslim satraps like Shaukat Mollah in Bhangore and Kajal Sheikh in Birbhum took part in the Ram Navami celebrations.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also conveyed her best wishes through her social media handles. The Trinamool Congress tweeted: "On the occasion of Ram Navami, Bengal bore witness to a celebration of unity and brotherhood. We show India that faith builds bridges, not walls. This is Smt. @MamataOfficial's vision."

Mamata Banerjee had ordered extensive police deployment on the streets this year in view of the communal tension that erupted in 2022, 2023 and 2024.



Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Satabdi Roy and others participate in a yatra on the occasion of Ram Navami, in Birbhum on Sunday. (ANI Photo)

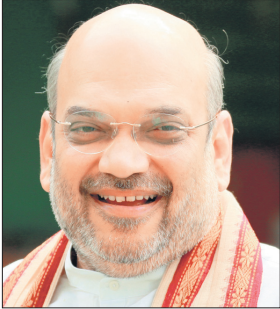
## Shah to spend 2 days every month in Bihar, Bengal, TN

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to spend two days every month in the election-bound states of Bihar, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu as part of the BJP campaign efforts.

These monthly visits will continue until the conclusion of the Assembly elections in all three states, with the BJP determined to contest the polls in full strength.

Following the conclusion of the Parliament session on Friday, Amit Shah



immediately began his election mission.

According to party sources, starting in April, he will conduct tours in the three states every month.

Shah is scheduled to visit Bihar on April 30 and May 1 to review the party's

# POLITICAL STORM RAGES AS STALIN SKIPS PM MODI'S PAMBAN EVENT

- Upping the ante, Tamil Nadu CM says PM should allay fears of the people on delimitation
- PM Modi hits back, saying TN should impart medical education in Tamil
- Pamban Bridge is India's first vertical lift sea bridge

AGENCIES  
RAMESWARAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the Pamban bridge, India's first vertical lift sea bridge and flagged off train service linking Rameswaram island to the rest of the country.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin skipped the event.

Modi flagged off a Coast Guard ship that sailed under the bridge and also laid foundation stone for and dedicated to the nation various rail and road projects totally worth over Rs 8,300 crore. In his address, Modi said the day marked the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami and that Lord

Ram's good governance is the foundation for nation building.

He also outlined the connect Tamil Nadu had to Lord Ram by quoting Sangam era literature. On the fishermen issue vis-a-vis Sri Lanka, he said over the past decade, more than 3,700 fishermen have been brought back from Sri Lanka, including over 600 in the past year alone.

While Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin skipped the event and upped the ante on the delimitation issue, saying Modi should allay the fears of the people on the proposed exercise, the PM, without naming anyone, hit back by picking the Tamil pitch. He batted



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off the Rameswaram-Tambaram (Chennai) new train service after inaugurating New Pamban Bridge at Rameswaram on Sunday.

## TN given 3-times more funds: PM

AGENCIES  
RAMANATHAPURAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that developing Tamil Nadu's infrastructure is among his government's top priorities and highlighted the various infrastructure and development initiatives that the Central Government had supported in the State.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating the New Pamban Bridge in Ramanathapuram, the Prime Minister said, "The infrastructure of Tamil Nadu is a top priority for the government. In the past decade, the state's rail budget has increased more than

## BJP slams Stalin for 'insulting' PM

AGENCIES  
MADURAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin giving a miss to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official engagements in the state on Sunday came in for sharp criticism from the BJP, which charged him with 'insulting' the PM and demanded an apology.

BJP state president K Annamalai dubbed as 'drama,' Stalin highlighting the Parliamentary delimitation exercise.

Stalin was in the hill town of Udthagamandalam (ooty) on Sunday to inaugurate a

## MA Baby elected CPI(M) General Secretary

AGENCIES  
MADURAI

Former Kerala education minister MA Baby was elected as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at the party's 24th All India Conference in Madurai on Sunday.

Mariam Alexander Baby, commonly known as MA Baby, was a member of the Rajya Sabha of the CPI (M) from 1986 to 1998.

The party highlighted that the newly elected Central Committee has 20 per cent women members.

"The CPIM24th Party Congress has elected an 85-member Central Committee with one vacancy.



*The newly-elected CPI(M) general secretary admitted to differences in I.N.D.I.A bloc but expressed the hope of overcoming the differences*

## Dallewal ends hunger strike after 131 days

TARUNI GANDHI  
FATEHGARH SAHIB

Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal ended his indefinite hunger strike on Sunday after 131 days of protest, during a farmers' mahapanchayat at the Sirhind grain market in Fatehgarh Sahib. His decision came a day after Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan appealed to him to call off the fast, assuring farmers of a fresh round of talks in Chandigarh on May 4.

Addressing the gathering, Dallewal accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab of sabotaging the farmers' agitation. "The AAP government ended the movement to save Arvind



*Levelling grave allegations against AAP, the farmet leader said the government ended the movement to save Arvind Kejriwal*

Kejriwal. I am ending the hunger strike not because of the government, but at the repeated requests of farmers," he said.

Dallewal had launched his fast on November 26, 2024, demanding a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) and other farmer-related issues. On March 19, Punjab Police detained him along with other farmer leaders, including Sarwan Singh Pandher, and cleared protest sites at the Khanauri and Shambhu borders. Dallewal was admitted to a private hospital in Patiala and discharged on April 3.

In his address, Dallewal made three key allegations: The movement is not over "We are not restarting anything. We are united on



A child dressed as Lord Ravan during the Kanya Pujan on the occasion of Chaitra Navratri, at Baba Keenaram Ashram in Varanasi on Sunday. ANI

YASHIKA SAINI  
PANCHKULA

The Haryana Police have uncovered a crime by a man who defrauded 30 people to the tune of Rs 5 crore over years. Lucky Bansal, the accused, adopted a freak modus operandi—Open a grocery shop in a village, befriend the locals, defraud them to the tune of crores of rupees through bogus credit card transactions and invest-

ment schemes.

When confronted, he will move to a new place and repeat the same modus operandi. But his luck ran out as the Economic Offences Wing of Haryana police have tracked him to his new area of operations in Pinjore, a sub urban township of Panchkula district.

The economic offenses wing tracked Bansal to Kharar, Mohali, and arrested him. He was pro-

*The tactic was open a grocery shop in a village, win confidence of locals and defraud them to the tune of crores of rupees through bogus investment schemes.*



duced before a Panchkula court and sent to 5-day police remand.

Bansal is now in custody

of economic offences wing (EOW) his wife, daughters and father, who too are named as accused in the case registered at Pinjore police station, continue to be elusive, said the police officials.

Bansal and his family members were booked for cheating, fraud, forgery on the complaint of Amrik Singh, the person who first landed his trap.

Singh said the accused



# NSE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO INDIA’S DEVELOPMENT, SAYS RSS

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS) General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale visited the National Stock Exchange in Mumbai on Monday. He said that NSE has uniquely contributed to the nation’s development. “NSE has uniquely contributed to the nation’s development... It made every effort to bring India to first position in the field of business,” Hosabale told reporters. “I feel proud of the way NSE’s effort of positioning itself as unparalleled in the world through trust, transparency and innovation,” he added. NSE began operations



in 1994, and it has a fully integrated business model comprising exchange listings, trading services, clearing and settlement services, indices, market data feeds, technology solutions and financial education offerings. The NSE introduced and released over 200 Full Rack Equivalent (FRE) ca-

capacity of various variants in colocation facilities at the start of the New Year 2025-January 3. In a statement, the stock exchange said it continued to review and augment the capacity of available racks in the colocation facility in phases based on feedback and demand from market participants.

Currently, over 200 members have subscribed to racks in the Exchange Colocation Facility and over 100 members have subscribed to colocation via the Colocation as a Service (CaaS) model being provided by NSE. Looking at the demand dynamics, NSE plans to add over 300 more capacities by the end of the first quarter of the upcoming financial year 2025-26 at its Mumbai BKC site. The addition will take the capacity to 1500 racks in the next three months at its BKC site. Further, NSE also plans to add approximately 2,000 Full Rack Equivalent (FRE) capacity, on a need basis, in a phased manner over the next two years.

## LS Speaker leads delegation for IPU Summit in Tashkent

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is leading the Indian Parliamentary Delegation (IPD) for the 150th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Summit in Tashkent, an official statement said. Birla will represent 1.4 billion citizens of the world’s largest democracy in the historic 150th Assembly of the IPU, which is continuously adding new dimensions in the field of global parliamentary cooperation, the statement said. Birla will speak on “Parliamentary Action for Social Development and Justice”. Birla will also hold bilateral talks with his counterparts from Vietnam, Israel, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, as per the statement.



Surya Tilak’ illuminates Ram Lalla’s forehead on the occasion of Ram Navami at the Ram Jannabhoomi Temple, in Ayodhya on Sunday. (ANI Photo)

## Ram Navami celebrated across the country with fervour

AGENCIES  
AYODHYA/KOLKATA/  
RAMESWARAM

People thronged temples and participated in colourful processions as Ram Navami was celebrated across the country on Sunday, amid tight security in communally sensitive areas in several states including West Bengal, where BJP and TMC took out scores of rallies giving a political hue to the festival.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered prayers at the Ramanathaswamy temple in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, and greeted the people on the festival that celebrates the birth of Lord Ram.

“Prabhu Shri Ram is a uniting force for all of us,” the prime minister said on X as he shared that he had a ‘darshan’ of the Ram Setu on his flight from Sri Lanka to India on Sunday.

“And, as a divine coincidence, it happened at the same time as the Surya Tilak was taking place in Ayodhya. Blessed to have the Darshan of both. Prabhu Shri Ram is a uniting force for all of us. May

### Nine-day festival

Muslim community have decided to shower devotees with flower petals in a show of solidarity between Muslims and Hindus.

UP government authorities implemented drone surveillance to monitor the situation in Ayodhya

“Heartfelt greetings to all countrymen. May this holy and sacred occasion bring new consciousness and fresh enthusiasm: -Prime Minister Narendra Modi

His blessings always remain upon us,” he said in his post.

The Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the birth place of Lord Ram, was teeming with devotees since early morning to observe the ritual of Surya Tilak, where sun rays illuminate the forehead of Balak Shri Ram Lalla idol. At night, thousands of earthen lamps were lit on the banks of the River Sarayu.

Celebrations commenced Sunday morning as devotees carrying saffron flags and chanting ‘Jai Shri Ram’ took out processions with tableaux depicting scenes from the Ramayana while devotional music filled the air. Police were on high alert, especially in areas that have seen clashes during Ram Navami processions in the recent past.

## Prez Murmu embarks on four-day visit to Portugal and Slovakia

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday emplaned for a 4-day state visit to Portugal and Slovakia from April 7-10. She is visiting Portugal at the invitation of President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The visit is taking place after a gap of 27 years, as the last State Visit took place in 1998 when President KR Narayanan visited Portugal. While from 9-10 April, President Droupadi Murmu will visit the Slovakia at the invitation of the Slovakia President Peter Pellegrini. It will be the first

visit by the President of India to Slovakia in 29 years. Shatrting the post on X, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson wrote, “President Droupadi Murmu @rashtrapatibhvn emplanes on State visits to Portugal and the Slovak Republic. These are the first State visits to either country by the President of India in more than 25 years.” “The visits will further expand India’s multifaceted engagement with two important EU partners,” the post added. Speaking to media during the special briefing, Tanmay Lal Secretary (West) MEA, called the visits “two

important landmark visits.” Sharing the details of the visit to Portugal, Secretary Lal said that the visit becomes historic as it comes when India and Portugal are marking 50 years of the diplomatic relations and this visit will “take forward the friendship and partnership.” “It is also 27 years since the last visit by a President from India to Portugal. So it’s a very symbolic and landmark visit. The President will be traveling to Portugal at the invitation of President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa of Portugal,” he said.

## Hunger strike over non-supply of drinking water in U’khand

AGENCIES  
RISHIKESH

Hundreds of people in Uttarakhand’s Narendra Nagar began a hunger strike accusing the government of failing to supply drinking water as promised under the Centre’s Har Ghar Jal scheme. The protestors have been on strike since Saturday at the ‘Zero Band’ of Bharpur Patti on the Badrinath highway, 13 km from Kaudiyala in Tehri Garhwal district. Despite spending Rs 33 crore, protestors alleged, drinking water has not been supplied. Har Ghar Jal is a central government scheme that aims to provide water connections in all rural

households. Uttarakhand Gram Pradhan Sangathan spokesperson Pushpa Rawat alleged that officials had earlier assured that water supply would be streamlined in the area under the drinking water project by March 12, but it has not happened so far and people are unhappy about it. Rawat said 23 villages of the Bachelikhal development block were to be supplied water under the scheme. She alleged that instead of constructing a water tank under the scheme, only a pit has been made till now and authorities are giving “false assurances” to the people.

# Ideological, mass-based party: Nadda

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

BJP National President JP Nadda reflected on the party’s journey on the party’s 45th Foundation Day, emphasising its deep connection to India’s traditions, culture, and values and said that the Bharatiya Janata Party is an ideologically based and a mass-based party. Addressing a gathering here on Sunday, JP Nadda said, “BJP’s history is connected with Indian tradition, custom, policy, and culture. These elements will continue to guide us in the future, and we have never compromised ideologically.” Nadda reinforced the party’s ideological commitment, adding, “We are an ideology-based party, and we never compromise. We are also a mass-based party.” He shared the BJP’s current achievements, stating that the party now has over 240 members in the Lok Sabha and over 98 members in the Rajya Sabha, along with over 100,000 active workers. He further highlighted the party’s success in forming governments in several states, noting the BJP’s sixth consecutive term in Gujarat, third term in Goa and Haryana, 4th term in Madhya Pradesh, and second term in Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Assam, UP, and Tripura. “After 27 years, we have formed the government in

Delhi as well,” added JP Nadda. The BJP president stressed the importance of “scientific growth” in building the party’s organisation and winning elections, calling it a well-planned process. “The BJP is the only political party which has had scientific growth. To take forward and grow an organisation is also a science, and to win elections is also a science. It is the BJP’s commitment to fulfill it without compromising its ideological principles,” he stated. Nadda also took pride in the BJP’s welfare schemes under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, mentioning initiatives like the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and Ujjwala Yojana, which have uplifted millions of people, including the poor, Dalits, farmers, women, and marginalised communities. “In 10 years, under PM Modi’s leadership, the BJP has been dedicated to serving the most deprived sections of society,” he said. Looking ahead, Nadda outlined the party’s vision for Viksit Bharat 2047, calling it the BJP’s responsibility to contribute to India’s growth and development in the coming decades. He also announced a nationwide outreach initiative in which BJP leaders and workers will strengthen the party’s presence by visiting 500,000 booths and 100,000 localities from April 8 to 13.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah along with his wife Sonal Shah pays tribute to founders of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Deendayal Upadhyaya on the 45th Foundation Day of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the successor party of BJS, on Sunday. (ANI)

## PM extends greetings to Karyakartas of party

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his greetings to the workers of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on the occasion of the party’s Foundation Day on Sunday. In a post on the social media platform X, the Prime Minister wrote that the day made the party reiterate its unparalleled commitment to working towards the country’s progress. The PM further wrote that the people of the country also saw the good governance of the party, which had been re-ected in the historic mandates received in the years gone by. “Greetings to all@BJP4IndiaKaryakartas on the Party’s Sthapana Diwas. We

“The people of India are seeing good governance agenda of our party, which is also reflected in the historic mandates we’ve received... Our Governments will continue serving society and ensuring all-around development.”

- PM Modi

recall all those who devoted themselves to strengthening our Party over the last several decades. This important day makes us reiterate our unparalleled commitment to work towards India’s progress and realise the dream of a Viksit Bharat,” the post read. Emphasising the public’s endorsement of the BJP’s

governance, he wrote, “The people of India are seeing the good governance agenda of our Party, which is also re-ected in the historic mandates we’ve received in the years gone by, be it in the Lok Sabha elections, Assembly elections across different states and various local body polls across the nation.

## Lotus symbol new emblem of trust: Shah

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah congratulated party workers on the party’s foundation day on Sunday, highlighting how the “lotus symbol has become a new emblem of trust and hope in the hearts of the countrymen.” Posting about the party’s foundation day on X, Shah wrote, Today, under the leadership of (PM) Modi, the lotus symbol has become a new emblem of trust and hope in the hearts of the countrymen. The works of service, security, and cultural awakening that the BJP has undertaken in the past decade will become milestones in the days to come.”

## After Owaisi and Cong, RJD to challenge Waqf Bill in Supreme Court

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is set to challenge the Waqf Amendment Bill in the Supreme Court, with Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha and party leader Fayaz Ahmed filing a petition on behalf of the party. The duo will approach the apex court tomorrow, Monday, to contest the bill’s provisions, which they argue could have significant implications for the management of Waqf properties. The Waqf Amendment Bill has sparked controversy across political circles, with several opposition parties opposing it. Earlier, the Congress Party had also initiated their legal battle against the bill in the Supreme Court, expressing concerns over its potential impact on the management and oversight of Waqf properties in India. Congress MP Mohammad Jawed, on April 4, approached the Supreme

Court challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, saying it was discriminatory towards the Muslim community and violates their fundamental rights. The plea said the bill discriminates against the Muslim community by imposing restrictions that are not present in the governance of other religious endowments. Javed was also a member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024. The petition filed through advocate Anas Tanwar has contended that the bill violates Article 14 (right to equality), 25 (freedom to practice religion), 26 (freedom to manage religious affairs), 29 (minority rights) and 300A (right to property) of the Constitution. “The bill imposes arbitrary restrictions on Waqf properties and their management, thereby undermining the religious autonomy of the Muslim community,” it added.

## IFFCO has made India’s cooperative sector renowned globally: Shah

AGENCIES  
GANDHINAGAR

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Sunday attended the Golden Jubilee celebration of Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO’s) Kalol branch in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, and laid the foundation stone for the Beej Anusandhan Kendra, the Ministry of Cooperation said in a release.

In his address, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah stated that today marks the Golden Jubilee of IFFCO’s Kalol Plant and the groundbreaking ceremony for the Beej Anusandhan Kendra. He said that the 50 years of IFFCO’s glorious journey demonstrate how incredible results are achieved when cooperative and corporate values work together.



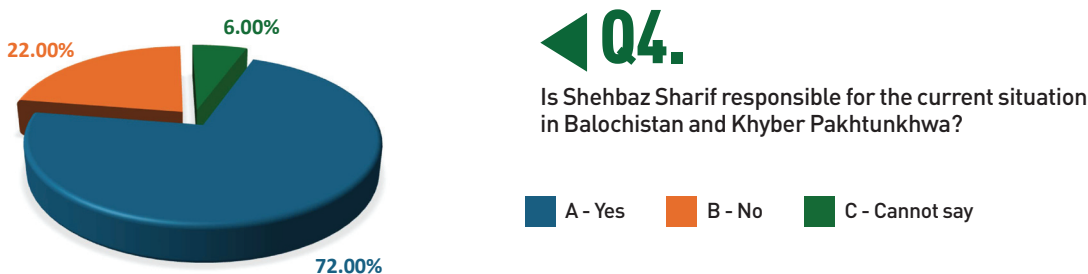
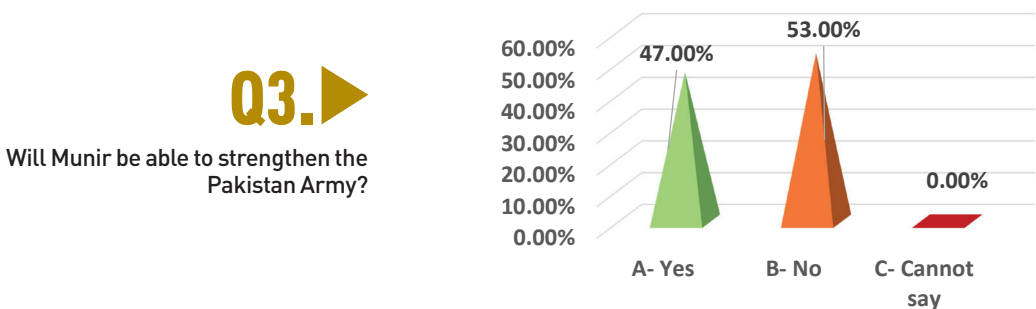
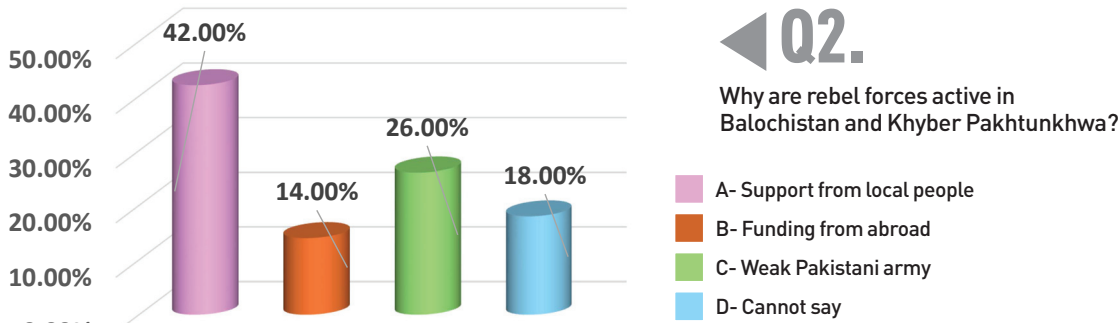
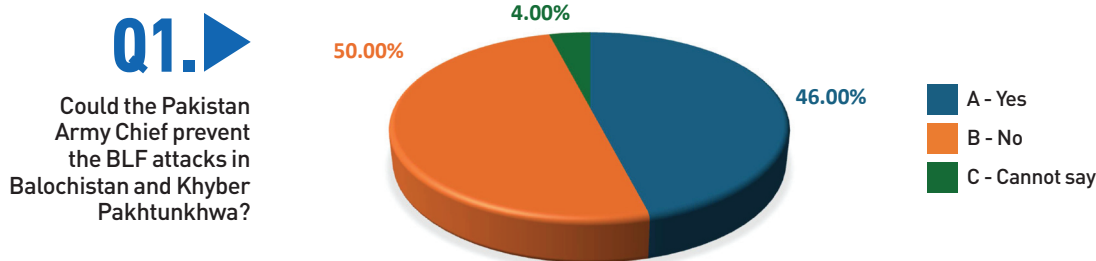
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON BLF ATTACK ON PAKISTAN ARMY

47% believe Munir can strengthen Pakistan Army

March was Pakistan's deadliest month in over a decade, with 335 killed in militant attacks and security operations, according to PICSS.

Over 100 attacks, mainly by TTP and BLA, hit Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A major incident involved BLA hijacking a train with

450 hostages. Six suicide bombings were also reported, highlighting the worsening security crisis.



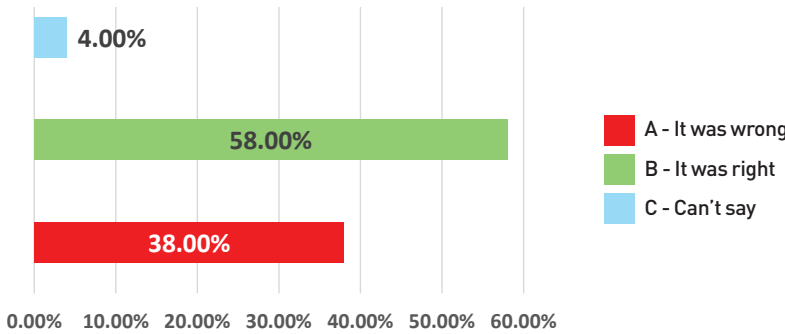
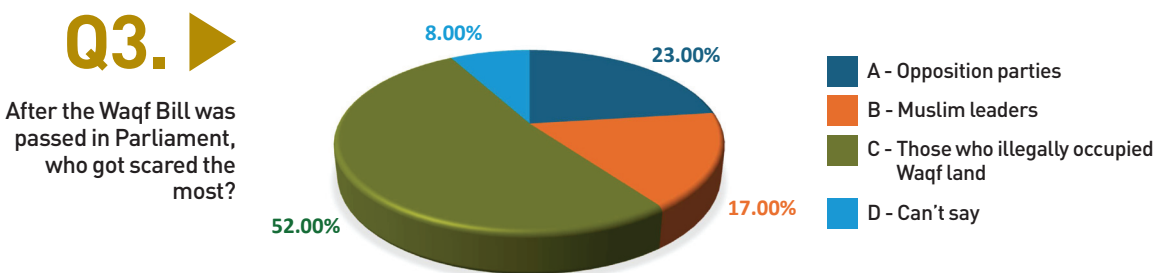
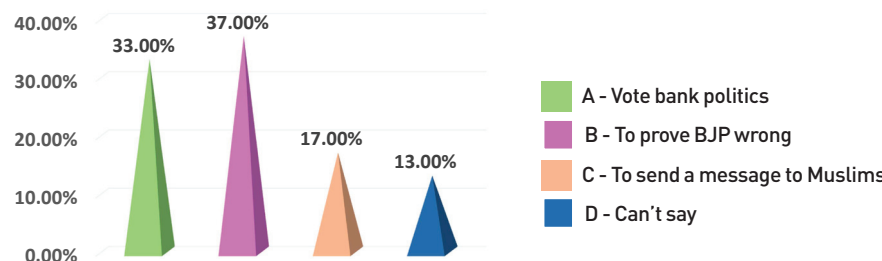
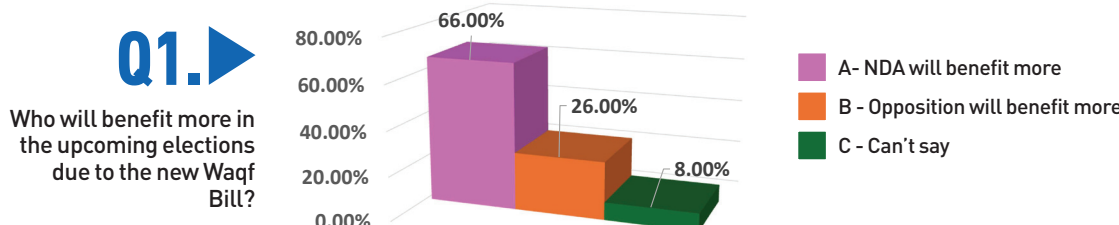
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON NDA & OPPOSITION ON WAQF BILL

66% believe NDA will benefit from Waqf Bill in upcoming elections

India's Parliament has passed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, aiming to reform the governance of Muslim-donated properties. While the govern-

ment claims it ensures transparency, opposition parties and Muslim leaders call it unconstitutional and discriminatory. Cleared by both houses

after intense debate, the bill awaits presidential assent. Narendra Modi hailed it as a "watershed moment" for property reforms.



Stalin skips PM's Pamban event

CONTINUED FROM P1

for imparting medical education in Tamil medium to help the poor and said the state got 11 new medical colleges in recent years.

Modi said efforts were on to take Tamil language, heritage to all corners of the world. Without naming anyone, the PM said he gets letters from leaders of Tamil Nadu and "they do not sign in Tamil," and asked them to atleast sign in in Tamil. Earlier, the prime minister prayed at the Ramanathaswamy temple here.

Lauding the hard work of Tamil Nadu's fisheries community, he said that over the past five years, Tamil Nadu has received substantial funds under the PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, stressing the government's efforts to provide modern facilities for fishermen, including investments worth hundreds of crores in seaweed

parks, fishing harbors, and landing centres. Referring to several projects he said work is progressing rapidly as regards the country's first bullet train, while modern trains like Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat, and Namo Bharat are making the rail network more advanced.

Modi underlined that this bridge is India's first vertical lift railway sea bridge, allowing big ships to sail underneath while enabling faster train travel.

According to the government, the bridge linking Rameswaram to the mainland, was a remarkable feat of Indian engineering and it was built at a cost of over Rs 700 crore. It is 2.08 km in length, features 99 spans and a 72.5-metre vertical lift span that rises up to a height of 17 metres, facilitating smooth movement of ships while ensuring seamless train operations.

Constructed with stain-

less steel reinforcement, high-grade protective paint, and fully welded joints, the bridge boasts increased durability and reduced maintenance needs. It is designed for dual rail tracks to accommodate future demands. The over Rs 8,000 crore projects include foundation stone for four-laning of 28 Km long Walajapet - Ranipet section of NH-40 and dedication to the Nation of 4-laned 29 Km long Vilupuram - Pudukcherry section of NH-332.

These highways will connect many pilgrim centres and tourist places, reduce distance between cities and enable faster access besides empowering local farmers to transport agricultural products to the nearby markets and boost economic activity. Tamil Nadu Governor, R N Ravi, Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw and L Murugan and elected representatives were present.

BJP slams Stalin for 'insulting' PM

CONTINUED FROM P1

government hospital and said he had informed the PM about his inability to attend the latter's programme in Rameswaram.

At Rameswaram, Modi inaugurated the new Pamban Bridge, besides launching other initiatives worth over Rs 8,000 crore.

At Udthagamandalam, Stalin said, "we have sought an appointment to present the memorandum on the delimitation... Since I am taking part in this government function I have conveyed to the PM about my inability to take part in his meeting and deputed our Ministers Thangam Thennarasu and

Raja Kannappan. Through this meeting and through you, I hereby seek the Prime Minister to allay the fears of delimitation," Stalin said earlier in the day. Responding, Annamalai said it was a matter of regret that Stalin was not present at the PM's event. "The reason given by him (CM) is not acceptable. He knows about PM's arrival, as the discussions were happening for long. The Prime Minister did not go to New Delhi directly from Sri Lanka but came here to dedicate projects. That being the case, it is the primary duty of the CM to welcome the PM," Annamalai told reporters here.

MA Baby new CPI(M) boss

CONTINUED FROM P1

The new Central Committee elected an 18-member Polit Bureau with Comrade M.A. Baby as the General Secretary. 20% of the Central Committee members are women," the party said in a post on X. The position of party general secretary became vacant following Sitaram Yechury's death last year. Subsequently, Prakash

Karat assumed the role of interim coordinator.

The newly-elected CPI(M) general secretary admitted to differences in I.N.D.I.A bloc but expressed hope that the grouping would be able to overcome those differences.

He took a jibe at PM Modi, saying the prime minister -- by repeatedly attacking the opposition

parties -- was contributing to activating a broad political arrangement. A senior leader who has been a member of the CPI(M) Politburo -- its highest decision-making body -- since 2012, Baby called himself an "obedient soldier" of the party. There were more deserving candidates, he told reporters shortly after being elected to the party's top post.

TMC's bid to steal saffron edge

CONTINUED FROM P1

As devotees thronged the streets with saffron flags, devotional music and tableaux depicting scenes from the Ramayana, the police, which had cancelled all leave to its personnel, kept vigil from the ground, from neighbouring rooftops and through drone coverage. In a gesture of communal harmony, many Muslims in Malda and Birbhum welcomed the Ram Navami rallies by showering flowers on participants, distributing water bottles, and offering sweets to Hindu devotees.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari,

who has consistently accused the Mamata Banerjee Government of Muslim appeasement, laid the foundation stone of a Ram temple in Nandigram's Sonachura village in Purba Medinipur district. Clad in saffron robes, Adhikari led a procession to the temple site in Sonachura, where he laid the foundation amid slogans of "Jai Shri Ram". The location of the temple is of historical importance, as it is near the site of the 2007 anti-land acquisition protests in which several people were killed in firing by miscreants and contributed to the rise of Mamata Banerjee to power.

Shah to spend 2 days in Bihar, Bengal

CONTINUED FROM P1

discussions regarding alliances. In Chennai, he will meet with both BJP leaders and NDA coalition allies in the state, they added. The Parliament passed the Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 in the early hours of Friday after a marathon and heated debate. Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said, "Ayes 128 and Noes 95,

Absent zero. The Bill is passed." The Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2024, has also been passed in Parliament. Lok Sabha had previously passed the bill. The government introduced the revised bill after incorporating the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which examined the legislation introduced in August last year.

Dallewal ends hunger strike after 131 days

CONTINUED FROM P1

some ideological fronts and differ on others. There's no clash with any organization."

AAP betrayed the movement: He accused the AAP government of making a "sold-out compromise" with industrialists and the Centre to save its supremacy and secure the Ludhiana Lok Sabha seat. "After losing Delhi, they were terrified that Kejriwal might go to jail," he claimed

Dallewal also alleged that women protesters were slapped, and elders insulted. On March 19, leaders of the protesting Kisan Mazdoor Morcha and Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) held a four-hour meeting in Chandigarh with Union Ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Piyush Goyal, and Pralhad Joshi. The talks remained inconclusive, and it was agreed

that negotiations would resume on May 4.

Following the meeting, the Punjab government instructed farmers to vacate the Khanauri and Shambhu borders. Farmers refused, insisting their protest would continue until demands were met.

As the leaders departed, Pandher was intercepted by police on Mohali's Airport Road. Dallewal, returning to Khanauri in an ambulance, was surrounded and detained near Sangrur. Several other leaders, including Kaka Singh Kotda and Abhimanyu Kohar, were also taken into custody.

Clashes broke out in Sangrur as police faced resistance from agitated farmers attempting to breach barricades. Police, anticipating unrest, detained all protesters and launched a heavy-force operation.

Man held for defrauding 30 people

CONTINUED FROM P1

lived with his family in a rented accommodation in Pinjore and ran a grocery shop where Singh was a regular. His wife Vaishali Bansal was alleged to be an active partner in the crime.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the family will try to win over the confidence of their targets as they did with Singh. Bansal introduced himself as channel partner of a platform involved in facilitating the defaulters of credit card payments as well as making goods available on discounted rates.

Besides this, he would

gain confidence and would motivate his target to invest in his channel and platform to earn handsome returns.

Bansal and his family suggested Singh to give his credit card to them for providing him with discounted goods and 2 per cent interest on purchases. They convinced Singh to buy goods using credit card for mutual benefits.

According to Singh, Bansal transacted through EQUITY CAPITAL ADVISORSIN, Bangalore and RAZ Equity Capital Advisorsin App, allegedly to make credit card payments of defaulters from the money invested by his targets.



# AHEAD OF AICC SESSION, CONG HIGHLIGHTS GUJARAT CONNECT

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Congress MP and party General Secretary Jairam Ramesh on Sunday traced the Indian National Congress's long-standing connection with Gujarat and announced that the next meeting is scheduled for April 8-9 in Ahmedabad under the presidency of party leader Mallikarjun Kharge.

In a post on X, Jairam Ramesh said, “The Indian National Congress was established on December 28, 1885. It first met in Gujarat at Ahmedabad during December 23-26, 1902, under the presidency of Surendra Nath Bannerjee.

The second time the INC met in Gujarat was at Surat during December 26-27, 1907, under the presidency of Rash Behary Ghose. The third time the INC met in Gujarat was



*The second time the INC met in Gujarat was at Surat during December 26-27, 1907, under the presidency of Rash Behary Ghose.*

again in Ahmedabad during December 27-28, 1921, under the presidency of Hakim Ajmal Khan.”

“The INC met in Gujarat for a fourth time at Haripura during Feb 19-21, 1938, under the presidency of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

The INC met in Gujarat for the fifth time at Bhavnagar during Jan 6-7, 1961, under

the presidency of Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy,” it said.

“The INC is meeting in Gujarat for a sixth time in Ahmedabad on April 8-9, 2025, under the presidency of Mallikarjun Kharge. The Extended CWC will be held at the Sardar Patel Memorial on April 8, and the AICC will meet the next day on the banks of the River

Sabarmati between Sabar-mati Ashram and Kochrab Ashram,” the post read.

He also provided a full official record of the five INC meetings in Gujarat that took place in the 20th century, with a link on X. Ahmedabad is gearing up to host the 84th National Convention of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) on April 8-9, marking a historic return of the event to Gujarat after a gap of 64 years.

The meeting set against the scenic backdrop of the Sabarmati Riverfront will witness the presence of several Congress leaders, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge, senior leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, and KC Venugopal. Earlier on Saturday, AICC formed a drafting committee for their upcoming meetingscheduled to be held in Ahmedabad on April 8 and 9.

## Rahul to hold ‘Roko Palayan, Do Naukri’ campaign in Bihar

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi said on Sunday that he will visit Bihar on April 7 to hold the “Roko Palayan, Do Naukri” campaign.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi said that he would visit Begusarai in Bihar, where he would hold the Yatra.

“Young friends of Bihar, I will be coming to Begusarai on April 7th to join you in the ‘Roko Palayan, Do Naukri’ campaign, walking shoulder to shoulder with you. The goal is to show the world the spirit of Bihar’s youth, their struggles, and their hardships,” Rahul said.

The Lok Sabha LoP also asked the youth to wear white t-shirts to put pressure



on the Bihar government. “Come wearing a White T-Shirt, ask questions, raise your voice--to put pressure on the government for your rights, to hold them accountable.

Let’s come together and make Bihar a state of opportunities,” he said.

“The issues you face--unemployment, inflation, paper leaks, and the reduction in government jobs one after another, along with privatization that doesn’t benefit you--are the reasons we are on this campaign.

## Kerala BJP chief slams Rahul over 'targeting' Catholic churches

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI

Kerala BJP President Rajeev Chandrasekhar slammed Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over their allegations of the central government targeting Catholic Church land after the passage of the Waqf Amendment Bill in Parliament.

Responding to Rahul Gandhi’s post in which he made the allegations, Chandrasekhar lashed out at the LoP and said, “One thing I recommend to Constitution-waving, India-bashing Rahul Gandhi is that he reads and learns the constitution before he uses it for his Congress politics of lies.”

He asserted that owning land is not a crime; however, grabbing it from people



is wrong.

“Owning land is not a crime just as vast amounts of land is owned by Railways, Army, Plantation owners etc. However, grabbing it from people as Cong leaders in Karnataka do and Waqf tried to do is wrong,” Chandrasekhar wrote on X.

Kerala BJP President further alleged that the Waqf Act passed by Congress “trampled” the rights of Indians and the Amendment Act restores them.

## Kerala CM, Congress slam ‘Organiser’ article on Church

**TDG NETWORK**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala have strongly criticised a recent article published in Organiser, the ideological mouthpiece of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which discussed the extent of land ownership by the Catholic Church in India.

CM Vijayan denounced the article, alleging it to be part of a larger agenda by the Sangh Parivar to alienate and marginalise minority communities.

“The article in the RSS mouthpiece @eOrganiser about the Church’s ownership of land, published soon after the Waqf Amendment Act was passed, lays bare the Sangh Parivar’s deep-rooted antagonism to-



wards minorities. Though later withdrawn, it reveals a deliberate, step-by-step attempt to target and isolate minorities and their institutions. Secular forces must unite in resistance,” said Kerala CM in a post on X.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala echoed similar concerns, referring to the article as “highly deplorable.”

“The article published in the ‘Organiser’ is highly deplorable. During the

time of the passing of the Waqf Bill, Congress and Rahul Gandhi mentioned that the next step will be against the Christians. The (article of) ‘Organiser’ clearly mentions that the Catholic community in India has seven crore acres in their hands...Through the Waqf Bill, they want to control the Waqf properties. The next step will be to control the properties which are owned by the Catholic community in India....,” he said.

Meanwhile, Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi took to X and warned about the dangerous precedent over the Waqf Bill beyond its impacts on the Muslim community. The Lok Sabha LoP said that the RSS wasted no time in turning its attention to the Christians, referring to an article by “The Telegraph”

on the Organizer’s article.

Gandhi stated that the passage of the bill could set a precedent to target other minority communities in the future.

“I had said that the Waqf Bill attacks Muslims now but sets a precedent to target other communities in the future. It didn’t take long for the RSS to turn its attention to Christians,” Gandhi said.

He underscored the Constitution’s role, adding, “The Constitution is the only shield that protects our people from such attacks--and it is our collective duty to defend it.”

The Waqf Amendment Bill passed in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha now awaits President Droupadi Murmu’s assent to become an Act. After two days of heated debate in both houses of Parliament, the bill was passed.

## PM Modi should ‘allay’ fears of people of TN, says Stalin

**TDG NETWORK**  
VIKRABAD

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to allay the “fears” of the people of Tamil Nadu that the next delimitation exercise would not lead to reduction in the state’s share of parliamentary seats.

Stalin called on PM to make a promise that states that have successfully controlled population growth will not be “penalised” in the delimitation exercise. In a post on X, Stalin said, “Standing on Tamil soil, the PM must give a clear guarantee: “Tamil Nadu and other states that have successfully controlled population growth will not be

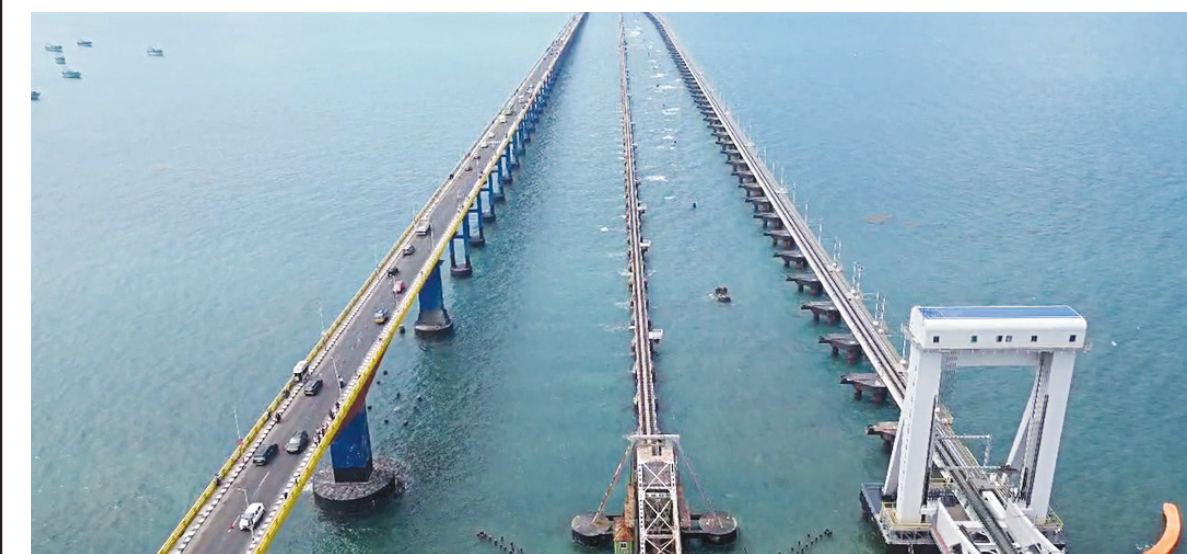
penalised in the impending delimitation exercise. Their share of parliamentary seats in percentage terms will remain untouched.”

“Hon’ble PM @NarendraModi should make this promise publicly, allay the fears in the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu, and follow it up with a constitutional amendment in Parliament.

## Manipur: Security forces recover arms

**TDG NETWORK**  
IMPHAL

A series of information-based joint operations by the Indian Army and Assam Rifles formations in Manipur resulted in the apprehension of six cadres and the recovery of twenty-two weapons, grenades, ammunition and other war-like stores. The operations were undertaken in coordination with Manipur Police, CRPF, BSF



Pamban railway bridge, India’s first vertical-lift bridge connecting the country’s mainland with Rameshwaram. ANI

### CONNECTING INDIA

## 'Pamban Bridge an engineering marvel'

**TDG NETWORK**  
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday highlighted that India’s first vertical lift sea bridge, the Pambam Bridge is an engineering marvel.

Vaishnaw addressed a gathering after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new Pambam bridge in Tamil Nadu’s Ramanathapuram today. Noting the occasion of Ram Navami, Vaishnaw said that the day will remain in memories for more than 100 years.

“Today is the day of Ram Navami. It is the day on which our PM, Narendra Modi, has dedicated the new Pambam bridge to the nation. It is the day which will remain in our memories for more than 100 years,” Vaishnaw said.

Vaishnaw also said that the bride is a “pearl” of Tamil culture and a “milestone” in the country’s journey to become a developed nation “Pambam bridge is an engineering marvel. It is the first vertical sea bridge in our country. Pambam bridge is a pearl of Tamil culture. It’s a milestone in our dream of becoming a developed nation. Our PM Narendra Modi ji understand the aspiration for Tamil Nadu. He respects the rich and ancient

culture of Tamil Nadu and classical Tamil language,” Vaishnaw said.

-Vaishnaw said that 77 railway stations are being reconstructed across the state with Rameswaram Railway Station being one of them. He added that the reconstruction will be completed by December of this year.

“77 stations are being reconstructed. Our Rameswaram Station will become very beautiful, connected with the heritage of Rameshwaram and work will be completed by December. We have constructed many new lines; many new work has been started. Modi ji has allocated 8 Vande Bharat trains to Tamil Nadu,” Vaishnaw said.

Pambam Bridge is India’s first vertical lift off bridge in Ramanathapuram. The 2.07-kilometre-long New Pambam Bridge, spanning the Palk Strait in Tamil Nadu, stands as a testament to India’s engineering prowess and visionary infrastructure development. A demonstration of the bridge’s functionality showcased its capabilities, with visuals from the area capturing key moments--Indian Coast Guard (ICG) boat successfully navigated under the bridge, highlighting its clearance and water-way accessibility.

## Trichy institute has played a pivotal role

**AGENCIES**  
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

In a landmark achievement, the Welding Research Institute (WRI) in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, has made a "significant contribution" to the successful construction of

ing (MoU) between WRI and Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). WRI was engaged as a third-party consultant, providing end-to-end support in welding and inspection activities vital to the bridge’s structural integrity," read a

*The institute also played a major role in non-destructive testing (NDT), ensuring weld quality through detailed review and validation of NDT procedures and reports.*

the New Pamban Railway Bridge, connecting Mandapam and Pamban Island near Rameswaram.

WRI was established by the Central Government, under the aegis of Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) with the aim of providing research, consultancy and training in the field of welding and allied areas.

New Pamban Railway bridge is India’s first vertical lift sea bridge, a pioneering engineering marvel, which will be inaugurated today by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The project, of national strategic importance, was executed under a Memorandum of Understand-

statement from BHEL.

WRI’s scope of work included the establishment of welding procedures, review of welding sequences, qualification of welders and weld operators, assessment of welding consumables, and periodic on-site monitoring. The institute also played a major role in non-destructive testing (NDT), ensuring weld quality through detailed review and validation of NDT procedures and reports. WRI conducted 100 per cent visual inspections of welds, witnessed penetrant testing, and inspected computed radiographic tested joints and Phased Array Ultrasonic Testing (PAUT)--a relatively new technology.

### A SNAPSHOT OF PAMBAN ENGINEERING

- India’s first vertical lift sea bridge, raising 22 meters for ship passage.
- The bridge is 72.5-meter-long vertical lift span and is designed for dual rail tracks, with provisions for future expansion.
- Designed to accommodate two rail tracks, with provisions for future expansion.
- The new railway sea bridge between Mandapam railway station (mainland) and Rameshwaram island showcases a colossal leap in India’s engineering capabilities.
- Supported by 333 piles and 101 piers/pile caps, providing stability in the harsh marine environment.



## Manipur: Security forces recover arms

and ITBP in the hill and valley districts of Imphal West, Kakching, Imphal East, Churachandpur and Bishnupur between April 4 and 05, 2025, said the Army. Army and Manipur Police apprehended two cadres and recovered a pistol from Karpur Sangha of Imphal East district. In Chandpur of Bishnupur district, four weapons comprising one Self Loading



Rifle (SLR), one Carbine, one .303 Rifle, one Double Barrel Rifle, ammunition and war-

like stores were recovered by Army and Manipur Police on 04 April 2025 and one

SLR, one 303 Rifle, one gun with a telescopic sight, one 0.177gun, two Pistols, ammunition and war-like stores were recovered from Khongam Pat of Imphal West. On the same day, in Kakching district Assam Rifles and Manipur Police apprehended two cadres and recovered two pistols, ammunition and war-like stores from Khongjom Khebaching, Churachandpur district.



# 'Politics of contentment will replace appeasement'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A "Laxmanrekha" will be drawn over the politics of appeasement practised in Delhi so far and "Ram Rajya" will be established through the politics of contentment, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of all, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Sunday. Attending a Ram Navami procession in west Delhi's Khayala area, Gupta said "saffron" is a symbol of the colour of the soil and the prosperity and well-being of people. "Why not paint Delhi saffron so that every person prospers and the city marches forward on the path of progress," she said, adding that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the national capital will realise the concept



of "Ram Rajya" that people had visualised. A "Laxmanrekha" (a line not to be crossed) will be drawn over the politics of "tushtikaran" (appeasement) that was being done in Delhi and now, there will be politics of "santushtikaran" (contentment), the chief minister said, addressing the gathering. Delhi will be given all the rights that it deserves, she said. "Ram Rajya will come now and every child will smile, every youngster will find a new direction and every woman will prosper,"

Gupta said. She said Ram Navami is a significant occasion. Last year, the Ram temple was unveiled in Ayodhya and Prime Minister Narendra Modi fulfilled the wishes of millions of people, she said. Speaking at the event, the Delhi CM said, "We have always followed the principle of putting the country first, party second and ourselves last. For us, the country has always been first and will always be. Today, through the government, we are going to work for the progress of Delhi and the country... The government will work in the interest of all sections of society living in Delhi." The party is celebrating its foundation day across the country, with various leaders including Union Ministers JP Nadda and Amit Shah congratulating party workers.

## BJP MP seeks to rename Delhi roads after Indian heroes

TDG NETWORK  
AGRA

BJP MP from Fatehpur Sikri (UP) and National President of the BJP Kisan Morcha, Rajkumar Chahar has urged the Central government to honour Indian heroes who fought against the Mughals by renaming roads in their names and replace Mughal names, which they are currently bearing. He addressed the Lok Sabha on April 3, highlighting a matter of public importance. He pointed out that many roads in Delhi, particularly around the Lutyens' area are named after Mughal rulers Babur, Tughlaq, Akbar, Humayun and Dara Shikoh. These names, he said had been given during the Congress government era.



# AAP slams BJP for 'denying' Delhi's kids seats, 'favouring' Rohingyas

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday accused the BJP of "double-faced politics" and alleged that the BJP's Karawal Nagar MLA facilitated admission of 10 Rohingya children into a Delhi government school. Calling out the BJP's "double-engine" government a "hypocrite," AAP leader and MLA Anil Jha said, "The BJP has robbed Delhi's children of their rights while secretly favouring Rohingya settlement. First, Hardeep Singh Puri talks about housing them in EWS flats, now, BJP MLAs are helping them get into schools." The AAP has demanded a probe, charging the BJP with caring more for Rohingyas than for India's Dalits, minorities and poor."



Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters, AAP MLA Anil Jha raised concerns over the Central Government's policies, calling it out for adopting double standards that are destabilising Delhi and the country. "Information has surfaced regarding the admission of approximately 10 Rohingya children in schools in Karawal Nagar, Delhi. BJP lead-

ers repeatedly label them as Bangladeshi infiltrators, yet Rohingya students are being admitted to Delhi schools. If my claim is incorrect, I challenge the Karawal Nagar MLA and Delhi government ministers to prove me wrong," he stated. The AAP MLA further added that the rights of Indian children are being violated to accommodate Rohingya students.

## GOVT PREPS FOR MONSOON, TO USE ADVANCED SEWER CLEANING

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Public Works Department Minister Parvesh Verma on Sunday announced that the government plans to deploy state-of-the-art sewer cleaning machines before the onset of monsoon to prevent waterlogging. The department will use CCTV cameras to verify full desilting of drains, he said during a field visit. Alleging that most of the drains and nullahs in Delhi have not been desilted for the past 10-20 years, Verma claimed roads get waterlogged and water enters homes each time it rains in the city. "Our effort now is to have state-of-the-art machines in every assembly consti-

CLEAN SWEEP

- Many drains haven't been cleaned for 10-20 years, causing waterlogging.
- A new machine cleans sewers without manual entry, improving efficiency.
- The machine reuses treated water for cleaning, reducing water use.
- The machine will be deployed across Delhi in phases, ensuring thorough cleaning.
- Many drains haven't been cleaned for 10-20 years, causing waterlogging.
- Many drains haven't been cleaned for 10-20 years, causing waterlogging.
- Many drains haven't been cleaned for 10-20 years, causing waterlogging.

tuency to ensure thorough cleaning," said the PWD minister. "This initiative is a concrete step towards realizing Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's vision of a Swachh Bharat and modern urban infrastructure," he remarked while inspecting a trial run of a recycler machine in south

Delhi's Greater Kailash area. According to officials, the machine has been brought from Mumbai and is capable of deep and thorough

sewer cleaning without requiring any manual entry into the system. "One of the key features that make this machine far superior to the traditional ones is its ability to simultaneously extract silt and dirty water from the sewer. The extracted water is treated within the machine and reused for jetting, thereby drastically reducing water consumption," the government said in a statement. Officials said that unlike traditional super sucker machines, no additional water tankers are required by the recycler machine. "Being a single-unit set-up, it requires minimal operational space. The entire cleaning process becomes faster, more precise, and environmentally friendly.

# Three separate fire incidents reported in Delhi; no injuries

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a man who allegedly masterminded a racket involved in forging property documents and impersonating dead people to secure bank loans, an official said on Sunday. The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the police said the accused, Nand Nagri resident Suresh Kumar (45), secured loans worth crores of rupees. "Suresh operated a cybercafe and had been under the radar for years due to his involvement in multiple financial fraud cases," it said.



In this combo of screenshots taken from videos provided by the Fire Dept., flame and smoke rise up (left) and firefighters try to douse a fire that broke out in a police 'malkhana' in northeast Delhi's Wazirabad area. ANI

He was arrested on April 2 in connection with a 2015 case registered at the Sarita Vihar police station. It was alleged that forged documents were used to obtain a loan of Rs 3.2 crore from a bank. The complainant, Sonal Jain, had alleged that forged documents were created in the name of her late husband Mahender Kumar Jain. Despite extensive probes over the years, the identity of the accused could not be revealed. Ultimately, a forensic analysis of thumb impressions on forged documents was conducted and matched with fingerprint records, providing a major breakthrough. According to police, Suresh has an extensive criminal history with his name figuring in 18 cases -- five registered with the EOW and 13 under CBI investigations.

Man held for forging property papers to dupe banks

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has arrested a man who allegedly masterminded a racket involved in forging property documents and impersonating dead people to secure bank loans, an official said on Sunday. The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the police said the accused, Nand Nagri resident Suresh Kumar (45), secured loans worth crores of rupees. "Suresh operated a cybercafe and had been under the radar for years due to his involvement in multiple financial fraud cases," it said. He was arrested on April 2 in connection with a 2015 case registered at the Sarita Vihar police station. It was alleged that forged documents were used to obtain a loan of Rs 3.2 crore from a bank. The complainant, Sonal Jain, had alleged that forged documents were created in the name of her late husband Mahender Kumar Jain. Despite extensive probes over the years, the identity of the accused could not be revealed. Ultimately, a forensic analysis of thumb impressions on forged documents was conducted and matched with fingerprint records, providing a major breakthrough. According to police, Suresh has an extensive criminal history with his name figuring in 18 cases -- five registered with the EOW and 13 under CBI investigations.

WOMAN TRAF-FICKED, FORCED INTO PROSTITUTION RESCUED

New Delhi: Delhi Police Crime Branch has rescued a 35-year-old woman who was allegedly trafficked and forced into prostitution at the GB Road red-light area here, an official said on Sunday. The "manager" of the brothel was arrested on the spot, he said. According to police, the woman, a native of West Bengal, was lured to Delhi about three months ago with the promise of a job, but was instead sold into the illegal trade. She lost contact with her family after arriving in Delhi, but around 10 days ago, she managed to call her brother and inform him about her situation, a senior police officer said. Her brother then approached the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) with help of a Non-governmental organization (NGO), he said. "Based on a tip off, a police team launched a rescue operation and conducted a raid on April 5. She was rescued from a brothel at GB Road, and its manager was arrested on the spot," the officer said.

## Police arrests murder accused after two-month manhunt

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested a 33-year-old man wanted in a murder case after a two-month search, an official said on Sunday. The accused, identified as Ankur, was apprehended from Loni in Ghaziabad on April 4, he said. The official said that Ankur, a resident of Padam Nagar in Sarai Rohilla, was evading arrest since January in connection with the stabbing death of a neighbour over a financial dispute. Ankur and his brothers -- Rohan and Ankit -- allegedly attacked their neighbour, Lakhman, on the intervening night of January 25-26 after a heated argument over a Rs 50,000 loan, police said. Lakhman later succumbed to his injuries in a hospital, they said. Rohan was arrested earlier, while Ankur and Ankit remained absconding, police said, adding that a team tracked him in Ghaziabad. The officer said that Ankur "confessed to the crime during interrogation". Ankur, a school dropout, worked as a rickshaw puller, police said, adding his possible involvement in other crimes are also being investigated. Further investigation is underway, police said.

# Delhi Metro to roll out India's first 3-coach train

TDGN NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) is set to introduce the country's first metro corridor designed for operations with three-coach trains on the upcoming Lajpat Nagar Saket G Block route, officials said on Sunday. A part of Phase-IV of the Delhi Metro project, the corridor will span eight kilometer and be the second-smallest in the network, the DMRC said in a statement. The line aims to enhance last-mile connectivity and ensure seamless interchange with existing corridors, it said. Unlike other metro lines that operate with four, six or eight coaches, the new corridor will use 3-coach trains, developed specifically for short-distance urban travel, the statement said. The smaller train configuration is expected to be a cost-effective and agile solution that ensures better frequency and operational efficiency while accommodating a significant number of daily commuters, it added. The DMRC said the decision was based on a realistic assessment of passenger flow. While high-density routes need longer trains, the Lajpat



The smaller train configuration is expected to be a cost-effective and agile solution that ensures better frequency and operational efficiency while accommodating a significant number of daily commuters, it added. Nagar Saket stretch caters primarily to short-distance travellers requiring frequent and efficient services, it added. The corridor's estimated Peak Hour Peak Direction Traffic (PHPDT) will allow for a comfortable commute without the need for overcapacity, the DMRC said. The three-coach system is aimed at ensuring economic sustainability while maintaining high-quality urban transit standards, it said. Each coach will have a seating and standing capacity of around 300 passengers, bringing the total capacity of a three-coach train to approximately 900 passengers per trip, it added. The corridor will have eight strategically located stations from Lajpat Nagar to Saket G Block to improve accessibility for key residential and commercial areas, the statement said. The station platforms have been designed with a length of 74 metres, optimised for three-coach train operations, it said. "In March 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for this project. The construction work has now commenced, and the corridor is expected to be completed by 2028," a DMRC official said.



# AMIT SHAH BEGINS THREE-DAY VISIT TO J&K

**TDG NETWORK**  
JAMMU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Jammu on Sunday evening for a crucial three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, his first since the formation of the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government in October last year.

Shah was received at the technical airport by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and senior BJP leaders. Security agencies have been placed on high alert across the Union Territory in view of the high-profile visit.

Soon after his arrival, Shah was scheduled to head to the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar to chair a meeting of party MLAs and office bearers. His visit also coincided with the 46th Foundation Day of the BJP, celebrated earlier



in the day across Jammu and Kashmir.

On Monday, Shah will travel to Kathua, where he is expected to visit the BSF's forward Border Outpost Vinay along the

India-Pakistan border to assess the on-ground security scenario. Later, he will meet the families of J&K Police martyrs at the Raj Bhavan in Jammu and present appointment letters

to some of them selected on compassionate grounds.

On the final day of his tour, April 8, Shah will be in Srinagar, where he will review development programmes and hold a high-

level meeting on the security situation in the Union Territory. Both meetings will take place at the Raj Bhavan. Earlier in the day, J&K BJP President Sat Sharma led the Foundation Day celebrations at the party headquarters in Jammu. Senior leaders, including MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, and Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, participated in the celebrations. Party flags were also hoisted at all district headquarters and activists' residences to mark the occasion.

Shah's visit is seen as significant against the backdrop of evolving political dynamics in J&K and is expected to set the tone for upcoming policy decisions related to development, border security, and regional outreach.

## Myanmar quake: India sends more humanitarian aid in C-17 aircraft

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday sent 31 tonnes of humanitarian aid, including replenishment stores for an Indian army field hospital unit deployed in Myanmar, to augment New Delhi's efforts to provide succour to the quake-hit neighbouring country. The aid was sent in a C-17 Globemaster heavy-lift aircraft.

It took off from the Hindon air force station in Ghaziabad early Sunday, a senior official said.

"#OperationBrahma@IAF. MCC C-17 plane departs for Mandalay with 31 tons of humanitarian aid, including replenishment stores for the Indian army field hospital unit," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar posted on X and also shared a few photos.

A 7.7-magnitude earthquake jolted Myanmar last week,



with the toll rising to over 3,000 even as rescuers continue to search through the rubble for signs of life.

India mounted its relief mission named 'Operation Brahma' as a swift response to the devastation caused by the earthquake that hit Myanmar as well as Thailand on March 28. The field hospital, under 'Operation Brahma', continues its humanitarian mission in Myanmar as the local government and its agencies also soldiered on with their efforts in relief and rescue work. The hospital unit comprising 118

personnel was deployed in Myanmar using two C-17 heavy-lift aircraft of the IAF which had taken off from Agra on March 29.

The field hospital has been set up by the Indian Army in Mandalay. Meanwhile, an Indian Navy spokesperson said that INS Gharial with 442 tonnes of relief material, including 405 tonnes of rice, arrived at Yangon early Saturday. The relief material was handed over by Indian ambassador Abhay Thakur to U Soe Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region, he said.

## No rift in I.N.D.I.A bloc, says Bihar Cong chief Rajesh Kumar

**TDG NETWORK**  
PATNA

Bihar Congress chief Rajesh Kumar on Sunday met Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav and dismissed speculations of discord within the INDIA bloc ahead of the state polls later this year.

Kumar's first meeting with the Leader of the Opposition since assuming the role of state Congress chief took place a day before Rahul Gandhi's Bihar tour.

He was accompanied by Congress Legislature Party leader Shakil Ahmed Khan.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Kumar said, "It was a formal meeting with Yadav. Such meetings with all constituents of the INDIA bloc will be held regularly ahead of the upcoming assembly polls. INDIA bloc and all its partners share a common resolve—to fight collectively and defeat the NDA to save both the nation



and Bihar." Kumar firmly rejected media reports suggesting rifts within the INDIA bloc in Bihar.

"The question of discord does not arise at all. We are united, and we will defeat the NDA together in the coming assembly polls," he asserted.

Asked about the chief ministerial face of the INDIA bloc for Bihar elections, Khan said, "Tejashwi Yadav is the Leader of the Opposition in the assembly. He represents all opposition

parties and will continue to do so even outside the assembly with the support of all constituents of the Mahagathbandhan." Khan criticised NDA leaders, particularly over the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Bill, recently passed by Parliament.

He remarked, "BJP leaders are speaking the language of General Dyer on this issue. The BJP is a party full of illiterate and uncivilised leaders (BJP mein jahilon ki fauz hai). Now, even JD(U) leaders are echoing the same sentiments. Nitish Kumar, the JD(U) supremo, is no different from BJP leaders. People will never forgive him for his stance on the Bill." The reference to General Dyer is rooted in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of April 13, 1919, when British troops under Dyer's command opened fire on a peaceful gathering in Amritsar, killing hundreds of unarmed Indians.

**TIKAM SHARMA**  
NOIDA

Frustrated by encroachments on public roads, hawkers occupying the streets, public drinking, and rampant mismanagement in high-rise societies—allegedly in connivance with government officials—residents of Noida and Greater Noida's high-rise societies have inundated authorities, including the Chief Minister's office, with complaints. This has spurred the state government and development bodies into action.

On April 3, the Noida Authority, led by CEO M. Lokesh, directed inspections of key societies with the aim of restoring trust where residents have long battled poor management, shoddy maintenance, and missing amenities.

Complaints filed via the CM Yogi Adityanath's Jan-sunwai portal have flagged illegal encroachments and hawkers clogging streets, often with alleged police inaction. In Jaypee Aman, Sector 151, mismanagement runs deep. The society has skipped Apartment Owners



Association (AOA) elections for a long time, raising fears of corruption. "We're stuck without elections, leading to all kinds of problems and apathy from government bodies. More than one crore rupees every month is going towards maintenance without any work to show for it. After much effort, we were able to pressure the relevant government office to call for an election, but that too has been delayed, allegedly due to concerned officials being bribed by interested parties,"

a resident said. Similar complaints from other societies are now being reviewed.

Outside Jaypee Aman, the chaos spills onto the streets. Hawkers and encroachments clog the roads, worsening traffic and safety concerns. "It's a mess out there—hawkers block everything, and police officials simply look the other way," a resident complained. Inside, the lack of elected oversight leaves security and upkeep in shambles, amplifying residents' frustration.

## Cong launches black flag protest against BJP's 'anti-Tamil' policies

**TDG NETWORK**  
CHENNAI

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Tamil Nadu visit to inaugurate the New Pambam Bridge, the Congress unit in the state launched a black flag protest on Sunday against BJP's "anti-Tamil policies," including the non-disbursal of funds to the state government and various other policies of the central government.

Earlier, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President K Selvaperunthagai said that the party condemns the idea of One Nation One Election, the passing of the Waqf

(Amendment) Bill, the non-disbursement of funds and other policies.

The party is also going to raise slogans condemning the Waqf Bill as PM Modi reaches Rameswaram city.

"(Union Finance Minister) Nirmala Sitharaman in Chennai event said One Nation One Election would be implemented. ... we are holding this protest. We will also raise new slogans as PM Modi reaches Rameswaram," K Selvaperunthagai said.

"We are also showing black flag to Modi condemning Waqf Board Amendment,"

he added.

In a statement released on X, the party's state president said highlighted their opposition to the Waqf Amendment Bill.

"The Waqf (Amendment) Bill is a weapon aimed at marginalizing Muslims and taking away their personal laws and property rights," Selvaperunthagai's statement read.

"This attack on the Constitution by the RSS, BJP and their allies is targeting Muslims today, but it sets a precedent for targeting other communities in the future," the statement added.

Earlier, MLA Oorvasi S Amirtharaj said the BJP has "continued to deceive Tamil Nadu and Tamils."

"Not giving relief funds for the districts affected by storm and floods, under conditions of Hindi imposition, not providing funds for school education, the central BJP is working to affect the livelihood of the rural people without providing funds to Tamil Nadu," said the MLA during a press meet. Multiple state trustees in Thoothukudi participated in the demonstration.

On the occasion of Ram Navami, Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi is set to inaugurate India's first vertical lift sea bridge, the New Pambam Bridge in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu.

The 2.07-kilometre-long New Pambam Bridge, spanning the Palk Strait in Tamil Nadu, stands as a testament to India's engineering prowess and visionary infrastructure development, the Ministry of Railways said in a statement.

The bridge has one vertical lift spanning 72.5 metres with two tracks. The approach has 88 spans of 18.3-metre steel plate girders fabricated for a single line.



Participants ride a bullock cart during a state-level race, at Kurubarahalli near Chikmagalur. Agencies

## Sri Lankan cricketer Jayasuriya seeks PM Modi's help in bringing international cricket to Jaffna

**TDG NETWORK**  
COLOMBO

During his recent visit to Sri Lanka, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with the island country's 1996 World Cup-winning cricketers, including Sanath Jayasuriya and Aravinda de Silva and recalled India's 1996 tour amid unrest as a symbol of strong ties between the two countries.

During the interaction he praised the cricketers and recalled when Team India extended a helping hand to the nation that was rocked by bomb blasts just days ahead of the tournament which it was co-hosting with India and Pakistan.

The cricketers thanked

India for support during Sri Lanka's economic crisis and requested help developing a stadium in Jaffna.

The video of the interaction from Saturday was released on the YouTube channel of the Prime Minister's Office today.

Cricketer Jayasuriya said, "When we had unrest, problems in Sri Lanka, you and the government helped us a lot. We are always grateful to you for helping Sri Lanka.

Jayasuriya, who is also the current Sri Lanka head coach, requested PM Modi to support Sri Lanka in its aim of bringing international cricket matches to Jaffna by building an international-level stadium.



"As the coach of Sri Lanka, at the moment we play all over Sri Lanka except Jaffna. If India can help us to bring international ground in Jaffna, there will be a big help for the people in Jaffna North and Eastern parts...I have a small request, if this can be done?..."

PM Modi reaffirmed India's "Neighbourhood

First" policy and cited aid to Myanmar as a recent example.

PM Modi said, "India has always believed in the 'Neighbourhood First' policy. We always want to respond to the crisis of our neighbouring countries. In the recent earthquakes in Myanmar, we were the first respondents. During

the crisis in Sri Lanka, we ensured that the country should come out of it, and we tried our best to do that... You (Sanath Jayasuriya) spoke about Jaffna that international matches should be played in Jaffna is a very strong thought and I assure you that my team will try to do everything possible for it..."

In January 1996, Sri Lanka was rocked by bomb blasts at the Central Bank. Due to this, Australia and West Indies refused to send their teams to Sri Lanka due to security reasons. However, in a great show of solidarity, sportsman spirit and brotherhood, India and Pakistan, two arch-rivals, sent a joint team led by Indian star

Mohammad Azharuddin to play a friendly match against Sri Lanka in February ahead of the marquee tournament.

The team featured several Indian stars like Azhar himself, alongside Sachin Tendulkar, Ajay Jadeja, Anil Kumble and Aashish Rakesh Kapoor. From Pakistan, came stars like Saeed Anwar, Aamir Sohail, Ijaz Ahmed, Rashid Latif, Waqar Younis and Wasim Akram.

However, West Indies and Australia did not turn up at all, giving Sri Lanka free points via walkover that made them the sole undefeated team in Group A and sent them straight to knockouts.

In a one-sided semifinal which was interrupted by rioting and arson by angry fans, Sri Lanka defeated India at Eden Gardens by "default" and marched to the final, where they defeated Australia by seven wickets in Lahore to capture their maiden World Cup title, paving the way for the rise of the Island nation as a cricketing superpower, which gave the sport icons like Kumar Sangakkara, Sanath Jayasuriya, Muttiah Muralitharan, Chaminda Vaas etc in years to come.

Speaking about the bomb blast and its aftermath in the video, ex-Sri Lanka batter Marvan Attapattu said to PM Modi, "One of the reasons why won, there

were two teams (Australia and West Indies) which did not come due to bomb blast. India sent a team here, to show the world the safety of the place. That is one of the reasons we won."

In his reply, PM Modi recalled how the gesture of Indian team was appreciated in the sports fraternity, particularly in Sri Lanka.

"When other teams were scared and running, India showed Sri Lanka 'kheldilli' and did not leave Sri Lanka alone. There was a lot of sportsman spirit. On one side, there was a bomb blast and on the other, was India's sportsman spirit. It was sportsman spirit which prevailed over bomb blast," he added.



# RBI TO HOLD FIRST MONETARY POLICY REVIEW TODAY

The RBI's target is to keep inflation within the range of 2-6 per cent, with a medium-term goal of 4%.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will hold its first monetary policy review meeting of 2025-26 starting Monday. The outcome of the three-day meeting will be announced on Wednesday morning (10 am). The RBI typically conducts six bimonthly meetings in a financial year, where it deliberates interest rates, money supply, inflation outlook, and various macroeconomic indicators. The other five meetings are scheduled for June 4-6, August 5-7, September 29-October 1, December 3-5, and February 4-6.

The RBI monetary policy committee (MPC) consists of six members—three from the RBI, including the Governor, and three external members appointed by the central government.

The main objective of the MPC is to maintain price stability while supporting economic growth. The RBI's

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

- RBI's first policy meet of FY26 begins April 7; decision to be announced on April 10 at 10 am.
- MPC's mandate: keep inflation within 2–6%, with a 4% target, while supporting growth.
- Repo rate cut by 25 bps in February to 6.25%—RBI's first rate cut in five years.
- Another 25 bps cut likely in April, with total 2025 rate cuts seen at 75 bps.



target is to keep inflation within the range of 2-6 per cent, with a medium-term goal of 4 per cent.

Inflation has been a concern for many countries, including advanced economies, but India has largely managed to steer its inflation trajectory quite well.

In the previous MPC meet-

ing on February 7, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had unanimously decided to reduce the policy rate by 25 basis points (bps) from 6.5 per cent to 6.25 per cent. This was the first rate cut in about 5 years.

The repo rate is the rate of interest at which the RBI lends to other banks.

Barring the latest rate cut, the RBI has kept the repo rate elevated at 6.5 per cent since May 2022 in the fight against inflation. Raising interest rates is a monetary policy instrument that typically helps suppress demand in the economy, thereby helping the inflation rate decline. Bank of Baroda asserted in

## ‘Forex reserves rise to \$665.4 billion, major jump in nearly five months’

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In a significant development, India's foreign exchange reserves rose from USD 6.596 billion to USD 665.396 billion in the week that ended on March 28, extending gains for the fourth straight week, official data released by RBI showed.

This significant jump is the highest in nearly five months, after witnessing a period of downturn.

According to RBI data, forex reserves have increased cumulatively by USD 20.1 billion over the past three weeks and by about USD 6.6 billion in the latest reporting week. Experts believe the declines in the last few weeks were caused by foreign investors' shaken confidence in Indian equity markets.

The data shows that the gold reserve, as of March 28, stood at USD 77.793 billion, while the foreign currency

assets were at USD 565.014 billion.

On the other hand, the Rupee, during the same period, appreciated by 0.6 per cent against the US dollar.

The appreciation of the Rs is seen as the renewed confi-



dence of foreign investment in the Indian stock markets.

Any decline in reserves is most likely due to RBI intervention, aimed at preventing a sharp depreciation of the Rupee.

Official estimates of the RBI suggest that India's foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to cover approximately

10-11 months of projected imports.

In 2023, India added around USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of USD 71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion.

Foreign exchange reserves, or FX reserves, are assets held by a nation's central bank or monetary authority. They are primarily in reserve currencies such as the US Dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese Yen, and Pound Sterling.

The RBI often intervenes by managing liquidity, including selling dollars, to prevent steep Rupee depreciation.

The RBI strategically buys dollars when the Rupee is strong and sells when it weakens.

## GeM facilitates Rs 38,500 cr in transactions for 30,000 startups

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The government e-marketplace (GeM) has enabled over Rs 38,500 crore in transactions for 30,000+ startups, reinforcing its position as a true catalyst in India's innovation ecosystem, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said in a statement on Sunday.

GeM is a Section 8 company established under the administrative control of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, for procuring goods and services by central ministries, State Departments, PSEs, and Autonomous Bodies.

In India, the GeM has emerged as a game-changer in public procurement, creating an open and inclusive platform that benefits not just government buyers but also local entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses. n alignment with the societal development of the nation, GeM has enabled startups to fulfil orders transparently.

The report adds that the investments on cloud infrastructure (servers, etc.) could be an additional USD 60 billion.

“While a majority of the cloud infrastructure spend will be done by hyperscalers, in our view, capex towards DC capacity (USD 20bn) alone could entail equity issuance of USD 10bn (assuming average D/E of global players). Still, these will merely serve India's domestic demand,” the report added.

A data centre is a physical facility that organizations use to house their critical applications and data. A data centre's design is based on a network of computing and storage resources that enable the delivery of shared applications and data.

The key components of a data centre design include routers, switches, firewalls, storage systems, servers, and application-delivery controllers.

To achieve 50 per cent of China's DC density, India needs 5GW of total capacity by 2030.

that its bottom-up research suggests that India's India's Colocation (colo) data centre capacity will be 1.35GW in 2024, up 38 per cent year on year.

Despite this, the report said that the country has one of the world's lowest DC densities at 14 petabyte/MW. To achieve 50 per cent of China's DC density, India needs 5GW of total capacity by 2030.

This aligns with the current announced under-construction + planned capacity of 3.3GW by 2028.

At an average capex/MW of Rs 465 million, this will translate into an incremental capital outlay of USD 20 billion over the next 5 years.

# India has upper hand in given tariffs: NSE MD-CEO

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India has the upper hand amidst the reciprocal tariffs imposed by the Trump administration, said Ashish-kumar Chauhan, Managing Director and CEO of National Stock Exchange, backing his argument, stating the duties slapped on India were less than others.

“US President Donald Trump has imposed import duty, there is a state of confusion all over the world, but India has an upper hand in that too, because the duty imposed on India is slightly less compared to China, Vietnam, so I think the situation will become normal in the next 1-2 weeks...,” Chauhan said, speaking from Katra.

“The tariffs imposed on India are relatively lower than those of other countries. Going ahead, India will do well during the negotiations (for a trade deal),” he supplemented. On Friday night, April 4, the US market fell by about 2200 points. In the last 2 sessions, it has fallen by

As stability comes in the US, there is a possibility of stability coming here as well...

The way India and the US have been talking over the past 2-3 months, I expect this to benefit India,” Ashishkumar Chauhan

more than 9 per cent.

“So I think there is a kind of confusion there, too, and you can also see the reflection of the situation here (in India). As stability comes in the US, there is a possibility of stability coming here as well...,” the NSE chief added.

“The way India and the US have been talking over the past 2-3 months, I expect this to benefit India,” Chauhan noted that the latest fall in international crude oil prices is also going in favour of India, a major importer of energy.

Since assuming office for his second term, President Trump has reiterated his stance on tariff reciprocity, emphasising that the United States will match tariffs imposed by other countries, including India, to ensure fair trade.

On April 2, the US Presi-

dent issued an executive order on reciprocal tariffs, imposing additional ad valorem duties ranging from 10 per cent to 50 per cent on imports from all trading partners. The baseline duty of 10 per cent will be effective from April 05, 2025, and the remaining country-specific additional ad valorem duty will be effective from April 09, 2025.

The additional duty on India is 26 per cent. Chauhan's remarks aim to temper growing concerns within the financial sector about the ongoing trade tensions and their potential to impact emerging markets. With negotiations expected to intensify, India's relatively moderate exposure to the US tariffs could position it as a more resilient player on the global stage in the weeks to come.

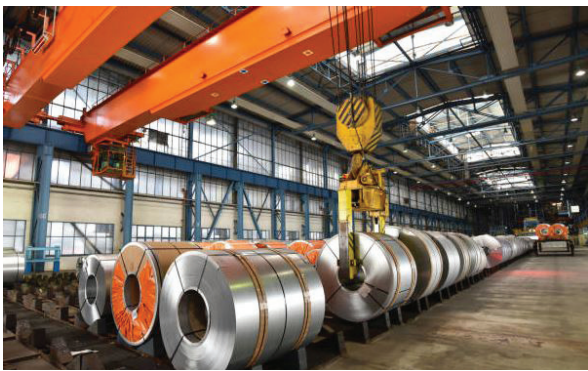
## Solar power can save up to 10% for steel sector: Report

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Solar power offers a massive opportunity for steel sector companies to reduce their production costs, with potential savings reaching up to 10 percent for certain operations, said energy think tank Ember in a recent report.

The report highlighted that the greatest benefits are seen in standalone electric arc furnace (EAF) steelmaking, where solar energy can significantly cut operational expenses.

The report added that savings range between 2 and 5 per cent for direct reduced iron arc furnace (DRI-EAF) steel production.



“For direct reduced iron arc furnace (DRI-EAF) based steelmaking, savings range between 2-5 per cent, while for cement manufacturing, the potential is lower,” the report added.

The steel sector alone contributes 9.4 GW to this opportunity, driven by the high

cost of grid power, which can be cost-effectively offset by solar. In some setups, like standalone arc furnaces used in secondary steelmaking, solar could reduce production costs by up to 10 per cent, the report added.

It highlighted that the aluminium industry is less like-

ly to experience similar cost reductions due to its heavy reliance on coal-based energy sources.

“Aluminium, however, does not present a significant cost-saving opportunity due to the abundant captive coal-based generation in place,” the report added.

Going forward, the report says that India's three big heavy industries—steel, cement, and aluminium—present a 20 GW solar open access market opportunity despite their reliance on captive coal generation.

Cement and aluminium, despite relying on affordable captive coal-based generation, together represent an 11 GW market.

## ‘We need to aim higher’: boAt Co-founder Aman Gupta

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Consumer electronics firm boAt's co-founder Aman Gupta has backed Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on the need for Indian startups to aim higher and start working on bigger solutions.

Drawing a parallel with China, the Union minister on Thursday said Indian startups are working on food delivery apps while Chinese counterparts are working on electric mobility, battery technology, and other future technologies.

The Commerce Minister made these remarks at the just-concluded Startup Mahakumbh.

The minister had suggested that India needs to raise the bar and help prepare for the future of the nation. Goyal supplemented that he had no issue with the startups working on food delivery services but he wants to see more entrepreneurs work on serious problem-solving.

boAt Co-founder Gupta who was in attendance at the Startup Mahakumbh during Piyush Goyal's address took to social media platform to post his comments.

“It's not every day that the government asks founders to dream bigger. But at Startup Mahakumbh, that's exactly what happened. I was there. I heard the full speech. Minister Piyush Goyal isn't against founders. He believes in us. His point was simple:

STARTUP CORNER



India has come far, but to lead the world...we need to aim higher,” Gupta wrote.

“It reminded me of something I say often on Shark Tank India, If you want to build a world-class product, you must know your competition. That applies to India too. Benchmarking against China, the US, or anyone else -- isn't weakness. It's smart strategy. We're already the 3rd largest startup ecosystem in the world and the fastest-growing mar-



for economy,” the startup leader said in his X post.

But if India wants to be No.1, Gupta said it needs to also go deep into AI, deeptech, climate, mobility, infra.

“We need LLMs (large language models) and innovation stacks that compete on global standards. And to make that happen, we also need Scientific risk, More patient capital, Founder-policy maker collaboration and a long-term national vision,” he added in his X post.

India has about 1.6 lakh startups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). India has the third largest startup ecosystem.

On January 16, 2025, India marked nine years of Startup India, a flagship initiative that began in 2016.

## Tariffs raise recession risk: Fitch

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Reciprocal tariffs imposed by the US significantly raise risks for a recession in the US and constrain the US Federal Reserve's ability to lower interest rates further, Fitch Ratings said in a note.

Post the higher-than-anticipated tariffs imposed the US administration, the rating agency projected that US growth in 2025 is likely to be slower than the 1.7 per cent that it had projected in March.

According to Fitch Ratings, tariff hikes will result in higher consumer prices and lower corporate profits in the US.

“Higher prices will squeeze real wages, weighing on consumer spending, while lower profits and policy uncertainty will act as a drag on business investment,” Fitch said.



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE: A FUTURE DIRECTION

## OPINION

ANANDAJIT GOSWAMI & SWATI HANS



Budget 2025 of India specifically highlights the importance of climate resilient districts to tackle climate vulnerability and enhance agricultural export earnings from these districts in order to attain the vision of doubling the farmer income of India. Currently, India's agriculture is extremely vulnerable to climate change, and each district has different degrees of climate vulnerability because of varying regional climatic and meteorological conditions. According to recent studies, agricultural output in Indian districts gets impacted by unpredictable rainfall patterns, warming temperatures,

extreme weather events, endangering food security, rural livelihoods and impacting the goal of doubling the farmer income. Therefore, understanding district-specific agricultural vulnerabilities is essential for creating focused interventions that can improve resilience in India's agricultural sector through means of state and district specific climate action plans for high risk climate vulnerable zones. A Machine Learning based LSTM Model has been developed to identify such high-risk districts of India requiring immediate action and thus creating, enabling a customized policy mapping

for those districts. A district-specific policy offers a more detailed understanding of climate-related hazards assisting farmers and policy makers towards implementing climate adaptation measures. The model uses climate variability factors across districts of India. Relationship between climate variables and agricultural production is mapped by the model with the help of following process – Taking account of past data, LSTM Model predicts agricultural production with reference to climatic variation across the Rabi and Kharif Seasons. Amongst districts of India, the following results emerge out of the LSTM model - In Kharif Season: Thane shows drastic future production decline whereas Ratnagiri, Gwalior shows notable decline requiring attention. East Godavari and Panna show increase in production. Hoshangabad, Jabalpur, Vellore also show gradual decline but less than Ratnagiri and Thane. In Rabi Season: East Godavari (Andhra Pradesh) and Thane (Maharashtra) should be monitored closely, although their rate of decline is slowing. Continuous intervention might be necessary to further slow down or halt the negative trend of production. Ratnagiri shows positive trend in production but still requires support to



maintain such growth momentum. **RISK ZONES AND PRIORITY DISTRICTS** Based on the model predictions for the next 70 years, districts are divided into different risk zones after mapping the future variation in their agricultural vulnerability and exposure to climate variability: High-Risk Zones: These areas show sharp drops in agricultural productivity and are extremely vulnerable to climate change. Immediate measures are crucial, including crop diversification, drought-resistant seed varieties, and upgradation of irrigation infrastructure. Moderate-Risk Zones: These regions are subject to

sporadic disturbances, but they can reduce risks by implementing climate-smart farming methods, better soil conservation, and more effective irrigation systems. Low-Risk Zones: Although these regions are not affected much in future, proactive steps like early warning systems and sustainable farming methods are needed to maintain their resilience against future climate unpredictability. Based on the above specific zoning, the model suggests the below mentioned policy matrix for future consideration – **POLICIES FOR DIFFERENT RISK ZONES** As per our LSTM modeling, for the two seasons of

Kharif and Rabi, the following findings have emerged: For the Kharif Season, East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh is in a low risk zone owing to a decreasing pattern of future variation by 2070 For the Kharif Season, Thane and Ratnagiri are in a high risk zone owing to a large pattern of climatic agricultural variation in the future by 2070 The above findings are a snapshot of a large set of findings from our model for each district of India. These findings enhance the importance of strengthening the importance of implementation of state specific climate action plans. State level implementation of central schemes dealing with crop insurance, climate resilient

agricultural practices have to increase manifold to address the above zone-specific climate and agricultural vulnerability. A state-specific strategy that incorporates district-level data, its assessment, measurement and monitoring for future policy making and execution must be immediately integrated into central and state level policy frameworks in a cogent way. A systematic approach to climate adaptation that considers the socioeconomic and ecological circumstances of each district must be implemented. Some of the state specific policies may include - Creating State-Specific Climate Policies as an additional lever to the State Level Climate Action Plans: To guarantee that policies adequately address issues unique to a given region and they should be customized based on regional vulnerability assessments based on the modelling outputs as suggested above. Investing in Climate-Resilient Infrastructure: Climate impacts can be considerably reduced by integrating renewable energy sources, enhancing soil health management, and upgrading water conservation systems by promotion of new investments in the green infrastructure for climate resilient agriculture. Encouragement of Climate-Smart Agricultural Practices: Through incentives

and awareness campaigns, robust crop types, precision farming, and sustainable soil practices should be promoted. Data for Climate Resilient Agricultural Policy: To enhance data-driven decision-making, governments and farmers can benefit from the use of AI-driven forecasting, predictive analytics, and real-time climate monitoring. Strategic climate adaptation efforts must incorporate localized vulnerabilities if India moves towards a prosperous climate resilient agricultural future for doubling the farmer income. With the advent of changing, upcoming climate challenges, policy makers can protect food security, sustain rural livelihoods, and guarantee sustainable agricultural expansion by giving district-level climate resilience top priority by means of localized data based decision making tools using AI tools. Within the current and future context, this is the only option that the country has for now! *Anandajit Goswami is a Professor, Director, Research Director at Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies (MRIIRS), Swati Hans is an Assistant Professor at Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies (MRIIRS). Views are Personal. The authors acknowledge the contributions by Ms. Tanu Dua and Prof. Indu Kashyap for the article.*

# India's strategy for electromagnetic supremacy in the 6G era

## OPINION

PROF. NISHAKANT OJHA



As India prepares for the rollout of 6G wireless technology, a significant technological leap is on the horizon, promising ultra-fast connectivity, advanced automation, and seamless machine-to-machine communication. However, this advancement brings complex challenges, especially for India's defense infrastructure. With the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) gearing up to auction crucial frequency bands for telecom giants like Jio, Airtel, BSNL, and Vi, there is growing concern over the potential impact of spectrum allocation on the Indian Air Force (IAF) and broader military operations. The convergence of civilian and defense spectrum usage demands a strategic approach to safeguard national security and maintain electromagnetic integrity. 6G is expected to utilize upper mid-band (7-24 GHz) and sub-terahertz (100

GHz-1 THz) frequencies to enable applications such as holographic communication, AI-driven automation, and hyper-connected IoT ecosystems. While these technologies promise a future of high-speed, intelligent communication, many of the proposed spectrum bands overlap with frequencies critical to military operations, including Beyond Line-of-Sight (BLoS) communications, airborne radar, and encrypted battlefield networks. Historically, mid-band and mmWave spectrums have been allocated to commercial telecom services, but for 6G, the inclusion of defense-critical bands—such as the 7-15 GHz and 100 GHz-1 THz ranges—raises urgent concerns about potential interference. These frequency bands are vital for strategic military functions like secure data transfer, radar surveillance, and electronic warfare capabilities. Therefore, a defense-first approach in spectrum allocation is essential to prevent operational compromise. The key stakeholders in this process include private telecom operators, defense agencies such as the IAF and Army, and regulatory bodies like the DoT and Ministry of Defence (MoD). A collaborative governance model is necessary to bal-

ance economic growth with strategic defense interests. The integration of 6G into military operations presents transformative possibilities, including real-time combat decision-making, improved inter-service coordination, AI-assisted battlefield awareness, secure command-and-control systems, and autonomous drone swarms. Reliable 6G connectivity can enable advanced UAV reconnaissance, encrypted communications using quantum technologies, and AI-powered threat assessments. Yet, these advancements are accompanied by vulnerabilities, particularly to electromagnetic interference (EMI) and cyber threats, which could undermine defense superiority if not addressed with urgency. Electromagnetic Environmental Preparedness (EEP) is critical to ensuring the operational efficiency of India's defense forces. Key systems that must remain interference-free include radar warning receivers on combat aircraft, AEW&C platforms, UAV communication networks, ISR satellites, and air-to-ground secure links. Without dedicated spectrum zones, increased spectral congestion may degrade these systems and expose military assets to adversarial jamming, cyber intrusions, and operational delays. Moreover, in conflict scenarios, the absence of regulatory frameworks for emergency spectrum reallocation can significantly hinder military decision-making. It is therefore essential to develop legal protocols granting defense forces priority access to the

spectrum during wartime and restricting civilian usage in sensitive zones. To address these risks, India must implement a defense-centric spectrum strategy. This includes reserving dedicated frequency bands exclusively for military use, enforcing wartime spectrum reallocation protocols, and establishing a Joint Spectrum Security Task Force (JSST) to coordinate efforts between the DoT and MoD. Technologies like adaptive waveform modulation, frequency-hopping, software-defined radios (SDRs), and electromagnetic shielding must be incorporated into defense systems to minimize EMI. Cybersecurity safeguards, including quantum-resilient encryption and AI-driven threat monitoring, should be prioritized to protect military networks. Additionally, India should invest in indigenous R&D to build defense-grade 6G technologies, reducing dependence

on foreign systems and strengthening national security infrastructure. Despite progress, several critical gaps remain unaddressed. India lacks a clear 6G military roadmap and legal frameworks for dynamic spectrum reallocation during emergencies. AI-based spectrum monitoring tools and countermeasures are underdeveloped, while collaboration between the MoD, DoT, and private telecoms is fragmented. Quantum-resilient communications have not been widely implemented, and oversight in space-based communication security poses new vulnerabilities. Addressing these issues is vital to building a secure and future-ready electromagnetic strategy. Global models offer valuable lessons. In the United States, the Department of Defense (DoD) has adopted a defense-first spectrum policy, using AI-enabled tools to monitor unauthor-

ized use and detect electronic warfare threats. China employs an integrated civil-military strategy, reserving dedicated spectrum for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and utilizing centralized infrastructure to secure military and civilian networks. NATO and the European Union have developed collaborative governance frameworks that exempt military bands from commercial use and impose strict telecom cybersecurity laws. Russia's strategy is focused on electronic warfare, emphasizing frequency dominance and advanced jamming to exploit vulnerabilities in civilian systems. These case studies highlight the need for India to build a robust, military-prioritized spectrum strategy. To support air defense and ground operations, the Indian Air Force (IAF) requires dedicated bands for BLoS communication, radar systems, UAV control, and EW resilience. The

7-15 GHz band is essential for encrypted UAV and drone data links, while the 20-30 GHz range supports high-speed command-and-control functions. The 8-12 GHz (X-band) and 33-36 GHz (Ka-band) are vital for fire control and SAR surveillance radars. The 77-81 GHz band is used in tactical drone operations, while sub-terahertz (100 GHz-1 THz) frequencies enable secure EW, jamming resistance, and quantum communications. Military satellite operations rely on the 30-40 GHz (V-band) and 220-330 GHz bands for high-speed ISR and battlefield networking. Protecting these bands is essential to prevent EMI, ensure secure data links, and maintain dominance in air and cyber warfare environments. International examples highlight the consequences of shared spectrum use. In the U.S., the DoD opposed commercial use of the L-band due to interference with GPS and precision-guided weapons. In China, the government has secured exclusive spectrum for military use to operate drone swarms and cyber-electronic warfare systems. Russia's EW capabilities in Ukraine further demonstrate how frequency control can determine battlefield success, as Russian forces successfully jammed Ukrainian communications and drone frequencies. India has also experienced spectrum interference in sensitive regions like the LAC and Indo-Pak border, where hostile signals disrupted surveillance and reconnaissance missions. These incidents underscore the necessity of an exclusive,

encrypted military spectrum. India's path forward lies in adopting a hybrid spectrum management model. This approach balances economic growth through controlled commercial spectrum use with the need to secure military operations. Key steps include reserving military-exclusive bands, fortifying telecom infrastructure with advanced cybersecurity tools, implementing AI-powered spectrum surveillance, and enacting wartime spectrum protocols. Prioritizing defense in spectrum allocation, fostering collaboration between DoT, MoD, and private operators, and developing national cybersecurity infrastructure are essential components. Strategic partnerships with global allies will help India integrate best practices in electronic warfare defense and spectrum management. By combining dynamic spectrum governance, electromagnetic shielding, AI-based interference mitigation, and quantum-secured communication frameworks, India can secure its place as a global 6G leader while maintaining military preparedness. As the electromagnetic battlefield becomes increasingly contested, safeguarding spectrum access and operational readiness must remain at the heart of India's digital and defense strategies. *The author is a distinguished authority in AI and Next-Generation Electronic Warfare, alongside renowned experts in the field. He is widely recognized as a pioneer in integrating emerging technologies with Defence Strategies globally*



# FROM JANA SANGH TO BJP: RISE OF INDIA'S RIGHT-WING POWERHOUSE

*The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), established on April 6, 1980, emerged from a faction within the Janata Party, primarily composed of former Bharatiya Jana Sangh members who faced expulsion due to their continued association with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), leading to the formation of a new political entity under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.*

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), one of India's foremost political entities, has a rich history rooted in the nation's post-independence political evolution. Its formation on April 6, 1980, marked the culmination of decades of ideological development, political alliances, and transformative events. To understand the BJP's genesis, one must delve into the origins of its precursor, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), and the subsequent political shifts that led to the BJP's establishment.

## THE GENESIS: BHARATIYA JANA SANGH

In the early years following India's independence in 1947, the political landscape was predominantly dominated by the Indian National Congress (INC). However, there was a growing sentiment among certain sections for a political platform that emphasized India's Hindu cultural identity and addressed concerns related to national integration and security. This led to the formation of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) on October 21, 1951, in Delhi. The BJS was founded by Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, a prominent leader who had previously been associated with the Hindu Mahasabha and had served as the Minister for Industry and Supply in Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet.

Dr. Mookerjee's vision for the BJS was to create a political alternative that prioritized the nation's cultural heritage, advocated for a uniform civil code, and emphasized the need for a strong national defense. The party's foundational ideology was deeply influenced by the principles of Hindutva, aiming to integrate India's diverse communities under a common cultural framework. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a nationalist organization founded in 1925, played a pivotal role in supporting the BJS, providing it with a cadre of dedicated workers and ideological guidance.

## EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The BJP faced significant challenges in its initial years.

The political dominance of the INC, coupled with the nascent stage of the BJS's organizational structure, made electoral success elusive. In the first general elections of 1951-52, the BJS managed to secure only three seats in the Lok Sabha, India's lower house of Parliament. Despite this modest beginning, the party remained steadfast in its mission, gradually expanding its base and articulating its vision for India.

A significant moment in the BJS's history was the untimely death of Dr. Mookerjee in 1953 under controversial circumstances during his detention in Jammu and Kashmir. His demise was a severe blow to the party, but it also galvanized its members to pursue his vision with renewed determination. Leadership was passed on to figures like Deendayal Upadhyaya, who further refined the party's ideological framework, introducing the concept of 'Integral Humanism' as a guiding philosophy.

## THE JANATA PARTY EXPERIMENT

The political landscape of India underwent a seismic shift during the Emergency period from 1975 to 1977, declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. This 21-month period saw the suspension of civil liberties, censorship of the press, and the arrest of opposition leaders. In response to the authoritarian measures, various opposition parties, including the BJS, came together to form the Janata Party, a coalition aimed at restoring democratic norms and challenging the INC's hegemony.

The Janata Party's success in the 1977 general elections was historic, leading to the formation of a non-Congress government for the first time since independence. However, ideological differences and internal contradictions plagued the coalition. A significant point of contention was the association of former BJS members with the RSS. Critics within the Janata Party argued that this affiliation compromised the secular credentials of the govern-



ment. The internal discord culminated in a split, leading to the fall of the Janata government and the re-emergence of the INC in the 1980 elections.

## FORMATION OF THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

The dissolution of the Janata Party prompted former



Narendra Modi in a rally organised by the VHP in 1991. Credit: X/@modiarchive



Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the first non-Congress leader to serve a full term in power.

*The demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 marked a pivotal moment in India's socio-political landscape, leading to widespread communal tensions and violence.*

BJP members and other like-minded individuals to introspect and reorganize. Recognizing the need for a distinct political identity that could effectively represent their ideological moorings and address contemporary challenges, they convened to establish a new political entity. On April 6, 1980, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was formally launched, with Atal Bihari Vajpayee elected as its first president.

The BJP sought to position itself as a party committed to 'Gandhian Socialism,' aiming to blend the principles of integral humanism with socio-economic policies that addressed the needs of the common citizen. This ideological stance was an attempt to broaden

the party's appeal beyond its traditional support base and to present a holistic vision for India's development.

## IDEOLOGICAL CONSOLIDATION

The initial years were challenging for the BJP. In the 1984 general elections, held in the aftermath of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination, the BJP secured only two seats in the Lok Sabha. This electoral setback prompted the party to reassess its strategies and re-emphasize its core ideological tenets.

The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed the BJP's active involvement in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, advocating for the construction of a temple at the disputed site in Ayod-

hya. This period saw the party's support base expand significantly, as it resonated with a large segment of the Hindu population. The 1989 general elections marked a turning point, with the BJP increasing its parliamentary presence and emerging as a formidable force in Indian politics.

The demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 marked a pivotal moment in India's socio-political landscape, leading to widespread communal tensions and violence. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had been actively involved in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, faced both criticism and support for its role in the events. In the aftermath, the Indian government, led by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, dismissed BJP-led state governments in regions like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh, citing their inability to maintain law and order.



Founder of Bharatiya Jana Sangh - Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee (6 July 1901-23 June 1953). Credit: bjp.org



Raj Narain, freedom fighter and health minister captured in camera with different mood, in Delhi during 1977. File photo



Famous photo of the Ram Janmabhoomi Movement from The Organiser archives.

## ELECTORAL ASCENDANCY

Despite the controversies, the BJP's prominence in national politics continued to grow. In the 1996 general elections, the party emerged as the single largest entity in the Lok Sabha, India's lower house of Parliament. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was invited to form the government; however, lacking a clear majority, his tenure as Prime Minister lasted a mere 13 days.

The subsequent years saw the BJP refining its coalition-building strategies. In 1998, the party successfully formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a coalition of like-minded parties. This alliance secured a majority in the general elections, leading to Vajpayee's appointment as Prime Minister. The NDA government initiated several key economic reforms and conducted nuclear tests in 1998, asserting India's position on

the global stage. However, internal challenges and external conflicts, such as the Kargil War in 1999, tested the government's resilience.

## RESURGENCE

The 2004 general elections brought an unexpected defeat for the BJP-led NDA, leading to a period of introspection for the party. The Indian National Congress, under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), assumed power, and the BJP found itself in opposition. During this period, the party focused on strengthening its organizational structure and reconnecting with its grassroots supporters.

A significant shift occurred in 2014 when the BJP, under the leadership of Narendra Modi, secured a decisive victory in the general elections. Modi's tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat had been marked by economic growth and infrastructural development, bolstering his reputation as a pro-development leader. The 2014 mandate was historic, with the BJP achieving an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha, a feat not accomplished by any party since 1984.

## EVOLUTION

The BJP's ideological roots are deeply embedded in the principles of Hindutva, advocating for the cultural and national identity of India to be defined by Hindu values. This philosophy has been both a unifying force for its supporters and a point of contention with critics

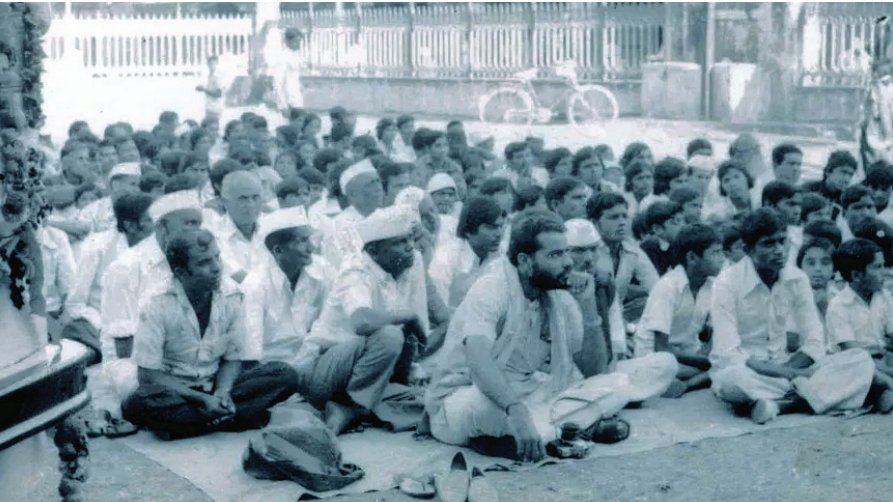
who argue it challenges the secular fabric of the nation. Over the years, the party has endeavored to balance its core ideological beliefs with the pragmatic demands of governance in a diverse and pluralistic society.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CADRE

A distinctive feature of the BJP is its robust organizational framework, significantly influenced by its association with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The RSS has been instrumental in providing a disciplined cadre base, ensuring that the party's ideological vision is consistently propagated across various levels. This synergy between the BJP and RSS has facilitated the party's outreach and mobilization efforts, particularly during election campaigns.

## WHAT WE KNOW...

From its inception in 1980, the Bharatiya Janata Party has traversed a path marked by ideological commitment, political challenges, and transformative leadership. Its evolution reflects a dynamic interplay between maintaining foundational principles and adapting to the ever-changing political landscape of India. As the BJP continues to shape and be shaped by the nation's democratic processes, its journey offers profound insights into the complexities of Indian politics and the enduring quest for a cohesive national identity.



Narendra Modi listening to a speech as an RSS cadre. Credit: X/@modiarchive



1962 : Bharatiya Jana Sangh members protesting against China. Credit: X/@indianhistorypics



# HANUMAN JAYANTI: A CELEBRATION OF STRENGTH, DEVOTION, AND DIVINE GRACE



DR AMIT VYAS

**H**anuman Jayanti, also known as Hanuman Janmotsav, is one of the most significant festivals for Hindus in India and across the world. It marks the birth of Lord Hanuman, the mighty monkey god who symbolizes unparalleled strength, unwavering devotion, and fearless courage. A revered figure in the epic Ramayana, Hanuman is not only a divine hero but also a beacon of selfless service and undying faith.

The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion, bringing together people from all walks of life to remember and emulate the virtues of Lord Hanuman. On this special occasion, devotees engage in various spiritual activities such as temple visits, Hanuman Chalisa recitation, fasting, bhajan-kirtan, and special puja rituals, reaffirming their faith and seeking the blessings of the deity.

## WHY HANUMAN JAYANTI IS CELEBRATED TWICE A YEAR

A unique aspect of Hanuman Jayanti is that it is observed twice a year in different regions of India. This often raises curiosity among devotees, leading

them to ask — why is Hanuman Jayanti celebrated two times?

### 1. FIRST HANUMAN JAYANTI (CHAITRA PURNIMA):

The primary celebration occurs on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Chaitra, which typically falls in March or April. This day is widely recognized as the actual birthday of Lord Hanuman. According to belief, he was born at sunrise on Chaitra Purnima, and hence, devotees wake up early to bathe, visit temples, and perform elaborate rituals and aarti to honor his birth.

### 2. SECOND HANUMAN JAYANTI (KARTIK OR ASHWIN MONTH):

The second observance happens during the Krishna Paksha (waning phase of the moon) on the fourteenth day (Chaturdashi) of Ashwin month, usually in September or October. This celebration, more prevalent in certain regions, coincides with the Diwali season. It is believed that on this day, after witnessing Hanuman's unmatched devotion, Mother Sita blessed him with immortality. Thus, this day also holds immense spiritual value, and devotees flock to temples to offer prayers and express gratitude.

Both these occasions reflect different aspects of Lord Hanuman's divine journey, and together, they offer devotees two opportunities in a year to reflect upon his teachings and deepen their connection with him.

### DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITIES



## TIES ON HANUMAN JAYANTI

### 1. TEMPLE VISITS AND WORSHIP:

Devotees throng Hanuman temples in large numbers on Hanuman Jayanti. From early morning, temples are abuzz with prayers, chanting, and the sound of bells. Special rituals are conducted by priests, and idols of Lord Hanuman are bathed in Panchamrit (a mixture of milk, curd, honey, ghee, and sugar), dressed in new clothes, and adorned with flowers and sindoor (vermillion), which is dear to the deity.

### 2. HANUMAN CHALISA RECITATION:

One of the most powerful aspects of Hanuman Jayanti is the chanting of the Hanuman Chalisa — a

40-verse hymn composed by Tulsidas. Devotees believe that reciting the Chalisa with devotion can remove obstacles, dispel fears, and bring strength and peace. Many communities organize collective recitations and akhand paath (continuous reading) on this day.

### 3. BHAJAN AND KIRTAN:

Musical offerings in the form of bhajans and kirtans dedicated to Lord Hanuman are held in temples and community gatherings. These spiritual melodies help devotees express their devotion and create a divine atmosphere full of energy and faith.

### 4. FASTING AND AUSTRITIES:

Several devotees choose to

fast on Hanuman Jayanti as a way to purify their body and mind. Some observe a full-day fast, while others follow a fruit or milk-based diet. Many also choose to wear white or saffron-colored clothes, symbolizing purity and devotion.

### PUJA VIDHI (RITUALS OF WORSHIP)

To perform Hanuman Jayanti puja at home or in a temple, the following steps are commonly observed:

#### • PREPARATION:

Begin by thoroughly cleaning the home and puja space. Take a bath and wear clean clothes. Decorate the altar with flowers and place a picture or idol of Lord Hanuman.

#### • OFFERINGS AND WORSHIP:

Light incense, lamps, and camphor. Offer fresh flowers, fruits, sweets (especially laddus), coconut, and Tulsi leaves. Begin the worship by reciting Hanuman Chalisa or any mantra dedicated to Hanuman.

#### • ABHISHEKAM AND DRESSING:

Bathe the idol with Panchamrit while chanting mantras. Wipe the idol gently, dress it in new clothes, and apply sindoor. Offer garlands made of marigold or Tulsi.

• **AARTI AND PRASAD:** Perform aarti with camphor and bells while singing the Hanuman Aarti. Distribute prasad among family and friends as a blessing from the deity.

### SPIRITUAL SIGNIFI-

### CANCE OF HANUMAN JAYANTI

Hanuman Jayanti is not just a celebration of a mythological figure; it is a reminder of eternal values that are deeply relevant even today. Hanuman stands as a symbol of:

- **Unwavering Devotion:** His loyalty and surrender to Lord Rama are unparalleled.
- **Fearlessness:** He undertook dangerous missions without hesitation, showcasing the courage that comes from faith.
- **Selfless Service:** Every action of his was rooted in seva, without seeking personal gain.
- **Humility and Wisdom:** Despite immense power, Hanuman remained humble and wise.

Devotees believe that by

worshipping Lord Hanuman, one can gain physical strength, mental clarity, emotional resilience, and spiritual elevation.

Hanuman Jayanti reminds us of the divine potential within each of us. As we chant his name, offer prayers, and reflect on his stories, we are reminded that courage, faith, and devotion can overcome any challenge. It is a festival that uplifts hearts, unites communities, and brings divine strength into everyday life.

Whether you celebrate it in April or during Diwali, the message remains eternal — serve with humility, love with devotion, and live with strength.

*The author is an astrologer and Vastu Expert.*

# Ravi-Pushya and Ramnavami at Shri Nahar Ganpati temple

## TDG NETWORK

On the auspicious occasion of Ravi-Pushya Nakshatra and Ramnavami, the sacred right-trunk, south-facing Ganpati idol of Shri Nahar Temple, located on Brahmapuri Mount Road, was ceremoniously anointed with Panchamrit on 6th April 2025 at 11 AM. Temple Yu-vacharya Pt. Manav Sharma shared that the Panchamrit Abhishek and Durva Marjan were conducted by Temple Mahant Pt. Jai Sharma, accompanied by the chanting of Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha and Shri Ganapati Ashottarshatanaamavali. Following the rituals, a Panchopchara Puja was performed, and sacred Ganpati Matrika hymns from the Rigveda were recited. Between 1:30 PM and 2 PM, Lord Ganpati was ceremoniously put to rest after being offered 21 Modaks with 21 Vedic mantras. Later in the evening, a grand Maha Aarti was conducted with 251 oil lamps. Devotees visiting the temple for darshan received consecrated Raksha Sutras, believed to bring happiness, prosperity, and remove obstacles from life.

Ravi Pushya Nakshatra is a highly auspicious period in Vedic astrology, occurring when the Pushya Nakshatra aligns with Sunday (Ravivar). This combination is believed to amplify the positive energies associated with both the day and the nakshatra, making it an ideal time for initiating new ventures, making significant purchases, and performing sacred rituals.

Understanding Pushya Nakshatra

Pushya Nakshatra, often referred to as the “Star of Nourishment,”

is one of the 27 lunar constellations in Vedic astrology. It is symbolized by a cow's udder, lotus, or an arrow, all representing nourishment, purity, and direction. Governed by the planet Saturn (Shani) and influenced by the deity Brihaspati (Jupiter), Pushya Nakshatra embodies qualities of care, nurturing, and spiritual wisdom. Individuals born under this nakshatra are often characterized by their compassionate nature, strong sense of duty, and inclination towards helping others.

Significance of Sunday (Ravivar) in Vedic Astrology  
Sunday is ruled by the Sun (Surya), symbolizing power, authority, and vitality. The Sun's energy is associated with leadership, confidence, and illumination. Activities initiated on Sundays are believed to be infused with the Sun's positive attributes, promoting success and recognition.

## FORMATION OF RAVI PUSHYA YOGA

When Pushya Nakshatra coincides with Sunday, it forms the Ravi Pushya Yoga, a rare and highly favorable astrological alignment. This combination merges the nurturing qualities of Pushya with the authoritative energy of Sunday, creating an opportune time for various auspicious activities. The synergy between Saturn's discipline and the Sun's vitality during this period is believed to enhance the effectiveness of endeavors undertaken.

## AUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES DURING RAVI PUSHYA



### NAKSHATRA

The Ravi Pushya period is considered ideal for:

- **Commencing New Ventures:** Starting businesses or projects during this time is believed to ensure long-term success and stability.
- **Financial Investments:** Making investments, especially in gold or property, is thought to attract prosperity and growth.
- **Purchasing Valuable Items:** Acquiring assets like vehicles, jewelry, or electronics is considered favorable, as it is believed to bring good fortune.
- **Spiritual Practices:** Engaging in rituals, prayers, and charitable activities during this period is said to amplify spiritual benefits and personal growth.

Rituals and Traditions Associated with Ravi Pushya Nakshatra  
Devotees often observe specific rituals during this

period to harness its positive energies:

- **Temple Visits:** Many visit temples to offer prayers and seek blessings for their endeavors.
- **Recitation of Mantras:** Chanting specific mantras dedicated to Lord Hanuman or other deities is common to invoke divine support.
- **Charitable Acts:** Donating to the needy and performing acts of kindness are believed to multiply the benefits received during this time.

## NOTABLE DATES FOR RAVI PUSHYA NAKSHATRA

The occurrence of Ravi Pushya Nakshatra varies each year. For instance, in 2024, this auspicious period fell on July 7th, starting from 5:29 am and ending on July 8th at 5:30 am.

Ravi Pushya Nakshatra holds a special place in Vedic astrology due to its association with prosperity,



success, and spiritual growth. The alignment of Pushya Nakshatra with Sunday creates a powerful window of opportunity for initiating important activities and making significant life decisions. By understanding and utilizing this auspicious period, individuals can align themselves with cosmic energies that support their aspirations and endeavors.

Donations on Ravi Pushya Nakshatra – Sacred Offerings for Auspicious Results  
Ravi Pushya Nakshatra is a powerful and rare astrological combination when Pushya Nakshatra (ruled by Jupiter) aligns with Sunday (Ravivar). This creates a highly auspicious time for daan (charity), believed to remove karmic obstacles, attract divine blessings, and open pathways to health, wealth, and spiritual elevation.

Here are some highly beneficial donations to

perform on Ravi Pushya Nakshatra, along with their significance:

### 1. GOLD OR YELLOW ITEMS

- **Symbolism:** Represents prosperity, purity, and solar energy.
- **Donate:** Gold/silver coins (even symbolic), yellow cloth, turmeric, saffron.
- **Benefits:** Attracts Lakshmi's blessings and removes financial hurdles.

### 2. GRAINS AND FOOD ITEMS

- **Symbolism:** Nourishment and selfless giving.
- **Donate:** Rice, wheat, jaggery, ghee, pulses, fresh fruits.
- **Ideal recipients:** Temples, orphanages, cowsheds (gaushalas), or poor families.
- **Benefits:** Fulfills basic karmic duty, brings household abundance.

### 3. COW AND COW-

## RELATED DONATIONS (GO DAAN OR GO SEVA)

- **Symbolism:** The cow is considered sacred and nourishing like a mother.
- **Donate:** Fodder, jaggery, green grass, or even sponsor cow care.
- **Benefits:** Highly meritorious, especially for wealth, progeny, and peace.

## 4. BOOKS, PENS, AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES

- **Symbolism:** Promotes knowledge and Saraswati's grace.
- **Donate to:** Students, schools, or underprivileged children.
- **Benefits:** Enhances your own clarity, wisdom, and removes obstacles in career or exams.

## 5. MEDICINES OR HEALTH ESSENTIALS

- **Symbolism:** Healing and compassion.
- **Donate:** Medicines, sanitiz-

ers, masks, basic health kits.

- **Benefits:** Brings relief from chronic ailments and invokes Dhanvantri's blessings.

## 6. WATER OR UMBRELLA DONATIONS

- **Symbolism:** Protection from heat (related to Surya).
- **Donate:** Earthen pots with water, fans, coolers, or umbrellas to workers.
- **Benefits:** Good for Pitra Dosh Nivaran, brings peace to ancestors.

## 7. YELLOW CLOTHES OR SANDALS

- **Symbolism:** Comfort and dignity.
- **Donate:** Cotton or woolen clothes (as per season), especially in yellow.
- **Benefits:** Enhances your Saturn and Jupiter energies, removes misfortune.

## 8. FEEDING BRAHMINs, SADHUS, OR THE POOR

- **Symbolism:** Traditional Vedic charity.
- **Offer:** Satvik food (like puri, halwa, chana), fruits, or sweets.
- **Benefits:** Increases punya, gives relief from planetary doshas.

## TIPS FOR DONATION:

- Always donate with a pure heart, no pride or expectation in return.
- Donate in the morning or Brahma Muhurat if possible.
- Chant mantras like “Om Dattatreya Namah” or “Om Shri Vishnav Namah” while giving.
- Do not seek credit or post about donations—silence enhances punya.
- So it can be said that it is an exclusive time and period to dive into rituals and spirituality.



# WHAT IS ‘HANDS-OFF’ PROTEST THAT HAS SPREAD ACROSS US

*Supported by both domestic and international forces, the protests represent one of the largest anti-Trump mobilizations since his return to the presidency.*

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Millions of Americans marched in the massive “Hands Off!” protest, a synchronised national campaign against President Donald Trump and Elon Musk. The marches, conducted in all 50 states and internationally, condemned Trump’s comprehensive budget reductions, termination of government employees, and Musk’s increasing control over public policy through the controversial Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Organized by more than 150 civil rights and labor organizations, the protests demanded an end to corporate meddling in government, defense of public programs such as Social Security and Medicaid, and protection of marginalized communities. Supported by both domestic and international forces, the protests represent one of the largest anti-Trump mobilizations since his return to the presidency.

## ORIGINS OF THE “HANDS OFF!” MOVEMENT

The “Hands Off!” movement arose in reaction to a string of aggressive and immensely unpopular policy initiatives launched by Trump’s reconstituted administration. At the center of the furor is the establishment of DOGE—an experimental government department led by Elon Musk and billed as a cost-savings wonder. But behind the branding is a dark truth: wholesale firings of federal employees, draconian cuts to essential services, and severe threats to the nation’s democratic foundations.



Protesters shout slogans as they take to the streets and march during a “Hands Off!” protest against President Donald Trump on Saturday in New York City. Credit: AP



Credit: X post/ @elchicanomarine

Critics urge that DOGE functions more as a corporate boardroom than as a democratic government. It has no oversight, advocates privatizing critical public services, and degrades traditional governing institutions. Activists worry that DOGE is being employed as a Trojan horse to dismantle the federal government internally—substituting public accountability with untrammeled corporate power. The movement’s most important demands are:

- An immediate halt to federal budget reductions targeting Social Security, Medicaid, veterans’ benefits, and public education.
- The ouster of Elon Musk from any advisory position in government policy.
- Legislative protections against corporate encroachment into public policy in the future.
- Defense of civil liberties and vulnerable communities at risk.

Protests across the world

The size of the demonstration is record-breaking. Over 1,200 mass-action protests took place at the same time across all 50 states, with demonstrations outside state capitals, federal buildings, congressional offices, and city halls. Tens of thousands of people were present in major cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, and San Francisco. In Washington, D.C., more than 20,000 demonstrators swamped the National Mall, shouting, “Hands off our rights!” and holding signs that said “Stop the Billion-

aire Coup.” Smaller cities also witnessed fervent turnout, indicating discontent is not only among coastal elites or city dwellers. It was a national cry, not a niche cry. Globally, solidarity protests broke out in London, Berlin, Paris, Toronto, and even Sydney. Over 600,000 individuals participated in protests outside the United States, according to Indivisible—a central group that spearheaded the movement. The global demonstrations highlighted the increasing concern that U.S. policies under Trump and Musk have far-reaching implications beyond American shores.



Julia Group, left, holds her daughter Esme, 3, and her neighbor Hannah Riviere-Platt, holding daughter Cora Petaccio, 3, march during a “Hands Off!” protest Saturday, April 5, 2025 down Colfax Avenue in Denver. Credit: The Colorado Sun

## TDG EXPLAINER

Why Trump and Musk became the faces of protest? President Trump’s militant, authoritarian-inclined agenda is once again at the center of American political turmoil. Since coming back to power, Trump has waged war on what he terms “big government waste,” but critics believe this is the code for cutting lifelines millions rely on—such as Medicare, food stamps, and housing aid. Elon Musk, whose nomination as DOGE chief has prompted scathing condemnation from civil rights organizations, economists, and even ex-members of Congress. The self-proclaimed visionary is no stranger to causing controversy with his opinions on AI, labor unions, and free speech. Musk’s role in government has done little to ease fears that his tech-libertarian agenda cannot coexist with the public good. Musk has promoted substituting “bloated” federal bureaucracies with AI-based systems—a vision that has already led to mad automation of vital services such as unemployment benefits, immigration processing, and healthcare signups. People view this as not innovation but a hostile billionaire takeover with no comprehension of social safety nets. The tariff policies pursued by the Trump administration have overburdened domestic industries, particularly manufacturing and agriculture. Once Trump’s steadfast supporters, the farmers of the Midwest now shoulder higher costs as well as smaller exports. As for the employees, layoffs among federal agencies from environmental protection to public health ruined the government’s capacity to mitigate crises. Public school budgets have been cut, leading to packed classrooms and a lack of teachers. Medicaid patients are experiencing delayed care because of administrative breakdown. Veterans housing programs have been eliminated in some states. These are not policy abstractions—these are working Americans’ everyday struggles. And for immigrants, LG-BTQ+, and minority communities, Trump’s return means increased crack-downs, unraveling of protections, and a dismantling of civil liberties. Protesters say that silence is not an option anymore.

## MOVEMENT DRIVEN BY EMERGENCY

What is powerful about the “Hands Off!” protests is that they are diverse. Labor unions, LGBTQ+, veterans, climate activists, educators, and students united under a common banner of resistance. Speakers at the rallies included such high-profile voices as Senator Elizabeth Warren, activist Rev. William Barber, and whistle-blowers within federal agencies. “This is not a protest,” one speaker in Boston said. “It’s a defense of the American promise.” Organizers vow this is just the start. Coordinated voter drives, general strikes, and a national day of action in May are already in the works. The movement is building infrastructure—not just outrage. The “Hands Off!” movement is a strong counterforce to the Trump-Musk axis. As more and more Americans awakened to the implications of unbridled corporate power and authoritarian rule, the protests have the potential to become a defining political moment. Whether such a civic uprising can compel policy reversals or influence the 2026 midterms is still to be seen. But what is certain is that millions no longer want to stand idly by while billionaires tear down democracy for profit.

# Why is Canada witnessing Hindu hate?

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Canada is witnessing a disturbing rise in Hindu temple vandalism, linked to growing extremism and geopolitical tensions. Authorities face mounting pressure to act decisively against hate targeting religious minorities. At least five Hindu temples in Ontario and British Columbia have been vandalized since late 2023. Graffiti with slogans like “Khalistan Zindabad” and “Down with Hindutva” have been found on temple walls, attributing the incidents to pro-Khalistani extremists.

## VANDALISM

- **Gauri Shankar Mandir, Brampton, Ontario (January 2023):** The temple was vandalized with anti-India graffiti, including slogans like “Khalistan Zindabad” and “Hindustan Murdabad.”
- **Shri Ram Mandir, Mississauga, Ontario (February 2023):** Vandals painted anti-India graffiti across the walls of the temple, which was denounced by the Consulate General of India in Toronto.
- **BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Toronto, Ontario (September 2023):** The temple was vandalized with slogans of “Khalistan Zindabad” and “Hindustan Murdabad.” Shree Mata Bhameshwari



Thousands of Canadian Hindus showed up at the Hindu Sabha Temple in Brampton to protest the coast-to-coast temple attacks seen on Diwali weekend. Photo | X

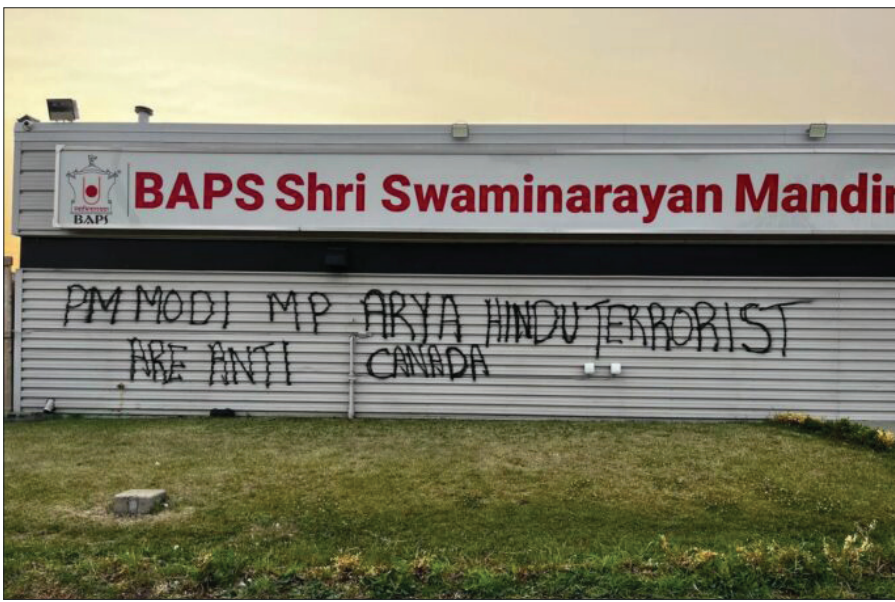
## TDG EXPLAINER

Durga Devi Society, Surrey, British Columbia (September 2023): The entrance to the temple was vandalized with graffiti reading “Punjab is not India.”

- **BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Edmonton, Alberta (July 2024):** Anti-Hindu and anti-India graffiti with messages against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian MP Chandra Arya were sprayed on the temple. Hindu Sabha Mandir, Brampton, Ontario (November 2024): There was violence with protesters waving Khalistan flags on a visit by Indian diplomats. It resulted in several arrests and sparked condemnation by leaders such as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.
- **BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Windsor, Ontario (April 2023):** Anti-India graffiti defaced the temple. The Windsor Police conducted a hate-motivated probe and released photographs of two suspects who were part of the vandalism.

## INDIA-CANADA TENSIONS

The increase in such incidents is concurrent with deteriorating diplomatic ties between India and Canada. Tensions escalated following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s accusation of India’s involvement in the June 2023 murder of Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia. India dismissed the accusations and struck back through travel advisories and suspension of visa services for Canadian nationals. Diplomacy, albeit slowly, has resumed since then. Consequences have had far-reaching and painful repercussions in the community level, however. The Hindu diaspora, primarily composed of diasporans remaining committed to pro-India feelings, has itself become a part of the battle zone of diaspora politics. Radicals directed attacks at the temple as representative stand-ins within the ideological conflict. Hindu groups and community leaders have been worried over the absence of robust denunciation by Canadian authorities. Most believe that the Trudeau government has failed to take definitive measures in checking hate crimes against Hindus. “Political leaders are intim-



Picture credit: Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce

idating us in our own house of worship, and the political leaders’ silence is deafening,” Ravi Subramanian, president of the Canadian Hindu Forum, said. “All hate crimes, be it against Sikhs, Jews, Muslims, or Hindus, need to be dealt with as urgently.” At the same time, Indo-Canadian police forces such as the Peel Regional Police and RCMP have opened probes, but in the high-profile temple desecration cases, no one has been arrested. The absence of accountability has worsened Indo-Canadian fears of an escalation of graffiti to hateful violence.

## EXTREMISM

Experts opine that online radicalization is fueling the problem. Social media sites such as Twitter and YouTube have become fertile soil for Khalistani propaganda and anti-Hindu hate speech. Influencers and activists on either side tend to amplify polarizing narratives, further polarizing diaspora communities. A 2024 report by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) cautioned against “increased online mobilization by foreign-influenced extremist groups” that could target minority communities or places of worship.

## INDIA’S OFFICIAL RESPONSE

India has strongly con-

demned the attacks and asked the Canadian government to provide security for its diaspora and Hindu places of worship. The High Commission of India in Ottawa has made several statements, asking for prompt justice and urging temple managements to report incidents or suspicious behaviour. During a March 2025 briefing, Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, “We are gravely concerned by increasing attacks on Hindu places of worship in Canada. We call upon the Canadian authorities to act firmly and maintain religious harmony.”

## WHAT LIES AHEAD?

The emerging Hindu hate in Canada is an ominous sign of how transnational politics can express itself as domestic violence. For a nation that boasts of its multiculturalism and religious tolerance, the Canadian government now has the pressing task of reasserting its commitment to safeguarding all faith communities, not merely through rhetoric but deeds. Unless urgent and real actions are initiated, the increasing gap between communities can only become larger, with temples serving as battlefields in a worldwide ideological war.



# EU CAUTIOUS ON BRAZIL’S PUSH FOR MULTILATERAL NEW CLIMATE BODY

Experts say real progress may now require a complete rethink of the Paris Agreement and how climate diplomacy works.

AGENCIES  
BRUSSELS

Brazil's idea to create a new multilateral body under the UN climate regime to fast-track implementation of COP decisions has triggered cautious responses from key developed countries, with Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden backing reform discussions but warning against weakening the core UNFCCC process. Brazil, which will host this year's UN climate conference or COP30 in Belem, has informally proposed setting up a "Climate Change Council" under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to improve how the world responds to climate change.

The idea is to speed up decision-making, coordinate efforts and improve implementation as many feel the current UN climate process is too slow and complicated.



While the Paris Agreement has helped lower projected warming since the start of the Industrial Revolution to around 2.1-2.8 degrees Celsius, the world is still off track for its 1.5 degrees Celsius goal. In fact, 2024 was the first year with global temperatures above 1.5 degrees Celsius for a full calendar year.

Climate impacts are worsening and global action is not keeping up. Many feel the UN climate talks are stuck in slow-moving negotiations with no real way to check if countries are doing enough. Experts say real progress may now require a complete rethink of the Paris Agreement and how climate diplomacy works.

Part of a five-member delegation from EU countries that visited India last week, Germany's Deputy Special Envoy for International Climate Action Gerhard Schlaudraff told journalists that the idea was discussed at the Petersberg Climate Dialogue in Berlin in March. He welcomed Brazil's move to start the conversation but warned against undermining the UNFCCC or the Paris Agreement. "There is a general idea that the Brazilians put forward... but there's also the idea for everybody who was in the room that the UNFCCC is right now the best thing we have and we should not throw it away," Schlaudraff said.

He said the UN climate process is an "expression of working multilateralism, where everybody has the same say at the table (and) every voice can be heard". Schlaudraff also said that one should not expect from COPs or the UNFCCC process what it cannot deliver. "Every year, the expectation is that the COPs will solve the climate crisis and that's not realistic," he said. European Union Special Envoy for Climate and Environment Anthony Aogo agreed that while UN climate talks can be slow, they remain irreplaceable. "But we simply cannot cling on to old sentiments when the world is turning this fast."

While Mr. Starmer said the government's priority remains to try and secure a trade deal with the U.S. which could include tariff exemptions, he said he will do "everything necessary" to protect the national interest. Britain was spared the most punitive treatment in Mr. Trump's tariff announcement on Wednesday when it was hit with the lowest import duty rate of 10%, but a global trade war will hurt its open economy. "This week we will turbocharge plans that will improve our domestic competitiveness, so we're less exposed to these kinds of global shocks," he said, adding that the government also wanted to strengthen alliances and reduce barriers to trade.



The Telegraph said that Mr. Starmer's government could bring in emergency reforms to reduce red tape around regulation and raised the prospect of targeted tax breaks to help affected sectors. British car maker Jaguar Land Rover said on Saturday it would pause shipments of cars to the U.S. for a month due to the tariffs, adding to fears about the impact on an industry which employs 200,000 people in the UK. Writing in the newspaper, Mr. Starmer reiterated he would take a "cool-headed" approach to the tariffs rather than immediately retaliating, but he added: "All options remain on the table".

## EU seeks united front as it aims to strike back at Trump tariffs

AGENCIES  
JOHANNESBURG

European Union countries will seek to present a united front in the coming days against U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs, likely approving a first set of targeted countermeasures on up to \$28 billion of U.S. imports from dental floss to diamonds.

Such a move would mean the EU joining China and Canada in imposing retaliatory tariffs on the United States in an early escalation of what some fear will become a global trade war, making goods more expensive for billions of consumers and pushing economies around the world into recession. The 27-nation bloc faces 25% import tariffs on steel and aluminium and cars and "reciprocal" tariffs of 20% from Wednesday for almost all other goods.

TARIFF IMPACT

- U.S. tariffs affect 70% of EU exports, including steel, pharmaceuticals, and more.
- The EU may target U.S. goods like meat, wine, clothing, and bourbon.
- The EU aims for a united front, prioritizing negotiations while preparing countermeasures.
- EU countries like France, Ireland, and Italy have different views on the response.

Trump's tariffs cover some 70% of the EU's exports to the United States - worth in total 532 billion euros (\$585 billion) last year - with likely duties on copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors and timber still to come. The European Commission, which coordinates EU trade policy, will propose to members late on Monday a list of U.S. products to hit with extra duties in response to Trump's steel and aluminium tariffs rather than the broader reciprocal levies.

It is set to include U.S. meat, cereals, wine, wood and clothing as well as chewing gum, dental floss, vacuum cleaners and toilet paper. One product that has received more attention and exposed discord in the bloc is bourbon. The Commission has earmarked a 50% tariff, prompting Trump to threaten a 200% counter-tariff on EU alcoholic drinks if the bloc goes ahead.

Wine exporters France and Italy have both expressed concern. The EU, whose economy is heavily reliant on free trade, is keen to make sure it has wide backing for any response so as to keep the pressure up on Trump ultimately to enter negotiations. Tibetan religious leader Tulkus are reported by Chinese authorities, as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration.

## Russian missile strike kills one, injures three in Kyiv

AGENCIES  
KYIV

A Russian missile attack on Kyiv killed one man and injured three other people overnight, causing damage and fires in several districts in the biggest such attack on Ukraine for weeks, Ukrainian officials said on Sunday.

The strike was the first large-scale attack using missiles and drones since the U.S. said late last month it had negotiated two ceasefire accords with Russia and Ukraine, including one that would on each other's energy infrastructure. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said



ongoing attacks showed Russia did not want to end the three-year-old war. "Such attacks are Putin's response to all international diplomatic efforts. Each of our partners - America, the whole of Europe, the whole world - has seen that Russia is going to continue to fight and kill," he said on the

Telegram messaging app. In a separate statement he said that he had instructed the defence and foreign ministers to intensify talks with partners, especially the U.S., on the supply of air defence equipment. Russian forces used ballistic and cruise missiles launched from both strategic bombers and naval fleets, as well as drones, during the overnight attack, Ukraine's air force said.

Zelenskyy called for increased manufacturing of air defence systems and missiles, suggesting that such production should be established in Ukraine. Andriy Yermak, Zelenskyy's chief of staff, posted a video of firefighters trying to put out fires at badly damaged buildings. Zelenskyy said that over the past week, Russia had launched more than 1,460 guided aerial bombs, nearly 670 attack drones and more than 30 missiles of various types against Ukraine.

## Netanyahu to meet Trump at White House; what's on the agenda?

AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to meet US President Donald Trump on Monday amid escalating Gaza tensions and imposition of tariffs. Trump has imposed 17 per cent tariffs on Israeli imported goods. This would be Netanyahu's second meeting with Trump at the White House since he took office in January. Both the leaders are likely to discuss the latest tariffs imposed, Gaza ceasefire and Iran's nuclear program. His visit also comes at a time when Netanyahu is facing the heat of the legal proceedings against him in Israel. Due to his Washington visit, the PM's office asked the Jerusalem District Court to postpone his expected appearances on Monday and Wednesday.

What's on the agenda list? A statement issued by the Netanyahu's office said that, "tariffs, efforts to release our hostages held in Gaza, Israel-Turkey relations, the Iranian threat and the battle against the International Criminal Court in The Hague" are on the list of discussions. The ICC issued an arrest warrant for Netanyahu alleging responsibility for war crimes in Gaza. Also, being one of the closest ally, Israel was taken by surprise when Trump included the country on a list of nations hit with higher tariffs in exports to the US. Interestingly, it came a day after Israel's finance minister announced the removal of all tariffs on US products. Though Israel jumped the gun to secure itself from the imposition of new US tariffs, it failed to work in favour for them.

Trump said that the US has a significant trade deficit with its ally. Both countries signed a free trade agreement 40 years ago and about 98 per cent of the goods from the US are now tax-free. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich pointed out that the imposition of tariffs could impact hit its machinery and medical equipment exports to the US. Meanwhile, Trump's 'baseline' tariff paid by the US importers has already taken effect at US seaports, airports and custom warehouses. Reportedly, during Netanyahu's recent visit to Budapest, he and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán spoke with Trump over phone call. Netanyahu's Washington visit was planned after the phone call. Another matter of discussion would be the relations with Turkey after the fall of the Assad regime in December last year.

## Tibetan religious leader dies in Chinese custody

AGENCIES  
BEIJING

Tibetan religious leader Tulkus are reported by Chinese authorities, as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration. His passing was confirmed by the Central Tibetan Administration, which reported that Chinese officials informed senior figures at Lunggon Monastery in Tibet's Gade County, Golog, of his death on April 2. However, the Chinese authorities have not disclosed the details surrounding his death nor returned his body, Tibet.net reported. Tulkus are reported by Chinese authorities, as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration. His passing was confirmed by the Central Tibetan Administration, which reported that Chinese officials informed senior figures at Lunggon Monastery in Tibet's Gade County, Golog, of his death on April 2. However, the Chinese authorities have not disclosed the details surrounding his death nor returned his body, Tibet.net reported. Tulkus are reported by Chinese authorities, as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration. His passing was confirmed by the Central Tibetan Administration, which reported that Chinese officials informed senior figures at Lunggon Monastery in Tibet's Gade County, Golog, of his death on April 2. However, the Chinese authorities have not disclosed the details surrounding his death nor returned his body, Tibet.net reported.

## Kyiv: Russia intensifies action in Sumy region



Ukraine's top general, who summed the northeastern Sumy region on Thursday, said Russian forces were intensifying their actions in the area in attempts to advance. The Ukrainian military is conducting defensive and assault operations to prevent the enemy from advancing deep into Ukrainian territory, General Oleksandr Syrskyy said on Facebook. Sumy borders Russia's Kursk region where Ukrainian forces have struggled in recent weeks to keep hold of Russian territory they captured in a cross-border offensive that began last August.

## Russia says Ukraine attacking energy infrastructure

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW

Ukraine continues to carry out attacks on Russian energy infrastructure despite a U.S.-brokered moratorium on strikes against energy facilities, the Russian Defence Ministry said on Sunday. According to the ministry, Ukrainian forces conducted seven such attacks over the last 24 hours in Crimea, Bryansk, Rostov, and Voronezh regions. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

In the Voronezh region, the attack damaged a gas distribution pipeline, the ministry said. In separate report the ministry said that Russian forces launched an overnight strike using long-range precision weapons and drones against Ukraine's central artillery armament base and defence industry enterprises involved in drone production. The location of the targets was not disclosed.



## Sri Lanka releases 14 Indian fishermen

AGENCIES  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Sunday released 14 Indian fishermen as a special gesture, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched for resolving the vexed issue with a "humane approach". The fishermen issue figured prominently during



talks between Prime Minister Modi and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Saturday.

Fourteen Indian fishermen were released as a special gesture, people familiar with the matter said.

The fishermen issue is a contentious matter in India-Sri Lanka ties. There have been several alleged incidents in the past of Sri Lankan Navy personnel using force against Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait which is a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka.

## US envoy urges Lebanon to rein in Hezbollah

AGENCIES  
BEIRUT

A senior U.S. envoy visited Beirut on Saturday amid a fragile ceasefire with Israel and mounting U.S. pressure on Lebanon to rein in the militant Hezbollah group, urging the Lebanese army to assert control over all national territory and prevent arms smuggling along the Syrian border. Deputy U.S. Special Envoy

to the Middle East Morgan Ortogus, who has been leading shuttle diplomacy between Lebanon and Israel under U.S. President Donald Trump's administration, met with Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri. Ortogus emphasized the need for the Lebanese Army to assert control over all Lebanese territory, not just south of the Litani River —

a boundary demarcated by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 that prohibits armed Hezbollah presence south of the river following the 2006 war with Israel. The boundary was reaffirmed with the November U.S.-brokered ceasefire that ended the 14-month war between Hezbollah and Israel. In a statement on X, formerly Twitter, Aoun, a former army commander, described his meeting with

Ortogus, in which they discussed regional security and economic recovery, as "constructive." Regarding Hezbollah's disarmament — a key U.S. demand — Ortogus praised the efforts of the Lebanese army but stressed that Washington expects further progress, a Lebanese official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to make public comments.



PICTURE PERFECT



Tamannaah Bhatia snapped in an embellished corset. (Image Credit: Instagram)

Ram Charan unveils bold new avatar in ‘Peddi’ teaser

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

On the special occasion of Ram Navami, the makers of Ram Charan starrer ‘Peddi’ unveiled a powerful teaser titled ‘Peddi First Shot’, giving fans a glimpse of the actor’s bold new avatar. Charan took to his X account on Sunday to drop the teaser and also shared that the film will release in theatres on March 27, 2026. The one-minute teaser shows Ram Charan walking into a dusty field as people cheer for him.



*The second poster provided a deeper look into his role, showing Ram Charan holding an old cricket bat in a rustic village stadium lit by floodlights, hinting at the film’s rural setting and intense themes.*

He lights a beedi and says, “I have only one life to live, and I want to make the most of it.” Earlier this month, the actor’s first-look posters from the film were shared by director, Buchi Babu Sana. In the first-look posters, Ram Charan embraces a raw and intense persona. His piercing gaze, untamed beard, messy hair, and nose ring give him a menacing aura. Dressed in a striped, red shirt and smoking a cigar, Ram Charan’s character exudes a fierce and earthy vibe.

vided a deeper look into his role, showing Ram Charan holding an old cricket bat in a rustic village stadium lit by floodlights, hinting at the film’s rural setting and intense themes.

Peddi is directed by Buchi Babu Sana and stars Janhvi Kapoor, Kannada superstar Shiva Raj Kumar, and Jagapathi Babu in prominent roles. The movie will also star Mirzapur fame Divyenndu in a significant role.

The makers had earlier unveiled the actor’s first look from the upcoming movie.

Peddi is produced by director Sukumar’s home banner, Sukumar Writings, while the music is composed by Oscar-winning musician AR Rahman. Meanwhile, Ram Charan was last seen in the much-discussed film ‘Game Changer’, directed by S. Shankar, which also starred Kiara Advani in the lead role.

Shreya Ghoshal returns to X, warns fans of fake ads

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Playback singer Shreya Ghoshal is finally back on X (formerly Twitter) after her account was hacked nearly two months ago. Ghoshal, on Sunday, took to her X account to share a video message with her followers, informing them that her account has now been restored. The popular singer, in her video message, also mentioned that it was a tough time for her to get help from the X support team, but someone from



the India team eventually helped her. “I am back!! I will be talking and writing here often. Yes, my X account has

been in trouble since it was hacked in February. Now, I have finally received help from the @X team after a lot of struggles in establishing

BRAIN PICKING

“Don’t cry over the past, it’s gone. Don’t stress about the future, it hasn’t arrived yet. Live in the present moment.”  
— MALAIKA ARORA  
(Indian Actress)

Jacqueline Fernandez’s mother Kim passes away

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Bollywood actress Jacqueline Fernandez’s mother, Kim Fernandez, passed away on Sunday, April 6. Jacqueline and her father, Elroy Fernandez, were earlier spotted at the Lilavati Hospital. Kim reportedly took her last breath at the Lilavati Hospital in Mumbai. Recently, Jacqueline

RAJKUMMAR RAO APPLAUDS HARYANA FILM FESTIVAL FOR NURTURING YOUNG TALENTS

AGENCIES  
ROHTAK

Bollywood actor Rajkumar Rao praised the Haryana Film Festival 2025 for empowering young talents to pursue careers in the film industry during his address at its inaugural ceremony on Saturday. He advised them to pursue acting with full heart and honesty, if passionate. The actor was invited as a chief guest at the event, along with Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. After the festival’s inauguration, the ‘Stree’ actor opened about his love for the city of Rohtak, which is his dear friend and actor Jaideep Ahlawat’s hometown.



“I have come to Rohtak for the first time. I have crossed it several times but stopped here for the first time. It is my FTII classmate and friend Jaideep Ahlawat’s city. He tells me a lot about this city, and I tell him of

Gurugram. I am very happy that the Haryana Film Festival is being organised in 2025,” said Rao.

The actor also advised the young talents to follow their passion for acting with honesty and hard work. He attributed himself as an example to prove that working with passion for the art form leads to success in the film industry.

“If you have passion for acting, direction, camera, editing, sound, screenwriting and others, then follow it. If it is a hobby, then keep it like that. But if you genuinely want to pursue it then work with your full heart and honesty. Example is in front of you,” said Rao.

Reflecting on his own journey, Rao shared that

when he began, there were no such opportunities. He urged today’s youth to seize the moment and make the most of these incredible initiatives.

“While I was growing up there were no opportunities. Now, there are a lot of opportunities. There is a lot of talent in the nation. Like the minister said, there is no need for the industry look for talent outside; we have a lot of talent, and our own industry is thriving, and it’s true. I am from the industry, and I know it,” Rao added. The actor also expressed his gratitude to Saimi and extended his greetings to Maharshi Dayanand University (MDU) for the success of the Haryana Film Festival 2025.

I’m doing a couple of projects for OTT: Sunny Deol

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Following the massive success of ‘Gadar 2’, which reignited his popularity among fans, Hindi cinema star Sunny Deol says he is ready to embark on a new phase in his 42-year career with a few upcoming projects in the streaming space.



Deol, the action star of 1990s films ‘Ghatak’, ‘Arjun’, and ‘Damini’, returned to the movies with a bang in 2023 with the sequel to his 2001 blockbuster ‘Gadar: Ek Prem Katha’. The 67-year-old actor, who is awaiting the release of his film ‘Jaat’, said

his OTT debut will allow people to watch his work on more than one medium.

“I’m doing a couple of projects for OTT, and they are not meant for the silver screen because the audience for that is niche. So, it’s best to go there (OTT).

People keep watching your films on different platforms. It is an interesting thing (medium) for actors and directors because it offers all kinds of variety, and you don’t have to restrict yourself to something,” Deol told a news

agency in an interview. The actor said he wants to explore “newer kinds of roles”.

“I’m already doing something (like that); I’m looking into it. But it all depends on if a writer and director offer you something (different). If you try and look for it, then it becomes difficult,” he added.

Deol credited OTT platforms for making his films relevant for the new generation of cinemagoers.

“Those who didn’t see our films in cinemas (halls) but they became relevant on digital platforms, and today’s generation got to see them.

Kareena Kapoor Khan organises get-together with friends and family

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Kareena Kapoor Khan hosted a get-together at her residence over the weekend, and fans loved the glimpse into the fun-filled afternoon. The gathering included close friends and family -- Soha Ali Khan, Kunal Kemmu, Neha Dhupia, Angad Bedi, and others.



Soha Ali Khan took to her Instagram account to share a bunch of adorable pictures from the mini party, giving fans a sneak peek of their chilled-out Sunday. In the first photo, the group is seen sitting around a dining table, smiling for the camera. Kareena looked stylish in an orange tank top and

white pants. Neha Dhupia, sitting beside her, wore a comfy denim dress. Soha looked elegant in a white full-sleeved top and black pants, while Kunal Kemmu sported a white T-shirt and red cap. Angad Bedi was seen in a white shirt and jeans.

One photo showed Ku-

nal in a swimming pool, while another funny one captured him balancing a spoon on his nose during lunch. In another fun snap, Kunal had a white towel over his face and posed beside Angad Bedi -- a playful nod, it seems, to Soha’s role in the upcoming horror film Chhorii 2.



skipped performing at the IPL ceremony in Guwahati due to her mother’s ill health. A source close to the actress informed us that the ‘Murder 2’ actress’s mother was in the ICU, recovering while they waited for more updates from the doctor.

Earlier today, Jacqueline and her father, Elroy, were spotted entering a building for Kim’s funeral. Actor

Sonu Sood has also reached the location to attend the funeral of his Fateh co-star’s mother. Meanwhile, on the acting front, Jacqueline was last seen sharing screen space with Sood in ‘Fateh,’ which marked the latter’s directorial debut. The film is an action-packed thriller inspired by real-life cybercrime events during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sreeleela dragged into crowd by fans

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Actors Kartik Aaryan and Sreeleela are filming for Anurag Basu’s yet-to-be-named film. Sreeleela recently got into a fright when she was forcibly dragged into a crowd, which went unnoticed by Kartik. Her crew had to come and rescue her from being dragged deeper into the crowd.

In a video posted by a paparazzo on Instagram on Sunday, Sreeleela and Kartik are spotted walking through a crowd with

their entourage. Sreeleela walked slightly behind Kartik when she got pulled into the crowd by a fan, unaware that Kartik was still walking ahead. Fortunately, her team stepped in and pulled her back before she was pulled further into the crowd. Sreeleela appeared visibly shaken but kept smiling as she spoke to her team. Kartik

glanced back at the commotion after she was back but

did not appear to understand what had occurred. Where and when the video was taken wasn’t stated. As soon as the video began doing rounds on Instagram and X (formerly Twitter), fans were worried about her safety.





# KOLKATA PAYS TRIBUTE TO RAMKINKAR BAIJ WITH A GRAND ART EXHIBITION AND BOOK LAUNCH

*Event Showcases Original Paintings and Sculptures, Celebrates Legacy of the Iconic Artist*

TDG NETWORK  
KOLKATA

Kolkata the city of joy came alive with creativity and nostalgia as it hosted an extraordinary art exhibition and book launch dedicated to the legendary sculptor and painter, Ramkinkar Baij. Held at Nazrul Tirtha, New Town, the event showcased Baij's original paintings and sculptures while celebrating his profound contributions to modern Indian art.

The event attracted some of India's most celebrated artists, critics, and dignitaries, making it one of the most significant tributes to Baij in recent years. Among the distinguished guests were Shri Lalu Prasad Shaw, Shri Niranjan Prasad, Smt. Suktisubhra Pradhan, Dr. Sanjeev Kishore Gautam, Shri Chandranath Das, Shri Kamaldeep Dhar, Shri Vimal Chand, Shri Amit Kalla, Shri Radhey Shyam, Shri Partha Shaw, Smt. Shashikala Singh, and Smt. Japani Shyam. Their presence underscored the importance of Baij's artistic legacy and its continued impact on contemporary Indian art.

The event's Chief Guest was Dr. Sanjeev Kishore Gautam, Director General-National Gallery of Modern Art, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, who inaugurated the event, emphasising Baij's revolutionary artistic vision. Smt. Ritika Chanda Parruck MBE,



Director of Education at the British Council, New Delhi, attended as the Guest of Honour, further elevating the event's prestige. Shri. Prayag Shukla- Sahitya Akademi award winner, eminent Hindi poet, author and art critic, was also present at the occasion.

The exhibition presented an extensive collection of Baij's original works, allowing visitors to experience his bold and experimental style up close. As a pioneer of modern Indian sculpture and painting, Baij's fearless creativity continues to inspire new generations of artists. Alongside his

works, the exhibition featured masterpieces from legendary artists, including: Late M.F. Husain – a trailblazer of Indian modern art, Abdur Rahman Chughtai – renowned for his Indo-Persian artistic style, Shri Prodosh Dasgupta – a leading sculptor of the Bengal School, K.G. Subramanian – a master of Indian modernism, Tyeb Mehta – famous for his powerful, expressionist compositions, Jangarh Singh Shyam – a pioneer of contemporary Gond art, and Shri Lalu Prasad Shaw & Shri Niranjan Prasad – stalwarts of Indian modernist move-

ments. By showcasing these distinguished artists, the exhibition sparked a dynamic dialogue between past and present, reinforcing Baij's influence on modern Indian art.

A major highlight of the event was the handing over of the 1st Ramkinkar Baij Lifetime Achievement Award 2025 to Shri. Lalu Prasad Shaw, Shri. Niranjan Pradhan and Smt. Suktisubhra Pradhan for their contribution to the Modern Indian Art.

Adding to the significance of the event was the much-anticipated launch of “The Unseen Life of Ram-

kinkar Baij,” authored by Chandranath Das and co-authored by Chandrima Das. The book provides an intimate look at Baij's life, creative journey, and artistic contributions, revealing lesser-known aspects of his personality and evolution as an artist.

Vijay Prabhat Shukla, the driving force behind the Ramkinkar Baij exhibition in Kolkata and the publication of “The Unseen Life of Ramkinkar Baij,” shared his journey. Over two years, he traveled across Bengal, visiting places like Santiniketan, Bankura, and Bhetia-Bolpur, to delve

deep into Baij's life. Captivated by his story and art, Shukla decided to publish the book. He expressed his excitement about the overwhelming response, stating, “It is truly gratifying to see such enthusiasm for Ramkinkar Baij's work. This exhibition is not just a tribute but also a platform to reignite conversations about his contributions to Indian art. We hope this inspires a new generation of artists and art lovers to explore and appreciate his legacy.”

Curator and co-author Chandrima Das added, “Baij's artistic journey

was defined by fearless experimentation and radical ideas. This exhibition and book aim to celebrate his trailblazing spirit and showcase how his work continues to inspire contemporary Indian artists.”

The exhibition features an impressive collection of 72 artworks, including 60 paintings and 12 sculptures. Among the legendary artists, 14 artworks (12 paintings and 2 sculptures) are displayed, with contributions from Ramkinkar Baij (6), MF Husain (1), Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1), KG Subramanyan (3), Tyeb Mehta (1), and Jan-

garh Singh Shyam (2). Senior eminent artists have contributed 18 artworks (12 paintings and 6 sculptures), including Lalu Prasad Shaw (6), Niranjan Pradhan (6 sculptures), and Suktisubhra Pradhan (6). Additionally, contributing artists from across India have presented 40 artworks (36 paintings and 4 sculptures), featuring works by Dr. Sanjeev Kishore Goutam (4), Chandranath Das (6), Kamaldeep Dhar (4 sculptures), Vimal Chand (4), Amit Kalla (5), Radhey Shyam (4), Partha Shaw (6), Shashikala Singh (4), and Japani Shyam (3).

## Pracheen Kala Kendra showcases 54th All India Bhaskar Rao Nritya and Sangeet Sammelan

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Pracheen Kala Kendra organised the six-day Annual 54th All India Bhaskar Rao Nritya and Sangeet Sammelan, celebrating India's classical performing arts with distinguished performances and esteemed dignitaries at Tagore Theatre Chandigarh.

The festival opened with a soulful Shehnai recital by Lokesh Anand rendering Raga Yaman in ek taal (vilambit) and drut teen taal, accompanied by Pt. Vinod Lele on tabla—followed by a captivating Kathak performance by Pt. Rajendra Gangani. Chief Guest Purna Puri (Chandigarh Administration) was felicitated by Dr Shobha Koser and Sajal Koser. Eminent personalities in art and journalism, including Padmashree Prof Somnath Bhatu and Manjushree Chatterjee, were honored with awards and mementos.

Eminent vocalist Dr Nivedita Singh presented a soulful recital featuring alaap and compositions in vilambit ek taal and drut teen taal. This was followed by a unique sitar-sarod jugalbandi by the Mohan Brothers (Lakshya Mohan and Aayush Mohan), with renowned tabla accompaniment by Ustad Rafiuddin Sabri. The session was broadcast live on social media, with a tribute paid to Founder Late Guru M L Koser.

Pandit Abhay Rustam Sopori mesmerized the audience with a santoor recital in Raga Marwa, accompanied by Ustad Akram Khan



on tabla. A Bharatanatyam duet by Samrat Dutta and Shantanu Roy, set in Raag-Tilang and Taal-Chatushr Ekam, paid homage to Lord Shri Ram, supported by vocal, mridangam, violin, and nattuvangam accompaniment. Flute virtuoso Pt. Ajay

Shankar Prasanna, a three-time Grammy nominee, unfolded the complex Raga Vachaspati in both madhya laya ek tal and drut laya teen taal. This was followed by an Odissi dance presentation led by Padma Shri Guru Durga Charan Ranbir's troupe, depicting

devotional themes and the rejuvenating power of the Sun God.

Vidushi Shubhra Guha of the Agra Gharana rendered an expressive vocal performance in Raag Jhinjhoti, followed by compositions in vilambit and drut Teen Taal. An instrumental fusion by

Pandit Ramdas Palsule, Pt. Milind Tulankar, and Ustad Taufiq Qureshi showcased a blend of jaltarang, tabla, and djembe, engaging the audience through interactive sessions.

The finale featured a splendid violin recital by Dr Santosh Kumar Nahar, who presented Raga Kirwani through alaap, jod, and jhala, followed by a dynamic jugalbandi with tabla. A trio of female tabla artists—Vidushi Rimpia Siva, Vidushi Sangita Agnihotri, and Vidushi Sunayana Ghosh—delivered a captivating performance in Teen Taal. Chief Guest Vikas Sabharwal (PPS, Punjab Police) was honored, and the event concluded with heartfelt thanks to all participants and guests.

## Grace in Motion: Neeti Jain and Troupe Enchant with ‘Mool’

TDG NETWORK  
GURUGRAM

The stage at Epicenter came alive as Neeti Jain and her troupe delivered a breathtaking Kathak recital, blending tradition, storytelling, and artistic brilliance. The evening was a true celebration of the Lucknow Gharana, where rhythmic footwork, expressive abhinaya, and captivating chakkars enthralled the audience.

Titled Mool, the performance explored the essence of success, weaving together the crucial elements of a Guru's guidance, failure, focus, discipline, and perseverance. Conceptualized, written, and designed by Neeti Jain, the production featured original music composed by Samiullah Khan.

A dedicated Kathak exponent, Neeti Jain has trained under esteemed Gurus since the age of six and holds a Prabhakar degree from Prayag Sangeet Samiti. Her mastery was evident in her evocative storytelling, intricate tatkaar, and fluid movements, drawing audiences into timeless narratives of mythology and philosophy.



*The stage at Epicenter came alive as Neeti Jain and her troupe delivered a breathtaking Kathak recital, blending tradition, storytelling, and artistic brilliance.*

The event was graced by renowned Kathak dancers Nalini Jain and Richa Jain as chief guests, inspiring the students of Mudra Dance Studio, who also took the stage. With over a decade of teaching experience, Neeti has trained more than 60 students, instilling not just technique but the soul of Kathak through Mudra's unique approach.

A standout element of the evening was the seamless integration of drama, lighting, and costume design, elevating the visual and

emotional impact of the performance. Every movement resonated deeply, leaving the audience spellbound.

As the final echoes of the ghungroos faded, thunderous applause filled the auditorium, marking the success of an evening that reaffirmed the timeless beauty of Kathak. With performances like these, Mudra Dance Studio continues to uphold and evolve the legacy of classical dance, proving that tradition, when nurtured with passion and commitment, remains ever-relevant.



One Frame Story



# RESPLENDENT RAYALASEEMA: TEMPLES AND MORE



RAVI VALLURI

Rayalaseema is an arid and sun-baked region by day and as the sun sinks into the western skies, an unexpected chill sets in and a cool breeze waft across the desiccated landscape.

A pilgrim reaching Guntakal in Rayalaseema region perforce heads to the Sri Nettikanti Anjaneya Swami Temple, the famous Lord Hanuman temple in Kasapuram, barely 4km from the railway station.

In quick succession he is also chaperoned to the Bug-gasangala Sivalayam, Jam-budweepachakra at Kona-kondla, Sri Venkateswara Temple and eventually to the Sri Guntakallappa Temple (the presiding deity of Guntakal).

Rayalaseema is a geographic entity in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. It includes the southern districts of Chittoor, Kadapa, Kurnool and Anantapur, an area of 67,526 km2. Al-



though Rayalaseema is a piffling region compared to the rest of Telugu-speaking areas, its contribution to Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, and Urdu arts, culture and literature is unparalleled.

The well-known suzerain of the Rayalaseema region was Sri Krishnadevaraya. It was also the original home of the Eastern Chalukyas, who gradually expanded their sway over Karnataka under pressure from the Chola kings.

During the British era, the Nizam of Hyderabad ceded this area to the British, and the area came to be known as the 'Ceded Districts.' Around the time of the freedom movement, the area was renamed as Rayalaseema; an amalgamation of the words 'Rayala' (from the title 'Raya' or 'Rayalu' used by the Vijayanagara kings) and 'seema', which was an administrative unit of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Rayalseema is larger than several states in India and borders Tamil Nadu to the south, Karnataka to the west and Telangana to the north.

It would be singular to mention that signs and symbols play a role in all the world's religions as objects on which thoughts and prayers can be focussed. Spiritual and religious symbols point a way through the numinous world of religious belief, acting as badges

of faith, teaching tools and aids on the pilgrimage towards appreciating complex philosophies.

The landscape of Rayalaseema is dotted with a humungous number of temples and pilgrimage spots which provide sanctuary to the faithful. The most prominent is the Lord Venkateswara Temple, the Lord of Seven Hills at Tirumala. There are several others too. Important among these is the Sri Bhramaramba Mal-



likarjana Swami temple at Srisailem, the only temple in India revered as a Jyotirlinga and Shaktipeeth. The fabled Khadiri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Kadri and Tallapaka the birthplace of the legendary Annamacharya are significant spots.

In modern times the devout make a beeline to the Raghavendra Swami Mutt at Mantralayam on the banks of Tungabhadra River. Raghavendra Swami

is believed to be in a state of live samadhi over here. At Puttaparthi is Prashanti Nilayam, where Bhagwan Satya Sai Baba lived and cast his mortal self. The abode of Jiddu Krishnamurthy, erudite scholar and philosopher is located at Madanapalle near Horsley Hills.

The region of Rayalaseema is replete with history, historical places, ancient historical sites like the Belum caves and an array of tem-

ples. It is a must visit area for agnostics, theists, and atheists alike. "Your daily life is your temple and your religion. When you enter it take with you all," wrote Khalil Gibran. The inhabitants of Rayalaseema adhere to this principle in letter and spirit.

*Ravi Valluri is working as the CEO of Chhattisgarh Est Railway Ltd. He is the author of Bombay Review and Other Stories.*

## My first impressions of the city and things to do in Taipei, Taiwan

MANJULIKA PRAMOD

Seeking thrill and adventure? Planning a not-so-crowded but a hidden gem kind of getaway? Looking for a culture-rich destination? Taiwan, one of the most underrated Asian countries is awaiting you. A little away from the downtown, the scenery of Taiwanese cities is breathtaking, everywhere. And as I explored further, what really took me by surprise were their highly rewarding and immersive cultural experiences, ethnically slow-living regions and nature-focused activities. Until I visited Taiwan, I had no idea that this island nation had a lot to offer, something interesting for everyone. And if you love Boba Tea (like I do), travelling to its motherland and indulging in loads of it is undoubtedly one of the best trips that you can gift yourself. A customary shot of me drinking Boba tea was mandatory for my travel brag.

As my flight started making a descent to the Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, the vistas unfolding below called for my undivided attention. There was a familiar feeling of excitement and nervousness. I couldn't wait to unravel the mystique and obscure beauty of Taiwan. Off the coast of southeastern China, Taiwan is an island, located in the western Pacific Ocean, and is officially called the Republic of China (ROC), (not to be confused with the People's Republic of China). To know about Taiwan, spending a few days in Taipei was one of the highlights of my trip. I prefer to gather my first impressions of a new country by observing the culture and attitude of the people of its capital city. I travelled with no preconceived notion and learned from the locals, about its tumultuous history, the culture, the currency, the food, the economy and the festivals in this part of the world, on-the-go.

Honestly, there are several other places and regions worth seeing out-



Boba Tea

side the Taipei city and in other regions of Taiwan but the capital city exudes an unmissable vibe. It is a city that can never leave you unimpressed. Taipei was recently voted the second-best city for night-life in Asia (12th best in the world) by Time Out. With perfectly balanced city attractions like Taipei 101, National Palace Museum, Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, historic temples, night markets, panoramic views to towering skyscrapers, exciting bars, karaoke, lively clubs, shopping markets and 24 hour bookstores, not only did I find the city cool and dandy but also safe and tourist friendly. The city won me over slowly and steadily. I loved it when I shopped till 2 a.m. in one of its night markets and took a taxi back to my hotel without an iota of fear. Also, no matter where I went, I always experienced the warmth and friendliness of the people. They always tried their best to answer my questions, tackle my inquisitiveness, serve me meat-free food and ensure that I had a pleasant stay in their country.

Up in Taipei, which is just off the rugged North coast, my exploration began with wandering through charming alleyways and discovering hidden gems like quirky cafes, tea shops, vibrant boutiques, and shopping markets. Those who wish to start at the main food and shopping hub of Taipei, Xi Men Ding is the place to begin with. Some tourists also gravitate to Tonghua, Jing Mei and Raohe night markets which are all fun in their own ways. Those who are looking for most local of Taipei's major night markets, Nan-jichang Night Market lives up to its rich reputation for excellent food and central location. Shilin is the largest night market in Taiwan but for shopping and fun games, Xi Men Ding is my favorite. There are lots of alleys and footpaths to explore around.

Ask anyone who has lived there or spent some time in the capital city, they ought to vouch that Taipei is one of the best hiking cities of the world. As the city sits in a basin, literally surrounded by mountains, even though you are in the city full of high rise buildings,



National Palace Museum



Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall

there are dozens of walking and hiking trails. Nature lovers are in for a treat as panoramic views outside the city are made up of waterfalls, hot springs, volcanic fumaroles, tea plantations, coastal views, and more. And the best part is some of the trails are easily accessible with MRT and less than two hours in length. While Xiangshan aka Elephant Mountain Trail is most-sought after, the locals also suggest Tiger Mountain, Huang Didian, Jimianshan, and Fuzhou Mountain trail for some of the best pictures. If you have only one day to spare, Yangmingshan National Park (one of the 9 national parks in Taiwan) is rich in hiking opportunities, and is the closest one to Tai-

pei. If you wish to indulge in hot springs, Beitou hot springs is a popular one and not very far from the downtown. For a private hot springs experience, there are a plenty of hotels in the area.

Taipei 101 formerly known as the Taipei World Financial Center may not be the tallest building in the world but this one-of-its-kind engineering project of Taiwan fetches best views of the city. It deserves a visit for it was the world's first skyscraper to exceed half a kilometer when it was opened in the year 2004. I would like to believe that it inspired the other countries to aim for the sky. One of the fastest lifts took me to 89th floor and from there the stairs walk to the 91st



Night Market



Taiwan-night-markets-1



Tamsui-Wuji-Tianyuan-Temple-3-Cherry blossom

floor makes for a thrilling trip. After spending time at the observation deck, it would be a sin to miss the amazing food at Din Tai Fung, one of the much-loved dumpling restaurants in Taipei.

I am glad I found my way to this massive building, which fortifies one of the most important chapters of Taiwanese history. Dedicated to Taiwan's founder, Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (a national monument) is a must-visit on every itinerary. The library and a museum inside the memorial document Chiang Kai-shek's life and career, giving a

glimpse into Taiwan's history and evolution. Plan your trip around the time when change of guard ceremony takes place. It occupies a permanent memory in my Taiwan folder.

While exploring the capital, dedicating a day or half to the National Palace Museum is highly recommended, especially this year. The centenary celebrations of the museum are in full swing. If you are wondering if Taiwan is that old enough, there comes the spin. The museum was originally established in 1920 in the Forbidden City, Beijing and in the year of 1925, the royal collection

was opened for public display. Political upheaval changed its destiny and lucrative source of Chinese imperial artifacts, world-class jade, unimaginable pottery, calligraphy and other precious artworks found its way into Taipei. The 19th century Jadeite cabbage is to the Taipei National Palace Museum what the painting of Mona-lisa is to Louvre. The museum lovers also find their way to the Taipei Astronomical Museum. When it comes to the temples in Taipei, Longshan, Bao-an and Confucius offer a beautiful mix of ornate, trendy, old and new. They are also great place to learn about religion and faith in Taipei.

If you would love to walk through timelessness and immerse yourself in deep history, Dadacheng neighborhood by the Tamsui River on Taipei City's west side is perfect for a day adventure. And I really can't forget to appreciate the amazing train system in Taipei and its connectivity. Everyone lines up in a single queue before boarding. After returning from Taipei, I realized how different and authentic the city is.

It is almost impossible to find a bad bubble tea in the whole of the city. The utterly delicious combination of tapioca, brown sugar and cold milk calls for a celebration every day. From cheap eats to five star restaurants, Taiwan is a foodie's paradise but there is always a day when you would want to indulge in Indian food in the foreign land. A trip to Mayur Indian Kitchen is a must-do.

There is always something happening in Taipei. Many annual events transform the city into a magical wonderland. From the mesmerizing Nuit Blanche Taipei in November to the festive Christmas celebrations in December to Taipei Lantern Festival, which takes place two weeks after the Lunar New year (Spring Festival), the capital city offers marvelous experiences.



# GT BEAT SRH BY SEVEN WICKETS IN IPL

**TDG NETWORK**  
HYDERABAD

Gujarat Titans (GT) delivered a dominant all-round performance to beat Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by seven wickets in an Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 encounter on Sunday. The visitors shone with both ball and bat, registering a clinical win and deepening SRH's woes with their fourth consecutive defeat.

Opting to bowl first on a slow, black-soil surface at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, GT's bowlers made full use of the conditions. Mohammed Siraj led the charge with a career-best spell of 4 for 17 in four overs, dismantling SRH's top and lower order. Prasidh Krishna (2/25) and R Sai Kishore (2/24) lent crucial support as GT restricted SRH to a modest 152 for 8.

Siraj struck early, removing Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma during the powerplay. The Head-Siraj rivalry, which ignited during last year's Border-Gavaskar Trophy, was renewed briefly as Head managed two fours before chipping one to midwicket for 8. Siraj's signature wobble-seam delivery did the trick again. Abhishek, who showed glimpses of form with four boundaries, miscued a catch to mid-on in Siraj's third over. The pacer returned at the death to clean up Aniket Verma and Impact Player Simarjeet Singh with pinpoint york-



Gujarat Titans' Ishant Sharma and teammates celebrate the wicket of Sunrisers Hyderabad's Ishan Kishan during their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 match, at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, in Hyderabad on Sunday. (ANI Photo)

Siraj's haul included his 100th IPL wicket and further cemented his place as the most effective powerplay bowler this season, with an economy of 6.27.

SRH struggled throughout their innings, managing only two sixes—the first of which came in the 13th over. Nitish Kumar Reddy top-scored with 31, while Heinrich Klaasen added 27. Skipper Pat Cummins injected some late energy with an unbeaten 22 off 9 balls, hitting two sixes. However, the total remained underwhelming, given the surface and GT's depth in batting.



Gujarat Titans' Mohammad Siraj celebrates the wicket of Sunrisers Hyderabad's Travis Head during their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 match, at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, in Hyderabad on Sunday. (ANI)

In the chase, GT lost Jos Buttler early, with Cummins dismissing him for a duck in the opening over.

But Washington Sundar, playing a key role at No. 4, launched a counter-attack. He smashed 23 off just nine

balls during the power-play, easing pressure and ensuring GT stayed ahead of the asking rate. Sundar continued his aggressive approach to score 49 off 29 balls, falling just one short of his maiden IPL half-century.

Captain Shubman Gill played the anchor's role with poise, compiling an unbeaten 61 off 43 balls. His innings featured elegant strokes and calm leadership. Sherfane Rutherford added the finishing touches with a blistering 35\* off just 16 balls, as GT chased down the target in just 16.4 overs.

Sunrisers Hyderabad: Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, Nitish Reddy, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Kamindu Mendis, Aniket Verma, Pat Cummins (c), Zeeshan Ansari, Mohammed Shami, Simarjeet Singh

Impact Subs: Abhinav Manohar, Sachin Baby, Rahul Chahar, Wiaan Mulder, Simarjeet Singh

Gujarat Titans: Shubman Gill (c), Sai Sudharsan, Jos Buttler (wk), Washington Sundar, Rahul Tewatia, Shahrulkh Khan, Rashid Khan, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, R Sai Kishore, Ishant Sharma

Impact Subs: Sherfane Rutherford, Glenn Phillips, Anuj Rawat, Mahipal Lomror, Arshad Khan

With this commanding win, GT reaffirmed their status as strong contenders, while SRH will need to regroup quickly before slipping further behind in the playoff race.

# Fiery Siraj helps GT restrict SRH to 152/8

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Mohammed Siraj bowled with fire in his belly to return excellent figures of 4/17 as Gujarat Titans restricted Sunrisers Hyderabad to 152 for eight in their Indian Premier League match here on Sunday.

A series of information-based joint operations by the Indian Army and Assam Rifles formations in Manipur resulted in the apprehension of six cadres and the recovery of twenty-two weapons, grenades, ammunition and other war-like stores.

The operations were undertaken in coordination with Manipur Police, CRPF, BSF and ITBP in the hill and valley districts of Imphal West, Kakching, Imphal East, Churachandpur and Bishnupur between April 4 and 05, 2025, said the Army.

Army and Manipur Police apprehended two cadres and recovered a pistol from Karpur Sangha of Imphal East district.

In Chandpur of Bishnupur district, four weapons comprising one Self Loading Rifle (SLR), one Carbine, one .303 Rifle, one Double Barrel Rifle, ammunition

and war-like stores were recovered by Army and Manipur Police on 04 April 2025 and one SLR, one 303 Rifle, one gun with a telescopic sight, one 0.177gun, two Pistols, ammunition



and war-like stores were recovered from Khongam Pat of Imphal West.

On the same day, in Kakching district Assam Rifles and Manipur Police apprehended two cadres and recovered two pistols, ammunition and war-like stores from Khongjom Khebaching, Churachandpur district. Two cadres were also recovered from D Vaion of the same district.

In Imphal East district, one Carbine, four Pistols, one .22 Rifle, one 12 Bore Single Barrel Rifle, two Single Bore Barrel Rifles, grenades, ammunition and war-like stores were recovered from Ngariyan Hill.

The apprehended individuals and recovered stores have been handed over to the Manipur Police for further investigation and dispersal.

Earlier on April 5, Security forces recovered arms and ammunition during the search operations and area domination conducted in the fringe and vulnerable areas of hill and valley districts of Manipur, stated an official press release. In one such operation, security forces recovered a significant cache of arms and ammunition from Laisoi hill areas under Keibul Lamjao Police Station, in Bishnupur district.

# Argentina Shooting World Cup: Esha Singh bags silver

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI

Air Pistol Mixed Team world champion Esha Singh, bagged a second individual International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup silver, tallying 35 in the women's 25m pistol final, to finish behind China's Sun Yujie, who won gold with 38 hits after the 10th and final five-shot series. Sun's compatriot Feng Sixuan won bronze. Double Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker, who also made the final, finished sixth eventually.

India now has one medal of each colour at the ongoing ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun in Buenos Aires, Argentina, after Chai Singh won bronze in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P) and Sift Kaur Samra, a gold in women's 3P on Friday.

The Indians had to first qualify for the final eight early on Saturday morning, and Manu, who was fourth overnight, returned



a pleasing 294 in the second rapid-fire round to qualify in third spot, with a total of 585. The girl who piped Manu to a third medal at the Paris Olympics, Hungarian Veronika Major, topped with 587.

Esha too shot exceedingly well, a 294 in rapid-fire giving her a total of 579, just enough to ensure two Indians in the final. Simranpreet Kaur Brar, the third Indian in contention, had a tough opening rapid-fire series to miss out with 576.

Manu was also the strongest at the start of the final, a perfect five in the third series, moving her up to the joint lead with the two Chinese, Sun and Feng. Esha

came into her own from the third series, a round of four hits moving her up to joint fourth from seventh.

What followed was simply stunning from the Hyderabad girl as she maxed the fifth, sixth and seventh series to surge up to sole second, just one behind Sun.

As heavyweights like Tien Chia-Chen of Chinese Taipei, Doreen Vennekamp of Germany and Manu faltered, it was between Sun and Esha and the former finished stronger to claim a deserving gold. Feng overcame a three-way shoot-off to claim another podium for the Chinese.

# US visa issues affecting 2026 FIFA World Cup: Desailly

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

France football great Marcel Desailly does not feel that visa issues relating to entering the United States will have any impact on the 2026 FIFA World Cup as "sport is above all these".

The we, Canada and Mexico are co-hosting the 2026 World Cup from June 11 to July 19. The United States will host 78 matches, while Canada and Mexico will each stage 13 games in the 48-team tournament. There has been fear that the long visa appointment wait time combined with harsher regulations implemented by new president Donald Trump could make it more difficult for football fans to make it to the US for the World Cup. But Desailly, a member of France's 1998 FIFA World Cup and 2000 Euro winnings teams, said previous editions of the showpiece had succeeded despite having "bigger problems than a few visa issues.

# India ends Brazil 2025 World Boxing campaign with six medals

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian boxing contingent came up with an impressive performance in their first-ever outing in the Elite level international meet organised by World Boxing as they bagged six medals, including a gold and silver in the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 at Foz Do Iguaçu on Saturday.

Hitesh became the first Indian boxer to clinch a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup. His opponent, Odel Kamara of England was injured and couldn't take to the ring in the 70kg finale, as per a press release from the Boxing Federation of India (BFI).

Abhinash Jamwal, the other Indian boxer to reach the final in the 65kg category, gave his best against local favourite Yuri Reis but could not do enough to get a favourable verdict and bagged a silver medal.

Four Indian players bagged bronze medals, including



*Four Indian players bagged bronze medals, including Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin (60kg) and Vishal (90kg).*

Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50kg), Manish Rathore (55kg), Sachin (60kg) and Vishal (90kg).

Hitesh after becoming the first Indian boxer to clinch a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup credited the 10-day

preparation camp in Brazil ahead of the tournament as something that helped him and the team a lot.

"The camp helped me learn a few tactical nuances that helped me a lot in the competition. This tourna-

ment has provided us fantastic exposure at the highest level and I am happy that I could grab the gold medal," said Hitesh.

India had fielded a 10-member contingent for the World Boxing Cup, their first major international outing since the Paris Olympics, and bagging six medals, this will not only boost the confidence of the squad as they start preparing for the 2028 Olympic cycle ahead of Los Angeles Games.

# Diksha, Pranavi make cut in rain-hit Joburg Ladies Open

**AGENCIES**  
JOHANNESBURG

Golfer Pranavi Urs faltered in the second round at the weather-hot Joburg Ladies Open but made the 36-hole cut alongside Diksha Dagar, who turned in an even par round in the second round.

Diksha (71-73) and Pranavi (70-77) were positioned at T-22 and T-56th, respectively, at the Par-73 Modderfontein Golf Club on Saturday.

Things did not turn out too well for the other two Indians, Avani Prashanth (77-74) and Tvesa Malik (77-79) and they missed the cut.

After the suspension of round two, like it happened on a day ago, the Joburg Ladies Open resumed at a later



start time of 10 am (local time). It was a wet week after heavy rainfall and a flooded course caused the tournament to be reduced to 54 holes.

England's Mimi Rhodes leads the way, having completed the second round over two days. The rookie started

the day five holes in, with Saturday seeing a

play was first suspended on the first day she was 5-under through 13 holes, but when play resumed the following day she added a birdie to go 6-under. Then there was a reversal of fortunes as she had three bogeys in a row and ended with a round of 70. In the second round, she had four birdies, five birdies and a triple bogey in an action-packed up-and-down round. She carded 77 but made the cut on the line.

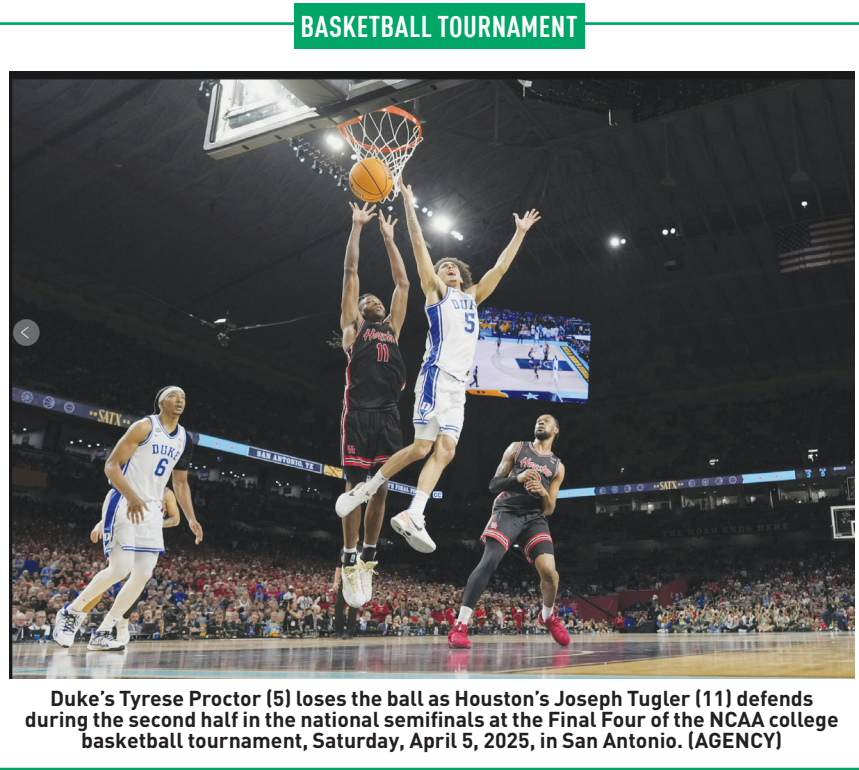
Diksha had a bogey-free first round with 2 birdies and no bogeys. In the second round she had one birdie and two bogeys on the front nine and then eight straight pars before closing the round with a birdie on the 18th for an even par round. She was T-22.

# Barcelona vs Real Madrid set to light in Mumbai

**TDG NETWORK**  
NAVI MUMBAI

Football fans in India are in for a nostalgic treat as legendary players from Spanish giants Barcelona and Real Madrid face off in a high-voltage exhibition match at the DY Patil Stadium today.

The much-anticipated clash between the Barcelona Legends and Real Madrid Legends is expected to draw thousands of fans, rekindling memories of one of football's most iconic rivalries -- El Clasico.



Duke's Tyrese Proctor (5) loses the ball as Houston's Joseph Tugler (11) defends during the second half in the national semifinals at the Final Four of the NCAA college basketball tournament, Saturday, April 5, 2025, in San Antonio. (AGENCY)