

## IN BRIEF

### Minister distributes power tillers to Draksharama farmers

Kakinada, April 30 (UNI) : Minister for Labour Vasamsetti Subhash has distributed fourteen Power tillers to farmers at a function held at Draksharama Market yard on Wednesday.

Stressing the need for mechanisation, he said farming would be economical and remunerative as the government was supplying power tillers and extending subsidies. Rs.1 lakh on power tillers and Rs.50,000 on Rotavators was available as subsidy. Drones were also available to the farmer groups on subsidy for spraying pesticide and fertilizers,' he added.

### Govt hikes sugarcane MSP to Rs 355 per quintal

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : The government on Wednesday approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of sugarcane at Rs 355 per quintal for the sugar season 2025-26. The decision was taken at the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi here. Addressing the media, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister said that this decision will benefit five crore sugarcane farmers and their dependents, as well as five lakh workers employed in the sugar mills and related ancillary activities.

He said that for this a premium of Rs 3.46 per quintal would be given to the farmers for every increase of 0.1 per cent. Apart from this, to protect the interests of sugarcane farmers, the government has also decided that no deduction will be made in the case of sugar mills whose recovery is less than 9.5 percent. The production cost of sugarcane for sugar season 2025-26 is Rs 173 per quintal. Sugar season 2025-26 will commence from October 1, 2025 and the prices will be applicable for purchasing sugarcane from farmers. Notably, the FRP has been determined on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other stake-holders. In the previous sugar season 2023-24, out of cane dues payable of Rs 1,11,782 crores about Rs 1,11,703 crores cane dues have been paid to farmers, as on 28.04.2025, thus, 99.92 percent cane dues have been cleared.

## 7 Devotees killed as wall collapses on them

(Standard Post Bureau) Visakhapatnam, April 30 : Seven devotees were killed and several others injured when a wall collapsed on them when they were standing in a queue to buy tickets at the famous hill shrine Simhachalam, near here, in the wee hours on Wednesday.

Police said that a large number of devotees stood in the queue to buy the Rs 300 ticket to have the glimpse of deity Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy at the famous hill shrine on the devotional occasion Gandhamavasya.

The deceased were identified as Patti Durga

Swamy Naidu (32), Yedla Venkata Rao (48), Mummapatla Manikantha (28), Gujjari Mahalakshmi (65), Paila Venkata Ratnam (45) Pilla Umamaheshwara Rao (30) and Pilla Sailaja (26).

Four of the deceased belonged to one family and they were Pilla Umamaheshwar Rao, a software engineer, his wife Pilla Sailaja, his mother Pilla Paila Venkataratnam and his aunt G Mahalakshmi.

Official sources said that thousands of people started reaching the hill shrine after midnight and formed a long queue to buy special darshan tickets. Heavy rain

accompanied by gales occurred at the temple resulting in a portion of a 20-foot-long wall caving on them. The injured were admitted to hospital where the condition of two of the injured is said to be critical.

Home Minister V Anitha, District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad, Commissioner of police Shankabratla Bagchi, MP M Sriharat visited the scene of the accident. An SDRF team extricated the victims from the rubble and shifted them to hospitals.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed grief and shock over the death of seven

devotees. He announced Rs 25 lakh ex gratia to each of the families of the deceased and Rs 3 lakh for the injured. He held a teleconference with the officials concerned and instructed them to provide the best medical treatment to the injured. The Chief Minister set up a three-member committee to conduct an inquiry into the incident.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed shock over the incident. He said on social media: "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives due to the collapse of a wall in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Condolences to those who

have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon".

Governor of Andhra Pradesh S. Abdul Nazeer has expressed anguish and profound grief on the loss of seven lives due to the collapse of a wall while they were waiting in the queue line to have darshan of Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy on the occasion of Chandanotsavam in the early hours on Wednesday.

The Governor offered his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and directed the district administration to provide better medical care to the injured.



### Sharad Pawar demands special session of Parliament over Pahalgam attack

The Congress' demand for a special parliament session to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack has received support from the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP- SP). Party supremo Sharad Pawar said on Wednesday a special session would be useful to show that the country stands united against terrorism. Pawar also clarified that he would support whatever decision Prime Minister Narendra Modi took in the aftermath of the killings of 27 tourists by terrorists on April 22.

(See on page 2)

## CM calls upon leaders, activists to make PM's programme big success



(Standard Post Bureau) Vijayawada, April 30 : Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu, on Wednesday asked all the TDP, the Jana Sena and the BJP leaders across the State to positively attend the relaunching of the works in the capital by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May two.

Through a teleconference, Naidu told the MPs, MLAs and booth-level leaders of the TDP that Prime Minister Modi will lay the foundation for Rs 49,040 crore worth of works in Amaravati. Also, the PM will lay the foundation stone of some works and inaugurate some other projects all worth Rs 57,962 crore relating to

DRDO, DPIIT, NHA and Railways, the Chief Minister said.

Acknowledging that the voters have given a record mandate to the NDA with 93 percent strike rate, Naidu said that this is because a promise has been made before the elections that the State, which was totally destroyed, will be rebuilt.

He asked all the TDP, the Jana Sena and the BJP leaders and activists to positively attend the Prime Minister's meeting.

Both the Centre and the State are moving ahead with close coordination, he said, adding that despite severe financial crunch welfare and developmental programmes

have been taken up in these 10 months. The Chief Minister reaffirmed that the Polavaram project will be completed by 2027 and that large scale employment opportunities will be generated with the establishment of TCS in Visakhapatnam.

Informing the NDA leaders that the works for the construction of Bhogapuram airport are moving at a very fast pace, he said that the LG Company is going to invest Rs 5,000 crore in the Sri City.

The State is receiving the highest amounts of investments, the Chief Minister claimed and stated that Swarnandhra Vision-

2047 has been formulated for the comprehensive development of the State as the goal of NDA is decentralisation of development. He expressed concern that though land in Visakhapatnam has been allotted to URSA company at Rs 1.5 crore per acre, some forces are resorting to a misinformation campaign that it is allotted at only 99 paise. Naidu expressed confidence that Amaravati will be built in such a way that the people of the State can proudly claim that it is their capital like how the people of Karnataka claim about their Bengaluru, how the Telangana people claim Hyderabad and Tamil Nadu people Chennai.

### TTD Chairman Naidu offers Pattu vastrams to Appanna at Simhachalam temple

(Standard Post Bureau) Visakhapatnam, April 30 : TTD Chairman S.B.R. Naidu offered Pattu vastrams to Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy (Appanna) at the Simhachalam temple near Visakhapatnam on Wednesday.

Since 1996, TTD has been offering these clothes every year during the Chandanotsavam festival. Simhachalam is one of the oldest Narasimha temples in India, and the idol here is believed to be self-manifested.

The Chandanotsavam festival began in the early hours.

The idol is usually covered with sandalwood paste throughout the year.

Only on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya is the sandal paste removed for 12 hours so that the devotees can see the presiding deity in Nija Rupa (original form) clearly. Then, a fresh layer of sandal paste is applied again. On this special day, TTD offered the vastrams on behalf of Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple. TTD Dy EO Lokanatham, Bokkasam In-charge Guru Raja Swamy, and other officials were also present.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday welcomed the Central Government's decision to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming national census and called for a clear implementation timeline.

( See on page 8)

### Canadian, U.S. leaders agree ...



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday agreed to meet in person in the near future. According to a readout issued by the prime minister's office, Carney spoke with Trump on Tuesday, one day after the victory in Monday's parliamentary elections which were dominated by issues like tariffs and annexation threats from Trump.

(See on page 5)

### Veteran shooting coach Sunny Thomas dies



India's longest-serving national shooting coach Sunny Thomas died on Wednesday in Kottayam, Kerala, following a cardiac arrest, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) confirmed. Thomas, a former NRAI Vice-President, was 84. He is survived by his wife KJ Josamma and three children Manoj Sunny, Sanil Sunny and Sonia Sunny.

(See on page 7)

## CM welcomes Centre's decision to include caste enumeration in Census

(Standard Post Bureau) Vijayawada, April 30 : Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday hailed the Central Government's decision to include caste enumeration in Census 2025. In a message here, Naidu said: "The decision to include caste enumeration in Census 2025 by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs reflects Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's deep commitment to inclusive government." Naidu said. "This landmark step will enable more precise, data-driven policies that address the needs of the marginalized communities in our country. Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas continues to evolve from principle to practice, strengthening the foundations of social justice in India."

## Govt decides to hold caste census

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : In a landmark decision, the government on Wednesday decided to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming census, marking the first such step since independence.

The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "As per article 246 of the Constitution of India, the subject Census is listed at 69 in the Union list in Seventh Schedule. According to the Constitution of India, Census is a Union subject," Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said at a media briefing. He said, "Some states have conducted surveys to enumerate castes. Some states have



done this well, while some others have conducted such surveys purely from a political angle in a non-transparent way. Such surveys have created doubts in society."

Vaishnaw said, "Considering all these facts, and to ensure that our social fabric is not disturbed by politics, caste enumeration should be transparently included in the Census

instead of surveys. This will strengthen the social and economic structure of our society while the nation continues to progress".

It may be mentioned that the main Opposition party, the Congress and especially Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had been demanding caste census.

He had raised the issue at various platforms including the Lower House.

The Minister added, "This demonstrates that our government is committed to the values and interests of our society and country, like in the past when our government had introduced 10 percent reservation for the economically weaker sections of the society without causing stress in any section of the society."



# IRCTC to Operate Niche Heritage Tour on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Circuit

**IRCTC's special tour offering to cover Raigad Fort, "Pune (Lal Mahal, Kasba Ganapati and Shivrushthi), Shivneri Fort, Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga, Pratapgarh Fort, and Kolhapur (Mahalakshmi Temple and Panhala Fort)**

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 30 : IRCTC is all set to operate the first of its kind heritage tour on 'Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Circuit' that will cover the key sites associated with the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha kingdom.

True to its name, the 06 days itinerary will commence its journey from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus



travelling to Shivneri, situated at a distance of 95 kms from Pune city. The Shivneri Fort is situated on a hilltop overlooking the Junnar City. It is the birthplace of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and a symbol of Maratha pride and resistance against Muslim rule. Post lunch,

(CSMT) on Day 1 for Mangaon Railway station on the Konkan Railway network, the closest railway link for Raigad fort. The first destination is Raigad, known for the eponymous hill fort where Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's coronation or Rajyabhishek had taken place and was later his capital from where he ruled. On completion of the sightseeing, the tourists would return back to the train as it proceeds for the next destination, Pune wherein the tourists will be having dinner followed by overnight stay at hotel at Pune.

On Day 2 of the tour, the prominent sites that the tourists would be covering at Pune are Lal Mahal, Kasba Ganapati and Shivrushthi. Lal Mahal as the name suggests is a red-colored palace constructed by Chhatrapati Shivaji's father Shahaji Bhosale for his wife Jijabai and son in 1630 CE. The present-day structure was rebuilt in 1984 on a part of the land where Lal Mahal stood and houses a vast collection of oil paintings that depicts significant life events of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The temple of Kasba Ganapati, the presiding deity of Pune dates back to the 1893 and is believed to have been earmarked by Jijabai, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's mother. Since then, the city is known as the city of Ganesha. Later in the day, the tourists shall be visiting Shivrushthi—the largest historical theme park showcasing the legend of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Tourists will watch the life story of the Maratha ruler in 3D and will enjoy other interactive sessions. "After a night's rest at Pune, on Day 3, the guests will be

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the tourists will be visiting Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga temple, one of the 12 Jyotirlinga temples before returning back to Pune for night halt.

On Day 4 of the itinerary, the tourists will be boarding the train for onward journey to Satara. The key site to be covered from this station is Pratapgarh Fort which is of immense historical importance because of the Battle of Pratapgad that took place in 1659 between Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Bijapur Sultanate general Afzal Khan. This battle had set the stage for the establishment of the Maratha Empire. Post visit, the tourists will take lunch at a suitable place and start back for the train as it proceeds for the last destination of this tour, Kolhapur. "The train will arrive at Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Terminus Kolhapur Railway Station early morning on Day 5. Post wash & change and breakfast at a hotel, the tourists will proceed for Mahalakshmi Temple popularly known as Ambabai followed by the Panhala Fort. Sitting atop the Sahyadri range, the hill fort bears a testament to many battles and is closely connected with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who spent over 500 days as where he was held captive and later escaped. The Panhala Fort – also called as the 'Fort of Snakes' since it is zigzag in shape. The Fort is associated with the life history of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shambhaji Maharaj. It is remembered for the heroic valour shown by Baji Prabhu Deshpande, the commander of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj during the fight in capturing the Fort. In the late evening, the train starts back on its return journey for Mumbai and reaches early morning in Mumbai on Day 6. "The package has been attractively priced at Rs. 13,155/- per person in Economy (Sleeper Class), Rs 19,840/- per person in Comfort (3AC) & Rs. 27,365/- per person for Superior (2AC). The all-inclusive price in all categories will cover train journey in respective classes, night stay at comfortable hotels, all meals (vegetarian only), all transfer & sight-seeing in buses, travel insurance, services of tour escort etc. All necessary efforts will be made by IRCTC to provide a safe and memorable experience to the guests.

## Police constables, Customs officer among 10 arrested for ganja smuggling

Mumbai, April 30 (UNI) : The Navi Mumbai police have busted an international ganja smuggling gang by arresting 10 people, including two police constables and a Custom officer, for their alleged involvement in smuggling racket. They have seized goods worth Rs 74 lakh from them, police said on Wednesday. According to police, among the arrested accused are police constables Sachin Bhalerao and Sanjay Phulkhar of Anti-Narcotics Cell as well as Customs superintendent Prashant Gaur.

## Sharad Pawar demands special session of Parliament over Pahalgam attack

(Standard Post Bureau) Thane, April 30 : The Congress' demand for a special parliament session to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack has received support from the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP- SP). Party supremo Sharad Pawar said on Wednesday a special session would be useful to show that the country stands united against terrorism.

Pawar also clarified that he would support whatever decision Prime Minister Narendra Modi took in the aftermath of the killings of

27 tourists by terrorists on April 22.

Pawar was speaking at an event organized by his party MLA Jitendra Awhad who has built a temple of Tulja Bhavani in Ganeshwadi in the Pachpakhadi area of ??Thane.

The idol of Tulja Bhavani was consecrated by Pawar and his wife Pratibha on Wednesday.

"The terrorist attack in Pahalgam is an attack on the country. Citizens from many families have been martyred. Therefore, there is no need to bring caste

and religion into the attack. We have to come together and stay united", he added.

A special session of Parliament, Pawar said, would be useful to show that the entire country was united and all parties were together post Pahalgam carnage, he added.

Talking about Thackeray cousins coming together, Pawar said if the two families were ready for a reunion, there was no need to bring politics into it. "We will be happy if the two brothers, Raj and Uddhav Thackeray, come together," Pawar said.

## SC stays FIR against Kerala CM's chief principal secy K M Abraham; issues notice to CBI

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the registration of an FIR against K M Abraham, Chief Principal Secretary to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, which was ordered by the Kerala High Court in connection with allegations of amassing disproportionate assets.

The apex court also issued notice to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Abraham's Special Leave Petition (SLP) challenging the High Court's direction for a CBI probe.

A bench, comprising Justices Dipankar Dutta and Manmohan, passed the interim order after hearing submissions by Senior Advocate R Basant, appearing for Abraham,

and Senior Advocate Jaideep Gupta, who represented the State of Kerala. The Court observed that the Kerala High Court's directive for FIR (first information report) registration may have violated procedural requirements under Section 156(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code, particularly the need for prior sanction before initiating a probe against a public servant.

Citing earlier judgments such as Anil Kumar & Ors versus M K Aiyappa (2013) and L Narayana Swamy vs State of Karnataka (2016), the Supreme Court reiterated that a Magistrate cannot order the registration of an FIR against a public servant without prior sanction from

the competent authority.

The Kerala High Court, in its order dated April 11, 2025, had directed the CBI to investigate allegations brought by activist Jomon Puthenpurackal, who claimed that Abraham had acquired assets vastly disproportionate to his known sources of income including a Rs three crore apartment in Mumbai, a Rs one crore flat in Thiruvananthapuram, and a one-third stake in an Rs eight crore shopping complex in Kollam.

Justice K Babu of the High Court criticized the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) for arbitrarily excluding critical time periods from its investigation. The Court emphasized that the chosen "check period" for

evaluating disproportionate assets must provide a complete picture of the public servant's financial activities.

The High Court also questioned the credibility of the Enquiry Officer's conclusions, observing discrepancies in the source of funds and inconsistencies in reliance on documents like Memoranda of Understanding and powers of attorney. Finding sufficient grounds to question the impartiality of the VACB inquiry, the High Court had transferred the investigation to the CBI. However, with the Supreme Court's stay now in place, the FIR and consequent probe will remain suspended pending further hearing.

## Caste census 100 pc victory for 90 pc unity of PDA: Akhilesh

Lucknow, April 30 (UNI) : Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday termed the central government's decision to conduct caste census as 100 per cent victory and said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government was compelled to take this decision due to collective pressure. Taking to X, Akhilesh wrote, "The decision for a caste census is a 100 percent victory for

the 90 percent unity of the PDA. Due to our collective pressure, the BJP government was compelled to take this decision. This is an extremely significant phase of victory for the PDA in the fight for social justice."

He said, "This is a warning to the BJP government to keep its electoral manipulations away from the caste census. Only an honest census will ensure that

every caste receives its rightful share and rights proportional to its population, which until now the supremacists had arrogantly controlled."

The SP chief said, "This is the first phase of a positive democratic

movement for rights and the final phase of the BJP's negative politics.

The BJP's supremacist ideology will inevitably come to an end. The Constitution will always prevail over any man-made doctrine in the long run."

## US in touch with India, Pakistan not to escalate situation; UK Parliament discusses Pahalgam attack

Washington/London/ New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : The US has said it is in touch with both India and Pakistan so as not to escalate the situation, following the Pahalgam terror attack, while in the UK Parliament Conservative MP Bob Blackman strongly condemned the "systematic killing of Hindus and Christians" in the attack.

During a US State Department briefing, spokesperson Tammy Bruce confirmed that the United States is in touch with the leadership of both Pakistan and India.

She said that Secretary of State Marco Rubio is "reaching out – regarding the Kashmir situation to India and Pakistan".

"We are reaching out to both parties and telling, of course, them to not escalate the situation. The Secretary expects to speak with the foreign ministers of Pakistan and India as early

as today or tomorrow. He is encouraging other national leaders, other foreign ministers, to also reach out to the countries on this issue.

She said the US is "obviously also monitoring the developments across the board in that region", and at multiple levels is in touch with the governments of India and Pakistan, not just at the foreign minister level.

"We, of course, are encouraging all parties to work together for a responsible solution. The world is watching this," she added.

In the UK Parliament, Conservative MP Bob Blackman raised the Pahalgam terror attack, terming it an "Islamist" attack and called on the UK government to provide full support to India in its fight against cross-border terrorism.

Speaking in the UK Parliament, and later also at a memorial at India House,

## Gangotri and Yamunotri Dham gates open, first puja performed in PM Modi's name

Uttarkashi, April 30 (UNI) : The gates of the revered Gangotri and Yamunotri Dham temples in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district were opened for devotees on Wednesday, marking the beginning of the 2025 Char Dham Yatra.

The ceremony took place amidst Vedic chanting and puja ceremonies on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami performed the first puja in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and prayed for the successful conduct of the Char Dham Yatra, as also prosperity and happiness for the country and the state.

Notably, CM Dhami became the first Chief Minister to attend the gate-opening ceremony at Yamunotri Dham. A helicopter showered flowers over both the temples on the occasion.

As per tradition, the idol of Goddess Ganga was taken in a procession from Bhairav Ghati to Gangotri Dham, where the temple gates were opened at 10:30 am after special puja and abhishek. Similarly, the idol of Goddess Yamuna was taken in a procession from Kharsali to Yamunotri Dham, and the temple gates were opened at 11:55 am. Thousands of devotees from across the country and abroad witnessed the ceremony, took a holy dip in the Ganga and Yamuna rivers, and sought blessings.

CM Dhami emphasized that the state has made comprehensive arrangements for a safe and smooth Char Dham Yatra, ensuring basic facilities for pilgrims. He appealed for cooperation in making the yatra "Green and Clean."

In London, Bob Blackman described the April 22 attack as a well organised and coordinated one.

"The terrorists were well-equipped, and they were well-coordinated. The sad reality is this, whilst the government may give expressions of condolences and support to the people of India, the fact remains that the terrorist bases that exist along the Line of Control in the part of Kashmir, illegally occupied by

Pakistan, still continue to operate across that Line of Control," he said, in a statement strongly backing India's stand against Pakistan and its cross-border terrorism. "These 26 men who were murdered systematically by being shot in the head, were either Hindu or Christian, and there was a deliberate Islamist attack on those tourists who were just going about their business in a peaceful manner," he added.



Court, Secretariat other administrative buildings and housing buildings for over 5,200 families, worth over Rs 11,240 crore.



STANDARD POST

Maharashtra ranked India’s top performing state, Gujarat 2nd

Maharashtra leads the overall composite rankings as the top performing state across economic and social parameters in the country, followed by Gujarat and Karnataka, according to a report released .

Maharashtra topped in financial development and performed strongly across the economic, fiscal and social pillars while Gujarat’s performance is supported by its leading economic rank along with favourable outcomes in the fiscal and infrastructure pillars, according to the CareEdge Ratings' 'State Ranking 2025' report.

As per the report, western and southern states dominate the top five rankings. Fiscal, economic and financial development pillars are the strong points for western states, while the southern states performed well across the economic, financial development, environment and governance pillars. Goa topped the rankings in Group B (north-east, hilly and small states) with strong score for financial development, infrastructure, social, fiscal and economic pillars.

"The initiative to rank Indian states is an attempt to capture the long-term growth potential of states, while also focusing on the quality and inclusiveness of the growth model. This will facilitate informed decision-making and fine-tuning existing policies to suit the diversity in Indian states," said Mehul Pandya, CareEdge CEO.

The report presented a comprehensive assessment based on seven key pillars – Economic, Fiscal, Infrastructure, Financial Development, Social, Governance and Environment.

Gujarat topped the economic pillar aided by a strong performance in per capita Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a percentage of GSDP, and Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) for industries.

Karnataka and Maharashtra followed with higher share of industry and services in GVA and an encouraging performance in FDI. Overall, western and southern states dominated the economic rankings with a healthy per capita GSDP, higher share of industry and services and strong FDI. Sikkim ranked highest in Category B, aided by an upbeat performance in per capita GSDP and higher share of industry and services in GVA, the report stated.

Odisha led the fiscal rankings faring well in terms of revenue deficit, interest payments, debt management, outstanding liabilities and guarantees. Odisha was followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra. Gujarat’s performance was supported by a better score in fiscal deficit, government’s capital outlay, outstanding liabilities and guarantees.In Category B, Uttarakhand performed well due to better outcomes in fiscal deficit, own tax revenues, outstanding liabilities and guarantees as well as a relatively better spending by the government on health and education, according to the report.

Maharashtra excelled in terms of financial development faring well in credit disbursements by banks and NBFCs, penetration of mutual funds and health insurance. Maharashtra was followed by Telangana and Haryana. Southern states like Telangana and Tamil Nadu performed positively in terms of bank credit disbursements and SHG loans.Haryana occupied the third spot supported by better outcomes for NBFC credit, balance in PMJDY account, penetration of life insurance and mutual funds. In Category B, Goa’s is in leading position with a large margin vis-à-vis other states driven by higher scores across most indicators.

Punjab and Haryana occupied top ranks for infrastructure on account of better scores in per capita power availability, railway density and net irrigated area (net sown area). In terms of social infrastructure, both Punjab and Haryana fared well in the pupil-teacher ratio but lagged in the availability of doctors. Goa led the Group B states faring well in per capita power availability, road and railway density, air passenger traffic and doctor availability, the report stated.Kerala stood out in the social assessment, driven by strong scores across most indicators.Similarly, Tamil Nadu also demonstrated a healthy performance across most indicators. However, Kerala lagged on the unemployment front.

India's changemakers speak: Padma awardees reflect on recognition and responsibility

(By IANS)

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday conferred the prestigious Padma Awards to 71 distinguished individuals at the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan's Durbar Hall. The honours included four Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan, and 57 Padma Shri awards, recognising outstanding contributions across diverse fields.

The event marked the first phase of Padma Award presentations for the year 2025.

In conversation with IANS, these Padma Awardees shared their experiences, expressing their commitment towards the country.

PR Sreejesh, known for his unique goalkeeping in hockey, was awarded the Padma Bhushan in the field of sports. Former Indian hockey goalkeeper and current junior Indian hockey team coach, Sreejesh, created history by winning two Olympic bronze medals and three times the Goalkeeper of the Year title.

Speaking to IANS, he said, "I am very honoured for this award. I am very proud. I would like to thank all the teammates for helping me achieve this feat."

In the field of medicine, Prof. (Dr) Ashok Kumar Mahapatra was awarded the Padma Shri. He is an eminent neurosurgeon who has published research papers, written books, and led several research projects during his tenure at AIIMS.

Speaking to IANS, he said, "I would first thank the government. This is a huge achievement. It is a great thing to get a Padma award in India. I worked for 22 years at the AIIMS, where I was a professor and dean. After retirement, I went to Odisha, where I was the vice-chancellor at a research institute."

Vinod Kumar Dham was awarded the Padma Bhushan in the field of science and engineering. Vinod Dham, popularly known as the ‘Father of Pentium’, made computing accessible across the world with his vision in the development of the Pentium microprocessor.

Speaking to IANS, he said, "This award is a recognition of India's progress. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India is progressing



rapidly in technology. The concept of Digital India is so broad that it can include everything." He emphasised India's progress in semiconductors, AI, and quantum technology, and also said that the right use of technology can be a boon for humanity.

Naren Gurung was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of arts. This artist from Sikkim has regenerated the cultural heritage of Sikkim through his art and literature.

Speaking to IANS, he said, "It was great to be on this occasion with the President and the Prime Minister. I work on folk art, literature, and traditions. I have written books, I am a singer, dancer, and choreographer. This versatility symbolises taking the cultural richness of Sikkim to the new generation."

Suresh Harilal Soni was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of social work. He is the founder of the Sahyog Kushta Yagna Trust of Gujarat. He, along with his wife, started this trust in 1988 for 20 leprosy patients and their children. Today, this trust is giving shelter and respect to more than 1500 people.

Talking to IANS, he said, "No government grant is taken in our organisation. Donations come by the grace of God. We give love to people, and they love us a lot."

Dr Jaspinder Narula Kaul was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of art. She is a famous playback singer whose

songs resonate in different languages and musical styles.

Talking to IANS, she said, "This award was received after 50 years of penance. This is sadhana, it should be done with a full heart."

In the field of art, Adwaita Charan Gadanayak was awarded the Padma Shri. He is a renowned sculptor whose art reflects Indian culture and spirituality.

Speaking to IANS, he said, "This award increases responsibility. Now we have to think about the country. Starting from the village, we have to take our art to the whole world."

Nirmala Devi, the patron of Sujini craft, was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of art. Her embroidery work has been displayed from Bihar to museums in London. Talking to IANS, she said, "I am very happy. I make art on sarees, for this, I got this award."

In the field of art, Dr Madugula Nagaphani Sarma was awarded the Padma Shri. He is a Sanskrit and Telugu poet who gave regeneration to the art of Avadhanam. Talking to IANS, he said, "I have been doing this art for 52 years. I have answered the questions of more than 2000 scholars. This award gives me immense pleasure."

In the field of literature and education, Tushar Durgeshbhai Shukla was awarded the Padma Shri. The poet, who keeps the Gujarati language and culture alive through his poems and songs, told

IANS, "With Padma Shri, the responsibility has increased. I want to build a bridge between society and administration with my pen."

In the field of arts, Pandit Ronu Majumdar, a world-renowned flautist who made the flute popular among the younger generation, was awarded the Padma Shri. Speaking to IANS, he said, "I got this award for 50 years of service to the flute. I dedicate it to my gurus and mother."

In the field of culinary arts, Dr K. Damodaran, a renowned chef who contributed to Tamil Nadu’s mid-day meal scheme, was awarded the Padma Shri. Speaking to IANS, he said, "In a career spanning 40 years, I employed 8,000 people. I dedicate this award to my students and young chefs."

Dr Surinder Kumar Vasal was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of science and engineering. His role in the development of the Suwan-1 variety of maize and the World Food Prize are proof of his achievements. Speaking to IANS, he said, "This award is very important for me. It is a recognition of my work for food and nutrition security."

Professor Bharat Gupta and Begum Batool were also awarded the Padma Shri in the field of arts. Professor Gupta and Begum Batool told IANS, "I thank the nation. I hope the government and society will invest more in the preservation of art."

PM Modi to visit Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh on May 1 and 2

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh on Thursday and Friday.

On Thursday, the Prime Minister will inaugurate WAVES 2025, India's first-of-its-kind World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit at the Jio World Centre in Mumbai. The four-day summit with tagline "Connecting Creators, Connecting Countries" is poised to position India as a global hub for media, entertainment, and digital innovation by bringing together creators, startups, industry leaders, and policymakers from across the world, an official statement said on Wednesday.

In line with Prime Minister's vision of leveraging creativity, technology, and talent to shape a brighter future, WAVES will integrate films, OTT, gaming, comics, digital media, AI,AVGC-XR, broadcasting, and emerging tech, making it a comprehensive showcase of India's media and entertainment prowess. WAVES aims to unlock a 50 billion US dollar market by 2029, expanding India’s footprint in the global entertainment economy.

At WAVES 2025, India will also host the Global Media Dialogue (GMD) for the first time, with ministerial participation from 25 countries, marking a milestone in the country’s engagement with the global media and entertainment landscape.

Modi will visit the Creatosphere and interact with creators, selected from the 32 Create in India Challenges launched nearly a year ago, which garnered over one lakh registrations. He will also visit the Bharat Pavilion.WAVES 2025 will witness participation from over 90 countries, with more than 10,000 delegates, 1,000 creators, 300+ companies, and 350+ startups.During his visit to Kerala on Friday, the Prime Minister will dedicate to the nation Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport worth Rs 8,900 crore.

Vizhinjam Port, having strategic importance, has been identified as a key priority project which will contribute in strengthening India’s position in global trade, enhance logistics efficiency, and reduce

reliance on foreign ports for cargo transshipment. Its natural deep draft of nearly 20 meters and location near one of the world's busiest sea trade routes further strengthens India’s position in global trade.

During his visit to Andhra Pradesh on the same day, the Prime Minister will inaugurate, lay the foundation stone and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over Rs 58,000 crore in Amaravati.

He will inaugurate seven National Highway projects in AP. These projects include widening of various sections of National Highways, construction of Road over Bridge and subway among others. These projects will further enhance road safety; create employment opportunities; provide seamless connectivity to religious and tourist places like Tirupati, Srikalahasti, Malakonda and Udayagiri Fort among others.

He will also dedicate to the nation railway projects aimed at enhancing connectivity and boosting capacity.

The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone of six National Highway projects and one Railway project.

Modi will lay the foundation stone for multiple infrastructure projects that include the Legislative Assembly, High Court, Secretariat other administrative buildings and housing buildings for over 5,200 families, worth over Rs 11,240 crore.

It will also include trunk infrastructure and flood mitigation projects featuring a 320 km world-class transport network with underground utilities and advanced flood management systems, worth over Rs 17,400 crore. The Land Pooling Scheme Infrastructure projects will cover 1,281 km of roads equipped with central medians, cycle tracks, and integrated utilities across the capital city of Amaravati, worth over Rs 20,400 crore.

He will also lay the foundation stone of Missile Test Range at Nagayalanka in Andhra Pradesh worth around Rs 1,460 crore. It will comprise a launch centre, technical instrumentation facilities, Indigenous Radars, Telemetry and Electro-Optical systems enhancing the country's defence preparedness.

UP to organise statewide awareness camps to promote tourism

Lucknow, April 30 (UNI) : To ensure that investors across the state receive the benefits of Uttar Pradesh Tourism Policy 2022, the Tourism Department is launching a large-scale awareness campaign.

As part of this initiative, camps will be held in every district, aimed at informing and engaging potential investors. Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture Mukesh Kumar Meshram will address participants virtually

through video conferencing, highlighting key provisions and opportunities under the policy.

Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said, "UP is among the fastest-growing states in the tourism sector. Last year, nearly 65 crore pilgrims and tourists visited destinations such as Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura and Prayagraj. There is a need to expand and enhance facilities at these places and along the key travel corridors."

He said apart from major religious and cultural sites, the department is focusing on building world-class wayside amenities, such as hotels, motels, and dhabas, along national highways, state highways and other key routes.

"Our aim is to equip these en-route facilities with modern, high-quality tourism infrastructure so that travellers can access premium services even before reaching their

destination," he said.

Singh said that under the new tourism policy, 33 types of tourism enterprises have been identified and included. "These include capital-intensive sectors that will now be eligible for incentives. Tourism entrepreneurs can avail of capital investment subsidies up to 30 percent, along with other financial benefits and exemptions," he said.

He said, "To make

the process transparent and seamless, an online portal has been launched up-tourismportal.in, where investors can apply for incentives and access detailed information about the policy."

The minister said that the Tourism Policy is being actively promoted not just within UP but also at the national and international levels.

"As part of this campaign, awareness camps will be organised

across all districts of the state until May 15, with the roll out having begun on April 28. These camps will see participation from revenue officers, GST officials, presidents of trade and industry associations, as well as hotel owners, motel operators, dhaba owners and other potential investors. They will be provided with detailed information about the Tourism Policy 2022 and the benefits available to them under its framework," he said.



17 injured in residential area blast in north China city

Taiyuan, April 30 (UNI) : Seventeen people were injured in a residential complex explosion on Wednesday afternoon in Taiyuan, capital of north China's Shanxi Province, with four in critical condition and three discharged after treatment, according to local authorities.

The blast occurred in the Beiyong neighborhood of Xiaodian District at around 1 p.m. As of 3 p.m., the fire triggered by the blast had been extinguished.

Rescue teams are conducting door-to-door safety checks in the affected building, and an investigation into the cause of the blast is underway.

Canadian, U.S. leaders agree to meet in near future

Ottawa, April 30 (UNI) : Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday agreed to meet in person in the near future.

According to a readout issued by the prime minister's office, Carney spoke with Trump on Tuesday, one day after the victory in Monday's parliamentary elections which were dominated by issues like tariffs and annexation threats from Trump.

The leaders agreed on the importance of Canada and the United States working together as independent, sovereign nations, said the readout.

Carney mentioned Canada-U.S. relations several times during his victory speech, reminding Canadians of the challenges posed by ongoing hostilities with the United States.

China issues orange alert for forest fires

Beijing, April 30 (UNI) : Chinese authorities on Wednesday issued an orange alert, the second highest-level warning, for forest fires in parts of China from May 1 to 5.

The national forest and grassland fire-control command office and the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) issued the alert for forest fires in parts of Hebei, Shanxi, Henan and Shaanxi during the five-day May Day holiday.

The emergency management departments have been instructed to closely monitor changes in fire hazards, implement early warning and response measures, continuously reinforce fire source control, strengthen emergency preparedness, and effectively address the ongoing severe risk of forest fires.

Forest and grassland fires are among eight major natural disasters. "Generally speaking, China's forest fires have shown an overall downward trend in recent years," said Yang Xudong, an official with the MEM, on March 21, the International Day of Forests.

Statistics show that, from 1950 to 1989, China averaged approximately 16,000 forest fire incidents annually. This number dropped to around 6,000 between 1990 and 2020, and since 2021, it has further decreased to less than 1,000 cases per year.

The causes of forest and grassland fires are categorized into natural and human factors, with the latter accounting for over 90 percent of the causes of fire incidents, according to Yang. China has a four-level warning system for forest fires, with red being the highest followed by orange, yellow and blue.

IMF Executive Board to meet with Pakistan on May 9 to discuss \$7 billion loan

Islamabad, April 30 (UNI) : The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board will meet with Pakistani authorities on May 9 to discuss the country's staff-level agreement for a new \$1.3 billion arrangement under a climate resilience loan programme, along with the first review of Pakistan's ongoing \$7billion bailout programme.

According to the global money lender, this will be the first "review under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility", along with a request for an arrangement under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), as reported by Dawn.

In an affirmation of the meeting, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb during his visit to Washington had also said that he expected the IMF Executive Board to approve the programme sometime in early May.A Board approval would allow for the disbursement of a \$1 billion tranche under the programme secured by Pakistan in 2024. The IMF programme has been instrumental in stabilising Pakistan's fragile economy, offering vital external financing and bolstering market confidence.

The global money lender and Islamabad had reached an accord in July 2024, under which Pakistan was approved for a three-year, \$7billion aid package. The new programme was set to allow the country to "cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for stronger, more inclusive and resilient growth".The ongoing 37-month EFF programme consists of six reviews over the life of the bailout, and the release of the next tranche of approximately \$1billion will be contingent on the success of the performance review.

In March, Pakistan and the IMF had concluded the first biannual review of the three-year-loan programme on a positive note, without imposing additional revenue measures.

In an end-of-mission statement, mission chief Nathan Porter said: "Programme implementation has been strong, and the discussions have made considerable progress in several areas, including the planned fiscal consolidation to durably reduce public debt, maintenance of sufficiently tight monetary policy to maintain low inflation, acceleration of cost-reducing reforms to improve energy sector viability."

1 soldier killed in Colombia helicopter crash



Bogota, April 30 (UNI) : A Colombian Navy helicopter crashed during a supply mission in northern Colombia, killing one soldier onboard, the navy said Tuesday. The Bell 412EP

helicopter plunged into a body of water shortly after takeoff near the town of Malagana.

Three other crew members were rescued and are receiving medical treatment, it

added.Colombian Defence Minister Pedro Sanchez said an inspection team has been established to investigate the crash, with support from the Colombian Aerospace Force.

Sri Lanka Navy seizes 322.860 kg Kerala cannabis, 4 held

Colombo (Sri Lanka), April 30 (UNI) : Sri Lanka Navy seized 322.860 kg of smuggled Kerala cannabis and arrested four persons in connection with the smuggling racket, an official statement said on Wednesday.

The statement issued here by the Sri Lankan Navy said a search operation was carried out by the Northern

Naval Command by deploying a naval craft 'SLNS Uththara' on receiving credible information in the Point Pedro sea area on Tuesday.

The naval personnel intercepted two dinghies and recovered 322.860 kg of Kerala cannabis being smuggled to the Island nation.Consequently, the consignment of Kerala

cannabis, two dinghies and four suspects were taken into naval custody.

The gross street value of the narcotic substance held in the operation is believed to exceed Rs 129 million.The arrested persons, together with Kerala cannabis and the dinghies were handed over to the Point Pedro police for onward legation, it said.

Powered by China, India, BRICS share in global economy reaches 36.8pc, G7's share decreases

Moscow, April 30 (UNI) : Powered mainly by China and India, the BRICS' share in the global economy has grown substantially, reaching a record 36.8%, with the gap between the G7 nations and BRICS widening, as per data gathered from last year.

According to RIA Novosti calculations based on IMF data, the contribution of the BRICS countries to global GDP increased by 0.64 percentage points, according to Sputnik. In comparison, the G7

lost 0.42 percentage points - with its share falling below 29% for the first time (recorded to be 28.86%).

As such, the gap between the BRICS and the G7 has widened to a record 8% points, up from 6.9 a year earlier.

The reasons for this are attributed to the economic growth of BRICS nations, seven of whom are showing greater contributions to the international economy.

The biggest of these seven are China and India, whose share shows an

increase of 0.34 percentage points to 19.45%, and 0.25 percentage points, to 8.25% respectively.

Others include Russia, recording an increase of 0.05 percentage points to 3.54%, Ethiopia by 0.01 percentage points to 0.27%, and a 0.01 percentage points from Brazil (2.4%), Iran (0.9%) and the UAE (0.4%).

Reportedly, out of all BRICS countries, only Egypt and South Africa saw a reduced share in the global economy – by approximately 0.01

14 killed in suspected terrorist attack in north Nigeria

Abuja, April 30 (UNI) : At least 14 people were killed in an attack by suspected terrorists who attacked a community in Borno, one of the restive states in Nigeria's northern region, local authorities said Tuesday.

The terrorists, suspected to be members of the outlawed Boko Haram group, stormed the Chibok community during a third-day prayer for a late district leader Monday evening, shooting indiscriminately and instantly killing seven mouners, Modu Mustapha, head of the Chibok local government area of Borno, told reporters.

Seven more bodies were recovered Tuesday as local volunteers combed the surroundings in search of casualties. Many others sustained varying degrees of gunshot injuries during the violence, which, according to Mustapha, had the trappings of Boko Haram attacks. Several houses were set ablaze during the attack.

The local government official said more casualties might be recovered, as volunteers continue to search for more bodies.

Trump administration sacks all authors of lead climate report

Washington, April 30 (UNI) : US President Donald Trump's administration has sacked all scientists and other authors working on the next authoritative look at how climate change is affecting the United States.The move will allow the administration to either skip the congressionally mandated report altogether, or pursue an alternative, potentially far more sceptical take on what is otherwise widely accepted climate science, CNN reported.

The last National Climate Assessment in 2023 found that climate change is already transforming every region of theUS, with more frequent and intense extreme weather events and a slew of other costly and harmful effects.

During the first Trump administration, the Fourth Assessment came out after being worked on mainly under the Obama White House. Trump officials sought to deep-six the findings by publishing it the day after Thanksgiving.Congress mandated these reports — conducted by a mix of federal and outside scientists under the US Global Change Research Program — be produced every four years. The next is due by 2027.

Pakistan's stock exchange crashes by 3,500 points

Islamabad, April 30 (UNI) : Pakistan's stock exchange (PSX) has crashed by 3,500 points over its panic on potential Indian military retaliation following the deadly Pahalgam terror attack in Kashmir.The country's benchmark KSE-100 index slumped by over 3.14% today, decreasing by 1,717.35 points, or 1.5%, to stand at 113,154.83 from the last close of 114,872.18, Dawn reported.By morning, the index declined by 2,073.42 points, or 1.8%, from the last close.

Trading volume stood at over 254 million shares, with a total market value of PKR 24.21 billion (USD 87 million).By afternoon, the KSE-100 index plunged by 3,255.42 points, or 2.83%, from the last close, before closing at 111,326.57, down by 3,545.61 or 3.09%, from the last close of 114,872.18.

The drop was attributed to the lack of investor confidence due to the warning issued by Information Minister Attaullah Tarar regarding heightened regional tensions.Speaking to Dawn, Mohammed Sohail,

chief executive of Topline Securities, attributed the decline to "news of likely attack in next few days".

Awais Ashraf, director research at AKD Securities, said, "Investors are worried about potential Indian military action against Pakistan, concerns that have intensified following the information minister's press briefing."Yousuf M. Farooq, director of research at Chase Securities, echoed the same sentiments.

He said that the market was under pressure following the information minister's "statement last night suggesting that India may take military action within the next 24–36 hours".This drop in PSX is bad news for Pakistan's already debilitating economy. The country has already witnessed little private investment, and few returns from public sector units. Following the Pahalgam attack which led to the deaths of 26 tourists, India's retaliatory actions against Pakistan's state-sponsored terrorism have created great anxiety amongst investors, many of whom are pulling out or completely refusing to invest any money.

China's Shenzhou 19 space mission returns to Earth safely after six months in orbit

Beijing, April 30 (UNI) : China's three-person-Shenzhou 19 space mission came back to Earth today after six months in orbit. The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) declared the mission a success, after the crew safely landed in the country's Inner Mongolia region.

The Shenzhou 19 spacecraft — carrying astronauts Cai Xuzhe, Song Lingdong, and Wang Haoze — undocked from the Tiangong space station on Tuesday (April 29) at 4 p.m. EDT (2000 GMT; 4 a.m. on April 30 China Standard Time), according to Beijing's space officials.

"The three astronauts stayed in orbit for 183 days [and] conducted three extravehicular activities, completed the installation of the space station's space debris protection device, and completed multiple cargo extravehicular missions," the CMSA said.

However, the astronauts were intended to make their return a day earlier, according to officials from the CMSA, as strong winds delayed the mission's landing at the original site, according to South China Morning Post. The agency added that the landing would be moved to the eastern section of the Dongfeng landing site where the meteorological conditions met requirements.It marked the first time a crew would land in this area, it said.

"Faced with new situations and new challenges, the entire project team worked closely together, linked up with the ground and the sky, and quickly formulated response measures to ensure the success of the mission," the CMSA said in a social media post before the descent.

The crew all landed safely and were reported to

be in good health by on-ground medical staff.

The Shenzhou 19 astronauts had been in space since October 29, when they launched toward Tiangong.

And they notched some notable milestones during that stretch. This included mission commander Cai and his fellow crew member Song spending more than nine hours outside Tiangong during a mid-December spacewalk, setting a new record for the longest extravehicular activity.

At a press conference the day before the Shenzhou-20 launch, CMSA deputy director Lin Xiqiang said that the Shenzhou-19 crew took part in 88 research projects – in the fields of microgravity, life sciences, aerospace medicine, and materials science – while on board.



Relationships



# Pros and cons of Working abroad

Working in a foreign country is a unique experience filled with new learnings, four professionals from diverse fields, who took up stints abroad before moving back to India, share their experience of working overseas

**Aasit Shah**

I don't consider any of my experiences in the US particularly appalling. In fact, the US proved to be a great training ground for me. I was working in the Silicon Valley and that favoured me in terms of weather since we had a good number of sunshine days. Dignity of labour is extremely high in the US. Even though there is hierarchy in terms of designations, I loved the personal connect one can have with their seniors. You can walk in and out of your senior's cabin any time. Work-life balance is excellent so much so that sending professional emails on a weekend is frowned upon. Organisations are extremely flexible. There were days when I could work from home. Since the US is considered to be the melting-pot of the world, I got the opportunity to work with people from different migrant communities there. And that was a great learning experience. I didn't miss India much because there are too many Indians around in the valley. So, for me, it was a home away from home!

**Pan kaj Khot**

Working in the UAE had its own upside and downside. The biggest benefit for me was to receive a tax-free salary, which is very rare. Companies in Dubai ensure that their employees have a perfect work-life balance. A major benefit of working in Dubai is that a number of international organisations have their offices there. So apart from helping you mingle with professionals from different cultures, it also enables you to understand the working styles of different countries. The city is strategically located and has great infrastructure. Restaurants in Dubai offer cuisines from all over the world making the place a gastronomic delight. On the flip side, house rents are too steep. Furthermore, if you don't have any family or friends, it can get boring and



**Kavita Gupta**

difficult. When I think about my working stint in the UK, I am filled with mixed feelings. First, I worked for Nokia. The environment there was professional, yet friendly. Flexibility was granted, when required. What I particularly liked was the blurring of hierarchy in terms of accessibility. One could approach one's bosses anytime. Being able to interact with people from different countries was a great advantage too. Work-life balance was perfect and working beyond clocking hours was not appreciated. However, when I moved to another company and got pregnant six months into the job, it didn't go well down with my boss. My profile was changed and I didn't find that fair.

**Guatam Parekh**

The first thing that really impressed me about Singapore was the minimalistic bureaucracy. Be it taxes of work permit or anything, government authorities are very co-operative. Every job or labour is treated with respect and this takes professionalism in the country to another level. Singapore being a first world country, infrastructure and connectivity are highly developed; both railways and roadways are well connected making travel hassle-free. I was part of the event industry there and the best thing was that clients treated me as their associate and not merely a vendor. It was a ritual for us to take our clients out for dinners post events. Professionally, it was a great bonding exercise. Technology is highly evolved in Singapore, so during events, each department knew their job to the T and that made our work easy. Since the country had professionals from all over the world, I got to learn a lot from people from varied cultures. Finally, Singapore is a welcoming country and doesn't let you feel homesick. My stint there was amazing.

## The struggles of a single mother

Mirror writer and single mom Anjana Vaswani chats with three others of her tribe on raising kids alone with one eye on blood pressure.

Two months ago, just days before the final round of admissions to kindergarten and Grade 1 under the Right to Education quota, panicking single mothers flocked to BMC help centres. Their applications had been rejected because the fathers' income certificates were missing. The mothers' certificates weren't acceptable as substitutes. It made newspaper copy, but ask a single mother, and she'll tell you niggles like these are a regular part of her life. Official paperwork that can be a nightmare in our patriarchal system is just the garnish on a gateaux of stress, guilt, feelings of isolation, stigma and self-doubt. Is her health likely to be impacted negatively in the long run? The answer though obvious is now confirmed by a study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health which assessed over 25,000 women across 15 countries. It focused on women who had children before the age of 18 and also examined, "whether doing it alone is worse in countries with relatively weak social and safety nets." Vital point, because our social structure may just be our redeemer. Not only does it alleviate the guilt when you leave your child with a grandparent, it allows us time for a fitness routine which, together, may render studies such as these altogether inapposite. This means you don't get to write us off yet. As I see friends, many, a lot younger than me, negotiating around the rose garden of marriage with aching backs and knees, and thyroid problems (frequently also treating the headaches of family politics), I feel confident that we have at least as good a shot at health and longevity as any of them. 'Suddenly, health became top priority' Anita Khiara, stay-at-home mum My daughters are now 14 and 11, but when I separated, they were nine and six. Since we had lived abroad for a while, moving to Mumbai postdivorce made it more challenging. We were grappling with a whole different culture, for one. I didn't even realise my health was headed downward. At the time, it appeared like a bout of illness. In the first three months, I lost enough weight to drop to an unhealthy size zero. It was only when I ended up fracturing my arm that I



realised my health was crying out for attention. The consistent aches and pains, I realised, arose partly due to the stress that accompanies moving home, and of course, separating from someone you've been with for 12 years; 14 in my case if I count the courtship. No matter what anyone says, it's scary to be on your own after all those years. You wonder, will I be able to provide for us? Will my children be all right? Seeing my father cry, I remember, was very hard for me - the hurt that the divorce had caused him. That I returned to a city where my siblings lived meant I could blend easily into their social circle. I found comfort in pouring my heart out to old friends. I sought out self-help literature. Carolyn Myss' Why People Don't Heal and How They Can helped me. There's a comprehensive table in the book that connects ailments to emotional issues. Interestingly, after the split, since I was aware that I was the only one around for my kids, I began taking my health very seriously. I never missed an annual check-up and exercised regularly. That's a habit that has stayed with me. 'I made a career out of the split' Nivedita Rawal, behavioural psychotherapist Twenty six and pregnant with my second child when my husband sought divorce in 1991, I had hoped then for a reconciliation. It wasn't until 2004 that I finally gathered the courage to confide in extended

family and friends about my single status. Single parenting is the toughest thing I have known, more so in the absence of family support. It was tough being mum and dad. The children's education, wellbeing, happiness. These became priority. Although I had worked in corporate jobs in Singapore, I was uncomfortable with the idea of leaving the kids in the care of a maid. I was petrified of child molestation and other possibilities. So, I decided to pursue psychology and set up a private practice after acquiring a Master's degree and then a Doctorate while the children were still in senior school. I'd be driving them back and forth from tuitions, I'd supervise their homework, and put up with the occasional last minute requests: 'Mommy, I need 20 buttons for art work. Now.' I remember running to JW Marriott at 9 pm once to ask if I could buy the needle-and-thread home-kits they offer in guestrooms. I got 10 packets. The rest of the buttons the kids needed came off my shirts. At one point, I supplemented my income by offering therapy to call centre employees during the graveyard shift. Social life was naturally sacrificed. In the last 23 years, I'd estimate that I must have attended about 10 social events. I did get into a relationship but ended it when I realised that he was not father material. Diwali, Christmas and Easter holidays were spent alone since the kids holidayed with their father.

But, having worked with single mothers who tend to develop acute depression, insomnia, even cancers and metabolic syndrome illnesses linked to diabetes, high blood pressure and heart conditions, I recognised my loneliness. I knew that I had to make a concerted effort to stay fit. I pursued Mallakhambh, yoga and swimming with dedication. It set the tone for the challenges that every day would bring. Yes, I still continue to combat insomnia and some food intolerances. Today, I'm a step-parent too, blessed with four children and two puppies, and have a successful practice that boasts celebrity clientele. 'It's tough to stay fit as a sandwich generation member' Ragashree Porecha, sales professional I kicked off my career with a monthly pay cheque of Rs 3,500 when I got divorced in 1995. It was a huge support to know that my family was there for my daughter. Still, there were heartbreaking moments when she'd complain that, unlike her, other kids always had mommy around. But by the time she got to the third

grade, she began to feel pride in the fact that her mother was a successful professional. Working had other advantages too. My first boss, with whom I worked for 15 years, was a bit of a health nut. She'd insist that I walk to work and back. Having been a juvenile diabetic, this helped me because otherwise, health would not have been priority. I know that, back then, I avoided visiting the doctor as far as possible. Health check-ups were erratic, but the walking kept my blood pressure and cholesterol levels in check. Over the last two years, however, after the demise of my mother, I'm now responsible not just for my daughter but my father too. And with that, my fitness has taken a beating. My blood pressure shot up over the last nine months, and sugar levels were erratic. I've developed hypothyroidism and my shoulders freeze up sometimes. But I know this is temporary. With years of work experience at luxury brands, I hope to have a job waiting for me when I'm able to take it, and I am working on rebuilding my immunity.

## Is loneliness making your pets depressed?

**Owners of two-and-a-half-year-old Brownny, whose habit of chasing her tail turned into a 24X7 obsession, panicked and took her to a veterinarian. The vet directed them to an animal behaviourist who diagnosed Brownny with boredom and separation anxiety. After months of treatment Brownny's behaviour has turned normal.**

Leaving your pets alone at home for long periods, ignoring them or spending insufficient time with them can take a toll on them and cause serious health issues. In recent times many pets have been facing issues of separation anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders and in extreme cases even self destructive behaviour, say city based pet psychologists and pet behaviourists. Priti Chauhan, a pet behaviourist and therapist for the last 10 years, said, "Every week I get two to three similar cases. Along with treating the pets, we also counsel the owners so that they do not repeat the same mistakes. In most of these cases the pets get affected due to suffering caused by their owners leaving them alone at home for long durations. Some people even tie them up, confining them to one place and don't keep sufficient drinking water among other things." Anagha Mali, another pet behaviourist informed, "There are various ways to know if a pet is suffering from these issues. Separation anxiety includes pets refusing to stay indoors, barking

continuously, being destructive including chewing on furniture, soiling the house. In extreme cases pets start hurting themselves by either licking and creating a wound, shadow chasing or tail chasing etc." At times pets can also suffer due to other reasons, explained Priti. "Ensure that the pet is well fed, is done with his daily ablutions and



has continuous access to water. Tying the pet is a no-no but if you have to, then make sure the place doesn't get direct sunlight. Also, it is important to stimulate the pet physically and mentally. Apart from regular exercises like walks, running or playing the ball which will drain him physically, ensure you take your pet to a nearby park, hill or any place outdoors where he can get

to smell flowers, leaves, roads etc. That will stimulate his brain," she said. Housewife Aarti Pednekar's case is an example of pets suffering due to other reasons. Aarti, who owns a six-year-old Labrador, Honey, narrated, "Though we are a family of four, Honey is most attached to me and becomes restless if I go out anywhere. Recently when I had gone out of town for a fortnight, she almost injured her front paw by licking it continuously. On consulting a behaviourist we realised she was suffering from separation anxiety. The behaviourist explained how important it is to engage other members of the family in taking care of the pet so that it feels attached to all." Veterinary surgeon and behaviour counsellor Dr Shivshankar Chikodi, said, "It is good to train your pet if you are going to leave him alone for long hours. The training can ideally start at two years of age. Initially one should start keeping the pet alone for a period of 15 minutes which can gradually be increased to two hours and longer.



# Inter - Departmental sports meet concludes with Enthusiasm and team spirit : ECoR



**(Standard Post Bureau)**  
Visakhapatnam, April 30 : The one month long Annual DRM Cup Inter-Departmental Sports Mela – 2025, organized by the East Coast Railway Sports Association (ECoRSA), Waltair, concluded today at Sri Srinivasa Kalyana M a n d a p a m , Visakhapatnam station Road with a vibrant closing ceremony.

Railway employees from various departments enthusiastically took part in 12 sporting disciplines, with women employees competing in 8 events. A total of 14 departments from across the Division participated in this mega sporting event, which was organized with the core motto of promoting sportsmanship and team spirit among the workforce.

Divisional Railway

Manager and President of ECoRSA Waltair, Shri Lalit Bohra, graced the closing ceremony as Chief Guest. Shri Manoj Kumar Sahoo, ADRM (Operations), Shri E. Santharam, ADRM (Infrastructure), Shri M. Haranath, Senior Divisional Finance Manager and Sports Officer, Shri A. Avinash, Joint Sports Officer and Sr. DOM (Operations), Treasurer Shri Jusuf Kabir Ansari, Assistant Sports Officers Shri Sh Patil & Shri Sahu, Smt. N. Usha, General Secretary of ECoRSA, along with other officers and sports personnel. The representatives from recognized trade Unions were also graced the occasion.

In his address, the DRM emphasized the importance of such events in fostering

camaraderie and interaction among employees. He highlighted the unique character of the Sports Mela, noting that it is one of a kind within Indian Railways. He also announced that the Electrical Engineering (Operations) team clinched the Overall Team Championship, while the RPF team emerged as runners-up. Trophies and Presentations were given to the winners by the DRM.

In the welcoming speech Sports Officer Shri M Haranath appreciated the team management for excellent organization of the Inter Departmental Sports Mela-2025 and also mentioned that ECoRSA will release a calendar of events of sports to be conducted in the coming year.

Departments that

participated in the event included:

Accounts, Medical, Operating, Engineering, Commercial, Electrical (General), Mechanical (C&W), Personnel, Construction, Signal & Telecom, Mechanical (DLS), Electrical (Operations), Electrical (TRS), Electrical (TRD), RPF, Safety, and Stores.

Events for men included:

Football, Volleyball, Athletics, Weightlifting, Table Tennis, Shuttle Badminton, Ball Badminton, Chess, Carrom, Bodybuilding, Tennis, and Cricket.

Events for women included:

Weightlifting, Chess, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Carrom, Shuttle Badminton, Athletics, Tug of War, and Walking.

# CSK knocked out of IPL, Chahal, Shreyas, Parbhsimran takes PBKS to easy win

Chennai, April 30 (UNI) : Five time winners Chennai Super Kings (CSK) were knocked out of IPL, as Punjab Kings (PBKS), thanks to half centuries by skipper Shreyas Iyer and opener Prabhsimran Singh, scored a thumping win by four wickets with two ball to spare at the Chepauk stadium here on Wednesday night.

After bowling out CSK for 190, which was largely due to a four wicket haul, including a second hat-trick by spinner Yuzuvendra Chahal in the 19th over, PBKS crossed the finishing line with consummate ease despite losing three wickets in the death overs.

Openers Priyansh Arya (23, 15 balls, 5x4) and Prabhsimran gave a solid start with a 44-run stand in 4.4 overs with some fluent power hitting.

Then Prabhsimran (54, 36 balls, 5x4, 3x6) and Shreyas Iyer took the game away from CSK, with a blazing 72-run stand for the second wicket in 8.2 overs, carting the home bowlers to all parts of the ground with a flurry of boundaries. A couple of dropped catches by CSK also compounded their woes. The exit of Prabhsimran and No.4 Nehal Wadhwa (5) in quick succession did not alter the course of the chase as Shreyas Iyer came up with a scintillating knock (72, 41 balls, 5x4, 4x6), picking up 20 runs in the 17th over of Sri Lankan slinger Matheehsa Pathirana which doused the hopes of the home team.

The exit of Shreyas, with just three runs remaining after Shashank Singh's brief cameo (23, 12 balls, 1x4, 1x6) came too late as CSK lost their eighth match and crashed out of this lucrative league as the visitors won with two balls to spare overhauling the target scoring 194 for six for its sixth win. Three wickets in three overs raised a glimmer of hope, but the CSK's chennai fortress was breached once again, losing its sixth home match, while hoping for some face saving win in their remaining contests to avoid finishing as wooden spoonists.

While PBKS jumped to the second spot in the points table (13 pts), CSK's fortunes continued to plummet as they definitely fell short by 10-15 runs, with Chahal doing the damage in the death overs.

Earlier, asked to bat first CSK were well set for a score of 200, despite losing three wickets in the power play. Sam Curran's first half century this edition (88, 47 balls, 9x4, 4x6) and Dewald Brevis (32, 26 balls, 2x4, 1x6), revived the innings with a fourth wicket stand setting the stage for a big total.

# Praggnanandhaa second as Fedoseev extends lead

Warsaw (Poland) April 30 (UNI) : GM P r a g g n a n a n d h a a Rameshbabu has bounced back from a rocky start to stay in contention for the top honours at the 2025 Superbet Rapid & Blitz Poland.

Despite suffering two early losses on the first day of blitz, the Indian chess prodigy has shown resilience, securing five victories and drawing against tournament leader GM Vladimir Fedoseev. As the event heads into its final day, Praggnanandhaa sits in sole second place, just 3.5 points behind the leader and with several contenders breathing down his neck.

Although the tournament has been a whirlwind for the young GM, he remains unshaken by the fluctuations of speed chess.

"It's a long event and you just have to keep going," Praggnanandhaa reflected, recalling his experience at Tata Steel Chess India 2024, where he turned around a rough start to finish strong. His ability to recover and persevere has been on full display, and his performance on Day 1 of the blitz has kept him within striking distance of the title.

Fedoseev, who surged ahead with an outstanding 8/9 score on Tuesday, leads with a commanding 16.5 points, but the chase for second place is far from settled.

# Veteran shooting coach Sunny Thomas dies

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : India's longest-serving national shooting coach Sunny Thomas died on Wednesday in Kottayam, Kerala, following a cardiac arrest, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) confirmed.

Thomas, a former NRAI Vice-President, was 84. He is survived by his wife KJ Josamma and three children — Manoj Sunny, Sanil Sunny and Sonia Sunny.

A pioneering figure in Indian sports, Prof Thomas served as India's national shooting coach from 1993 to 2012. During this period, he transformed the landscape of Indian shooting and laid the foundation for the country's emergence as a global powerhouse in the sport. Under his guidance, Indian shooters achieved landmark success on the Olympic stage. These included Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore's silver medal at the 2004 Athens Olympics, Abhinav Bindra's historic gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics — India's first individual Olympic gold — and the twin podium finishes at London 2012, where Vijay Kumar won silver and Gagan Narang bagged bronze. Prof Thomas was honoured with the Dronacharya Award in 2001 for his outstanding contribution to Indian shooting — becoming the first coach in the discipline to receive the prestigious recognition. In a statement, the NRAI said, "Prof Sunny

# India U19 men's team arrives in Arunachal Pradesh for SAFF U19 Championship

Itanagar, April 30 (UNI) : The India U19 men's team arrived in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, on Wednesday, ahead of the SAFF U19 Championship 2025, scheduled to take place from May 9 to 18 at the Golden Jubilee Stadium in Yupia.

Kipa Ajay, Treasurer, AIFF and Honorary Secretary, Arunachal Pradesh Football Association, welcomed the 25-member Indian squad, coached by Bibiano Fernandes, at the Donyi Polo Airport in the Arunachal capital. The Blue Colts had been training at the Padukone-David Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru before arriving in the Land of the Dawn-Lit Mountains.

It will mark a historic

occasion in the sporting history of Arunachal Pradesh as the state will host an international football tournament for the first time.

Hosts India will face Sri Lanka (May 9) and Nepal (May 13) in Group B. Maldives, Bhutan, and Bangladesh are in Group A. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals that will be played on May 16. The final will take place on May 18.

India's 25-member squad for the SAFF U19 Championship 2025: Goalkeepers: Aarush Hari, Aheibam Suraj Singh, Rohit. Defenders: Ashik Adhikari, Takhellambam Bungson Singh, Jodric Abranches, Malemngamba Singh Thokchom, Mohammed Kaif, Mukul

Panwar, Sumit Sharma Brahmacharimayum, Sohum Utreja, Roshan Singh Thangjam.

Midfielders: Danny Meitei Laishram, Gurnaj Singh Grewal, Md Arbash, Ningthoukhongjam Rishi Singh, Daniyal M a k a k m a y u m , Singamayum Shami.

F o r w a r d s : Ahongshangbam Samson, Bharat Lairenjam, Chaphamayum Rohen Singh, Omang Dodum, Prashan Jajo, Hemneichung Lunkim, Yohaan Benjamin.

Head coach: Bibiano Fernandes

Assistant coach: Remus Gomes

Goalkeeper coach: Dipankar Choudhury

Strength and conditioning coach: Chelston Pinto

# Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by an innings and 106 runs

Chattogram, April 30 (UNI) : Spinners reigned supreme as Bangladesh thumped Zimbabwe by an innings and 106 runs in the second Test of the two-match series against Zimbabwe here on Wednesday.

Mehedi Hasan Miraz picked up a five-wicket haul, Taijul Islam scalped three, while Nayeem Hasan chipped in with a solitary wicket as spinners accounted for nine wickets to bundle out Zimbabwe for 111 in the final session on Day 3. after Bangladesh posted 444 in response to the visitor's 227.

The Tigers amassed 444, thanks to Miraz's 104 and a 41-run knock from tailender Tanzim Hasan Sakib after Shadman Islam's 120, giving the Tigers a 227-run lead.

Zimbabwe's reply got off to an abysmal start as they lost half their side for just 69 runs on the board. Opener Ben Curran scored 46 and tried to hold one end but the spin challenge proved too steep for the visitors.

Taijul Islam, who took five wickets in the first innings, removed Brian Bennett (6) and Nick Welch (2) before the Tea interval. Nayeem Hasan then joined the

party with the dismissal of Sean Williams.

There was a 47-run partnership between Ben Curran and Craig Ervine, but then Miraz returned to strike a triple blow. From 69 for three, Zimbabwe suddenly became 73 for six with Curran holding up one end, the Daily Star reported.

This is the first time in 16 innings at home that Bangladesh have managed to get past 400.

Miraz was the last man out, for 104 runs, as Bangladesh bossed the third day's play thus far.

Taijul Islam (20) was the only wicket to fall on the morning, becoming the fourth victim of leg-spinner Vincent Masekesa, who is on debut. Tanzim Sakib (41) was the next to fall in the second session before Miraz's dismissal wrapped up the innings.

Vincent Masekesa finished with a five-wicket haul on debut.

Zimbabwe, who lead the two-match series 1-0, had scored 227 in their first innings after having won the toss.

Brief score:  
Zimbabwe: 227 & 111  
Bangladesh: 444

# Athletic Bilbao gearing up for Manchester United in Europa League semifinal

Madrid, April 30 (UNI) : Athletic Bilbao and Manchester United go head-to-head in the first leg of their UEFA Europa League semifinal in the San Mames Stadium on Thursday night. Athletic goes into the match with a 100 percent record in its home ground, while Manchester United is unbeaten in the tournament, meaning that something has to give.

There are high hopes in Bilbao that Athletic can reach the third European final in the club's history, with the added incentive that the final will be played at its San Mames stadium on May 21. United, meanwhile, has the Europa League as the only way to save a miserable campaign and qualify for Europe next season, although coach Ruben Amorim did not rest anyone for the 1-1 draw away to Bournemouth at the weekend, fielding a strong side including Bruno Fernandes, who is the heart of his side's creative play.

After a rare weekend without a game, Athletic coach Ernesto Valverde has virtually a full squad to choose from, with attacking

midfielder Oihan Sancet the only absentee as he struggles with yet another muscle injury.

Sancet is the top scorer and penalty taker and will be missed, although Valverde can decide between Unai Garcia or Alex Berenguer as replacements. Veterans Oscar de Marcos and Yuri Berchiche will play as full-backs for Athletic, with Spain international Dani Vivian and Yeray Alvarez in central defense.

Vivian's duels with Harry Maguire at set pieces promises to be one of the key tactical battles of the game. Mikel Jauregizar and Inigo Ruiz de Galarreta will play in central midfield, where they face an important battle against Manuel Ugarte and

Casemiro, while in attack Maruan Sannabi will lead the line, partnered by the Williams brothers Inaki and Nico on the flanks.

Nobody in Bilbao has forgotten the Europa League meeting between the two clubs in the last-16 in 2012, which saw Athletic outplay United to win 3-2 at Old Trafford and follow that up with a 2-1 win in San Mames for a 5-3 aggregate win that did not really reflect its dominance on the pitch. Few cities in the world get behind their football team in the way Bilbao does, and streets, bars and balconies will be festooned with Athletic's red and white colors for what promises to be a tense and emotional day in one of the biggest games in the club's history.

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## General Manager along with Central Railway Officials meet Members of Parliament of Mumbai Division

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 30 : Mr Dharam Veer Meena, General Manager, Central Railway along with Principal Head of the Departments & Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai met Hon'ble Members of Parliament at "Chintan" Conference Hall, Central Railway Headquarters Building on 30.04.2025.

Mr Dharam Veer Meena, General Manager, Central Railway along with Principal Head of the Departments & Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai met Members of Parliament at "Chintan" Conference Hall, Central Railway Headquarters Building on 30.04.2025.

"Earlier, the General Manager welcomed the Members of Parliament with shawl and Shrifal. In his welcome address, Mr Meena commended their cooperation and motivation in completing the projects and further said under their guidance will serve the esteemed passengers with



better amenities."

Mr Hresh Mina, Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai Division gave a presentation on Achievements of Mumbai Division."

Mr Shyam Sunder Gupta, Principal Chief Operations Manager, Mr Arvind Malkhede, Principal Chief Commercial Manager, Mr Anup Kumar Agrawal, Principal Chief Electrical Engineer, Mr Rajnish

Mathur, Principal Chief Engineer, Mr Maninder Uppal, Principal Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer, Mr Subodh Kumar Sagar, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr Surendra Nath Chaudhari, Principal Chief Security Commissioner, Smt Shobha Jagganath, Principal Chief Medical Director, Mr Hresh Mina, Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai Division, Central Railway,

Shri D Chandrakar, Chief Engineer (Const), Mr Piyush Chaturvedi, Secretary, Central Railway and Dr. Swapnil Nila, Chief Public Relations Officer, Central Railway were also present in the meeting. "

Mr K. K. Mishra, Deputy General Manager Central Railway conducted the proceedings of the meeting.

Revised composition of Train no 17614/17613 Hazur Sahib Nanded-Panvel-

Hazur Sahib Nanded Express and Train no 17630/17629 Hazur Sahib Nanded-Pune-Hazur Sahib Nanded Express are given below:-

One AC-2Tier, Five AC-3Tier, 05 Sleeper Class, 4 General Second Class, 1 General Second Class cum Guard's Brake Van and 1 Generator Van.

Train no 17641/17613 Hazur Sahib Nanded-Panvel-Hazur Sahib Nanded Express will run with revised composition Ex. Hazur Sahib Nanded Hazur Sahib Nanded from 1st May 2025 and from Ex. Panvel from 2nd May 2025.

Train no 17630/17629 Hazur Sahib Nanded-Pune-Hazur Sahib Nanded Express will run with revised composition Ex. Hazur Sahib Nanded from 3rd May 2025 and Ex. Pune from 4th May 2025.

For detailed timings and halts of these trains, please visit [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in) or download NTES App.

Passengers to please note the above changes.

## Rahul welcomes caste census decision; demands clear implementation timeline

New Delhi, April 30 (UNI) : Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday welcomed the Central Government's decision to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming national census and called for a clear implementation timeline.

Addressing a press conference at the party office here, Gandhi reiterated the party's longstanding demand for a caste census and emphasised the need to break the 50 percent cap on reservation.

"We also advocate eliminating the 50 percent cap on reservations as it is increasingly becoming an impediment to development, progress and the advancement of the backward castes, Dalits, and Adivasis," Gandhi said. Highlighting "Telangana as a model state that successfully conducted a comprehensive caste census", Gandhi urged the Central Government to "incorporate some of its effective approaches in the national census".

The former Congress president also demanded the swift implementation of Article 15(5), which pertains to reservations in private educational institutions — a law that already exists. "We urge the government to implement it without any delay," he added.

The Raebareli MP also praised all the Congress members, workers, and every single person, activists from the backward communities, Dalits, and Adivasis who fought for the caste census.

While replying to a question on the Pahalagam terror attack, Gandhi said, "I would not like to comment as to how this happened. I just want to say that those who have done it will have to pay the price for this".

## Two and a half lakh customers in Kalyan circle have TOD (Smart) meters

(Standard Post Bureau)

Kalyan/Vasai/Palghar, April 30 : Mahavitaran is installing such sophisticated TOD (Time of Day) meters among low-voltage electricity consumers. So far, TOD meters have been installed among two lakh 26 thousand customers in Kalyan circle. These meters are not prepaid. The customers to whom these meters are being installed are being given monthly bills after the electricity consumption as before. Through this meter, the concerned customer and Mahavitaran will get accurate information about how much electricity is being used at what time. Along with this, no financial burden will be borne by the customers. These meters are for the benefit of electricity consumers and Mahavitaran has appealed not to believe the misconceptions and rumors being spread about these meters.

The TOD meter has a communication port and the meter is connected to the server of Mahavitaran. Due to this, real-time data of the meter is available to Mahavitaran. Therefore, information about the meter being faulty can be obtained immediately. The meter reading will be automatic. There is no scope for human intervention in this. Due to automatic meter reading, the customers will get accurate and timely bills. Since this is a state-of-the-art meter, the customer will



be able to see the electricity consumption of every hour and day on their mobile. There will be no financial burden on the customers for installing the meter, and the discount is being provided from the central government funds.

Currently, Mahavitaran has installed TOD meters for all industrial customers. Accordingly, Mahavitaran provides discounts to industrial customers for electricity consumption during a specific period. On the same lines, it is proposed to provide discounts to domestic customers in the future if they use electricity during a specific time. This will benefit only the customers. Also, the installation of these meters will not have any impact on the prevailing electricity rates.

TOD meters have been installed at all government offices and residences, including Mahavitaran, Mahapreshan, and mobile tower customers. The customers are receiving positive response for installing these meters. As a result, TOD meters have been installed in Kalyan Circle till now for 2 lakh 25 thousand 984 customers of various categories. This includes 48 thousand 669 TOD meters installed for new electricity connections.

TOD meters installed in Kalyan Circle: "Office New electricity connections Changed meters Total" Kalyan Circle One 9,073 42,557 51,630 Kalyan Circle Two 13,712 53,935 67,647 Palghar 8,412 33,659 42,071 Vasai 17,472 47,164 64,636 Kalyan Circle 48,669 1,77,315 2,25,984

## WR to run three summer special trains to various destinations

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 30 : For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand especially during the summer season, Western Railway has decided to run three Special Trains on Special Fare to various destinations. Besides this, WR has decided to extend the trips of Train No. 09189/09190 Mumbai Central - Katihar Weekly Special train on Special fare on existing composition, timings, and stoppages, etc.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek the details of the special train is as under:

1. Train No. 09067/09068 Udhna - Jaynagar Weekly Unreserved Special [8Trips]

Train No. 09067 Udhna - Jaynagar Special will depart from Udhna every Sunday at 12.20 hrs and reach Jaynagar at 20.50 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 4th May to 25th May, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09068 Jaynagar - Udhna Special will depart from Jaynagar every Monday at 23.50 hrs and reach Udhna at 12.15 hrs, on Wednesday. This train will run from 5th May to 26th May, 2025.

Enroute this train will halt at Chalthan, Nandurbar, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Itarsi Jn, Jabalpur, Katni, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Cheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur Jn, Muzaffarpur Jn stations in both directions.

This train comprises of General Second Class coaches.

2. Train No. 09069/09070 Udhna - Samastipur Weekly Special [10 Trips]

Train No. 09069 Udhna - Samastipur Special will depart from Udhna every Saturday at 20.35 hrs and will reach Samastipur at 02.35 hrs, on Monday. This train will run from 3rd May to 31st May, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09070 Samastipur - Udhna Special will depart from Samastipur

every Monday at 05.00 hrs. & will arrive Udhna at 14.00 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 5th May to 2nd June, 2025.

Enroute this train will halt at Chalthan, Nandurbar, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Itarsi Jn, Jabalpur, Katni, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Cheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur Jn and Muzaffarpur Jn stations in both directions.

This train comprises of Sleeper Class and General Second Class coaches.

3. Train No. 09407/09408 Ahmedabad - Danapur Weekly Special [14 Trips]:

Train No. 09407 Ahmedabad - Danapur Special will depart Ahmedabad every Tuesday at 09.20 hrs & will reach Danapur at 19.00 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 6th May to 17th June, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09408 Danapur - Ahmedabad Special will depart from Danapur every Wednesday at 22.30 hrs & will reach Ahmedabad at 06.00 hrs, on Friday. This train will run from 7th May to 18th June, 2025.

Enroute this train will halt at Nadiad, Chhayapuri, Ratlam, Ujjain, Sant Hirdaram Nagar, Bina, Saugor, Damoh, Katni Murwara, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Cheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar and Ara station in both directions.

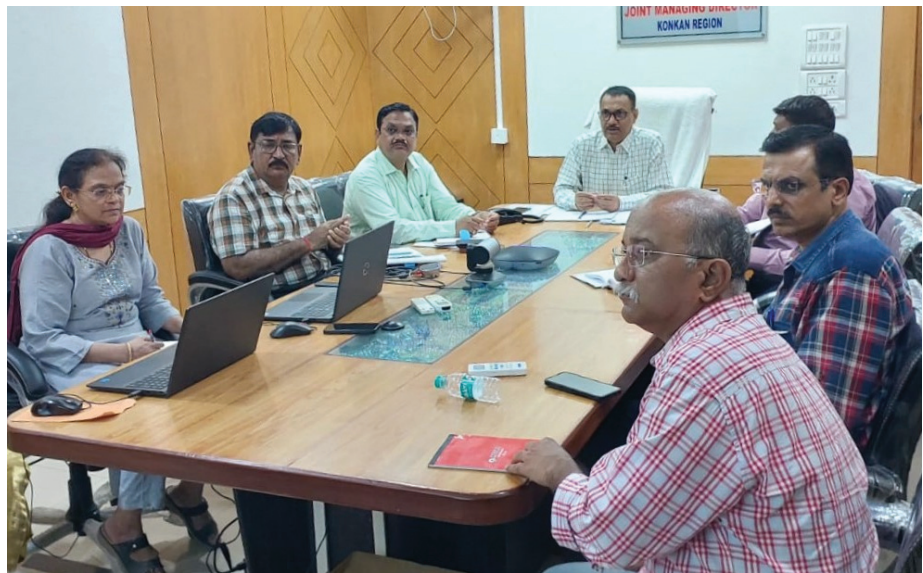
This train comprises of AC 2-Tier, AC 3-Tier, Sleeper Class and General Second-Class Coaches.

4. Extension of Train No. 09189/09190 Mumbai Central - Katihar Weekly Special:

Train No. 09189 Mumbai Central - Katihar Weekly Special has been extended up to 31st May, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09190 Katihar - Mumbai Central Weekly Special has been extended up to 3rd June, 2025.

The Booking for Train Nos. 09069, 09407 and extended trips of Train No. 09189 will open from 2nd May, 2025 at all PRS Counters and on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in)

## Services should be provided to electricity consumers as per the Right to Service Act : Dilip Jagdale



(Standard Post Bureau)

Kalyan, April 30 : he state government has implemented the Right to Service Act to provide various civil services to the people of the state within the prescribed period. Dilip Jagdale, Joint Managing Director of Konkan Regional Division of Mahavitaran, gave orders

to the officers and employees to implement this effectively.

He gave these orders in a video conference organized on Wednesday (30th April) with the Chief Engineers and Superintending Engineers under the Konkan Regional Division. On the occasion of the Right to Service

Fortnight, the state government has launched the Mahavitaran portal. In this, various services have been made available to electricity consumers. These services should be provided to the consumers within the prescribed period. He warned of action against officers and employees who neglect

this work. The meeting was attended by Chief Engineers of Kalyan and Bhandup Circles Chandramani Mishra, Chief Engineer of Konkan Circle Anil Doye, Chief Engineer of Nashik Circle Sundar Latpate, Chief Engineer of Jalgaon Circle Ibrahim Mulani and Superintending Engineers of all the divisional offices. "

Earlier, Joint Managing Director Mr. Jagdale administered the oath to the officers and employees present at the regional office in Godrej Hill area on the occasion of Seva Fortnight. Superintending Engineers Nilkamal Chaudhary, Kailash Dudhbarve, Mohan Kaloge, Deputy General Manager Yogesh Khairnar, Assistant General Manager Havisha Jagtap were present on this occasion.

## WR state Bharat scouts and guides organised 5th District rally

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 30 : Western Railway State Bharat Scouts & Guides successfully held its 5th District Rally from 25th April to 28th April, 2025 at the State Training Centre, Gholvad. With the central theme of "Peace and Trust," this year's rally brought together 104 Scouts and Guides from across Mumbai District to promote values of harmony, mutual understanding, and service.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek, the objective of the rally was to foster a culture of peace and dialogue, encourage community service, and strengthen intercultural understanding among young participants. Activities were designed to highlight these goals and provide a meaningful, collaborative experience for all attendees. 104 participants from all Units of Mumbai District such as



Glimpses of various activities and group photo of the 5th District Rally held at State Training Centre, Gholvad by Western Railway State Bharat Scouts & Guide.

Mumbai, Valsad, Surat/Udhna, Nandurbar and Sindkheda were part of this camp.

The rally featured a wide range of inter-patrol competitions including face painting, mehendi, rangoli, and poster-making. In line with environmental awareness efforts, participants engaged in a

recycling project by creatively reusing plastic bottles to construct boundaries around trees at the camp site. Team-building events such as tug of war, box cricket, quiz contests, and dance competitions added to the enthusiasm and camaraderie. Every evening

concluded with a themed campfire session, reinforcing the message of unity and shared purpose.

Mr Vineet further added that senior Scout leaders mentored new members through hands-on training in pioneering skills, including the construction of gadgets and a three-pole tower.