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BJP Flags Cow Slaughter Issue Ahead of Bakrid



N. Ramchander Rao alleged that incidents of illegal cattle transportation and cow slaughter were increasing in Telangana ahead of Bakrid, particularly in Hyderabad. He accused the police of targeting cow protectors and BJP workers instead of taking action against those involved in illegal activities. Rao demanded withdrawal of cases against activists and urged the government to set up inspection checkpoints to prevent illegal cattle transport. He warned that the BJP would launch a statewide agitation if the detained workers were not released.

BJP Rule to Last 20 Years

Axis My India
Chairman Pradeep Gupta

New Delhi: Axis My India Chairman and noted pollster Pradeep Gupta has said the Bharatiya Janata Party's current phase of political dominance could continue for at least two decades, drawing comparisons with the Congress party's prolonged rule in the early decades after Independence. In an interview with PTI, Gupta said the BJP's dominance, which began after the party came to power at the Centre in 2014, is likely to continue as long as its governance performance remains strong. "There is a threshold in politics. Earlier, Congress ruled continuously till 1977. After that, it started facing difficulties. In those days, we used to talk about a political generation lasting around 20 years. That 20-year cycle will remain even now," Gupta said. According to him, Indian politics is currently witnessing another phase of one-party predominance, with the BJP emerging as the central force in national politics. Gupta, however, cautioned that the continuation of the BJP-led NDA's dominance would depend heavily on governance and delivery. He noted that public expectations from the ruling alliance had risen sharply after receiving repeated electoral mandates. "After re-



ceiving such a massive mandate, expectations from the BJP have also increased. So the BJP and the NDA will now have to super perform," he said.

Till the time their performance does not become weak or poor, they will keep winning and the opposition will keep losing.

"Till the time their performance does not become weak or poor, they will keep winning and the opposition will keep losing," he added. Commenting on the Congress party's prospects, Gupta said the opposition party continues to face the burden of what he described as "legacy issues"

linked to perceptions of past governance failures. According to him, rebuilding public trust across the country may take several more years. "Even if you talk about 2029, it would mean around 15 years out of power for Congress. I feel it may take at least five more years for them to convince the entire country," he observed. At the same time, Gupta noted that sustained political dominance also brings risks, as public expectations tend to rise significantly with prolonged success. "When you reach great heights, there is also a tendency to come down later. BJP has also reached that stage where expectations from it have risen," he said.

Telangana Hikes Minimum Wages

Hyderabad, May 21: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday announced a major revision in minimum wages for workers across the state, stating that nearly 1.11 crore workers would benefit from the new pay structure coming into effect from June 1, 2026. Addressing a press conference at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister said the decision was taken following recommendations made by a Cabinet Sub-Committee headed by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu to review workers' wages. Revanth Reddy alleged that workers had suffered due to the negligence of the previous government and described the revised wage structure as a historic step towards labour welfare. Under the new system, workers have been categorised into four groups - unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled - while the state has been divided into three wage zones covering Municipal Corporations, Municipalities and rural areas. According to the revised structure, minimum wages for unskilled workers have been increased from Rs 12,750 to Rs 16,000 per month. Semi-skilled workers will now receive Rs 17,000 instead of Rs 13,152. Similarly, wages for skilled workers have been raised from Rs 13,772 to Rs 18,500.



Revanth Seeks Women's Quota Parli Session

Hyderabad, May 21: A. Revanth Reddy demanded that the Centre convene a special session of Parliament to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in legislative bodies. Paying tributes to former PM Rajiv Gandhi on his death anniversary, he said the INDIA Alliance was ready to support the Women's Reservation Bill. Revanth said the reservation should reflect Rajiv's vision of women's political empowerment through local body quotas, and urged all parties not to politicise the issue.

Centre Clears ₹5,681 Cr for Telangana Projects

Hyderabad, May 21: The Central Government has approved three major urban infrastructure projects worth Rs 5,681.04 crore for Telangana under the Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme (UCF), providing a major boost to development in Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam regions. The approval forms part of 17 projects sanctioned for six states across the country. Announcing the development on Thursday, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said the approved projects include the Khammam-Warangal-Karimnagar Corridor, modernisation of Warangal's sewerage system, and several infrastructure works in Karimnagar. The Karimnagar package includes construction of model roads, skywalks, foot-over bridges and non-motorised transport

facilities aimed at improving urban mobility and public infrastructure. According to the statement, the Centre will bear 25 per cent of the total project cost and has already released Rs 1,420.26 crore towards the initiatives. Remaining amount will be financed through HUDCO loans, while the Telangana Government will contribute its share of funding. The statement further noted that Karimnagar was initially left out of the proposals submitted by the State Government. However, Bandi Sanjay Kumar reportedly intervened and pursued the inclusion of the city's projects through discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Urban Development Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and senior officials. Following the approval, the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation is ex-



pected to receive nearly Rs 840 crore for urban development works. These include skywalk construction, drainage modernisation, flood mitigation measures and development of model roads. Officials said the sanctioned projects are expected to significantly strengthen urban infrastructure and civic amenities in TG's key municipal regions, particularly Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam.

Reels Abroad, Protests at Home

Rahul Targets PM Over NEET Leak

New Delhi, May 21: Rahul Gandhi on Thursday intensified his attack on the Centre over the NEET-UG paper leak, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of remaining silent on the issue and failing to act against Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi said the Congress would continue its agitation until Pradhan resigns and a foolproof mechanism is introduced to prevent examination paper leaks in the country. Taking a swipe at the PM, Gandhi alleged that while Modi was "making reels in Italy", students across India were protesting on the streets seeking justice over the NEET-UG paper leak. He claimed the leak had ruined the future of lakhs of students and alleged that several students had lost their lives due to the stress surrounding repeated examination controversies. Gandhi further accused the PM of neither taking responsibility nor removing the education minister. He is also criticised BJP-ruled states, alleging that police used force against protesting student. "A government that answers students' questions with batons runs on fear, not accountability," Gandhi said, asserting that the Congress would continue its fight for students affected by examination irregularities. Gandhi also shared a video posted by the Rajasthan Congress purportedly showing police using water cannons to disperse protesters outside BJP headquarters in Jaipur during a demonstration seeking Pradhan's resignation.

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Aid Cleared For Journalists

21 Families Get Welfare Support

Hyderabad, May 21: Telangana Media Academy has sanctioned financial assistance to 21 beneficiaries under the Journalists' Welfare Fund. The announcement was made by TMA Chairman K Srinivas Reddy after the fifth meeting of the Welfare Fund Committee held at the academy office in Nampally, Hyderabad. The committee reviewed 29 applications and approved aid for the families of 17 deceased journalists. Financial assistance was also extended to four working journalists suffering from serious illnesses or severe accidents. According to officials, the families of deceased journalists will receive Rs 1 lakh assistance along with a monthly pension of Rs 3,000 for five years.



Educational support of Rs 1,000 per month will also be provided for up to two children studying between LKG and Class 10. Senior officials from the Information Department and the Media Academy attended the meeting.

KTR Slams Govt Over Procurement Crisis

Hyderabad, May 21: Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday launched a strong attack on the Congress government in Telangana, accusing Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy of failing farmers amid an alleged crop procurement crisis across the state. In an open letter addressed to the Chief Minister, KTR claimed that farmers were facing severe hardship due to delays in procurement, shortage of facilities at procurement centres and administrative negligence. He alleged that farmers had been waiting for nearly two months at procurement centres to sell their produce, while protests, dharnas and road blockades were being reported from several parts of Telangana. The BRS leader further claimed that some farmers had report-



edly died due to heatstroke, stress and prolonged waiting at procurement centres. He criticised the Chief Minister for allegedly not visiting even a single procurement centre despite the ongoing situation. KTR also accused the Congress government of dismantling farmer welfare mechanisms introduced during the previous BRS administration. He alleged irregularities in procurement operations, including excessive deductions during grain purchases and inadequate supply of gunny bags at centres. Demanding urgent intervention, KTR urged the state Cabinet meeting scheduled for May 23 to prioritise the procurement issue and ensure immediate procurement of all pending grain stocks. He also called for timely payments to farmers.

EDITORIAL

Fragile Growth

India's Real Challenge Is Not Oil Prices — It Is Economic Dependence As tensions continue to rise in West Asia, governments across the world are once again preparing for the familiar consequences of geopolitical instability: rising crude oil prices, nervous financial markets, pressure on supply chains and fears of inflation. India too has begun reassuring citizens that petrol, diesel and LPG stocks are sufficient and that there is no immediate reason for panic. Such assurances are important. Yet the larger issue facing the country is not merely the possibility of higher fuel prices for a few weeks or months. The real challenge lies deeper — in India's continuing economic dependence on external energy sources and the vulnerability that dependence creates. Every major international conflict eventually reaches the daily life of ordinary citizens through economics. Wars are fought with weapons, but their aftershocks are felt in transport costs, electricity bills, food inflation and employment uncertainty. For a country like India, which imports nearly 85 percent of its crude oil requirements, geopolitical instability in oil-producing regions immediately becomes a domestic economic concern. The Gulf region is not just another foreign market for India; it is the lifeline of the nation's energy security. Whenever conflict intensifies in the Middle East, three reactions are predictable. Oil prices rise, shipping insurance costs increase and global investors become cautious. Even if actual supply disruptions do not occur immediately, markets react psychologically.

Traders begin anticipating shortages, speculative pricing enters the system and importing countries like India are forced to spend more foreign exchange to secure energy supplies. The result is pressure on the rupee, rising import bills and inflationary stress. India has handled such crises before. During the Gulf War, the Iraq conflict, the Russia-Ukraine war and the pandemic years, policymakers demonstrated resilience in managing supply chains and avoiding major shortages. But surviving repeated crises should not become a substitute for structural reform. A nation aspiring to become the world's third-largest economy cannot permanently remain vulnerable to developments taking place thousands of kilometres away. This is why the current situation must be viewed not simply as a temporary geopolitical disturbance but as a warning. India's growth ambitions, manufacturing expansion, urbanisation and rising middle-class consumption are all heavily energy dependent. Every new highway, airport, industrial corridor and logistics network requires fuel. Economic expansion without energy independence creates a paradox: the faster the country grows, the more exposed it becomes to global instability. The lesson is clear. India's energy policy can no longer revolve only around securing cheaper imports. It must focus on reducing strategic dependence itself. Over the last decade, India has indeed taken important steps. Renewable energy capacity has expanded rapidly. Solar parks, green hydrogen initiatives, ethanol blending programmes and electric mobility policies are moving in the right direction. India has also diversified crude import sources beyond traditional Gulf suppliers. Strategic petroleum reserves have been strengthened to some extent. These measures deserve recognition. However, the scale of the challenge is far greater than the current pace of transition.

Renewable energy growth still faces infrastructure bottlenecks. Battery storage remains expensive. Electric vehicle adoption is uneven. Public transport systems in many Indian cities remain underdeveloped, forcing continued dependence on fossil-fuel-driven private transport. Coal still dominates electricity generation despite ambitious climate commitments. Energy security is not just about production; it is equally about consumption patterns. India's cities continue to expand in ways that increase fuel dependence rather than reduce it. Urban planning encourages long commutes. Freight movement still relies heavily on roads instead of railways. Agricultural systems depend on diesel-powered irrigation and transport networks. In many sectors, efficiency reforms remain slow. The conversation must therefore shift from emergency response to long-term transformation. First, India needs a far more aggressive investment strategy in renewable infrastructure. Solar and wind generation alone are not enough. The country requires large-scale battery storage systems, modern transmission grids and decentralised energy networks capable of handling fluctuations efficiently. Without storage capacity, renewable growth cannot fully replace fossil fuel vulnerability.

Second, public transportation should become a national economic priority rather than merely an urban development project. Metro systems, electric buses, railway modernisation and integrated mobility planning are not just environmental policies — they are strategic economic safeguards. Every litre of fuel saved through efficient public transport reduces national vulnerability. Third, India must accelerate domestic manufacturing related to clean energy technology. Dependence on imported solar modules, batteries and semiconductor components could create a new form of strategic dependence even while reducing oil imports. Energy transition without manufacturing self-reliance only shifts the point of vulnerability from one sector to another. Fourth, policymakers must recognise that inflation management alone cannot define economic success during global crises. Protecting purchasing power is important, but long-term resilience matters more.

Governments often respond to oil shocks through temporary tax adjustments or subsidies. While necessary in emergencies, these measures do not solve the structural problem. They merely postpone the impact. Another equally important dimension is the Indian diaspora in the Gulf region. Millions of Indians work across West Asian countries, contributing enormously through remittances that support families and strengthen India's foreign exchange reserves. Any prolonged instability in the region affects not only energy supplies but also employment security for overseas Indians.

ROBERT KIYOSAKI'S WARNINGS - A GLOBAL DISCUSSION

The global economy is once again entering a phase of uncertainty. Across international financial circles, economists and market analysts are increasingly discussing the possibility of a major economic slowdown during 2026–2027. Among the most debated voices is globally known financial author Robert Kiyosaki, who has described the coming years as a “massive economic storm.” His warnings regarding rising debt, inflation, geopolitical tensions, artificial intelligence-driven unemployment, and financial instability have triggered discussions worldwide. While some experts believe the world may face another severe economic crisis, others argue that technological growth, green energy investments, and digital economies may help avoid a total collapse. Regardless of differing opinions, it is evident that the global economy stands at a critical turning point. History shows that economic crises are not new. The Great Depression of 1929 devastated economies across the world. Global unemployment rose sharply, industrial production collapsed, and millions of people fell into poverty. The 1973 oil crisis caused inflation to surge internationally. Later, the 1997 Asian financial crisis destabilized several developing economies. In 2008, the collapse of the U.S. housing market triggered one of the worst banking crises in modern history. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 nearly brought the global economy to a standstill, disrupting trade, employment, and industrial production worldwide. Today, several warning signs are once again visible. One of the biggest concerns is the massive growth in global debt. International financial estimates suggest total global debt crossed \$320 trillion by the end of 2025, amounting to more than 330% of global GDP. The United States alone carries national debt exceeding \$38 trillion. Meanwhile, China is facing a deep real estate crisis, Europe is struggling with high energy costs, and tensions in the Middle East continue to threaten oil market stability. These developments are increasing fears of renewed infla-

tion. During the post-pandemic years, many countries already experienced inflation levels between 8% and 12%. Although inflation moderated somewhat by 2025, economists warn that rising energy prices and supply chain disruptions could once again push prices higher during 2026–2027.

High interest rates are also creating pressure on economies. To control inflation, central banks around the world sharply increased rates over the past few years. In the United States, the Federal Reserve raised rates from near zero in 2022 to above 5% by the end of 2025. Higher borrowing costs are slowing business investments, weakening housing markets, and reducing consumer spending. Similar conditions are visible across Europe and other developed economies. Another major issue shaping the future economy is artificial intelligence. AI technologies are rapidly transforming industries worldwide. Automation is improving productivity but also threatening traditional employment structures. Analysts estimate that nearly 23% of global jobs could be influenced by automation by 2027. Millions of jobs in call centers, media, accounting, banking, and data-processing industries may disappear or undergo major transformation. This technological shift is creating both opportunity and fear. On one side, AI is driving innovation, digital services, and productivity growth. On the other side, rising unemployment among low-skilled and middle-income workers may increase economic inequality and social instability. Oil prices remain another major concern. If geopolitical tensions intensify in the Middle East, some analysts warn that crude oil prices could exceed \$150 per barrel. Such a scenario would sharply increase transportation costs, fuel inflation, and place additional pressure on poorer na-



tions already struggling with rising food prices. At the same time, global markets are debating whether an “Artificial Intelligence Bubble” is forming. Some economists compare the current enthusiasm surrounding AI companies to the dot-com bubble of 2000. Technology firms now dominate stock markets, and there are fears that overvalued shares could collapse suddenly if investor confidence weakens.

Robert Kiyosaki argues that excessive printing of currency by governments and central banks is weakening the value of money itself. Because of this, he advocates investments in gold, silver, and cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin. According to him, the coming economic crisis may even surpass the severity of the 2008 financial collapse. However, not all experts share such pessimism. Several international financial institutions believe the world economy will continue growing, though at a slower pace. Investments in artificial intelligence, green energy, digital infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing could support economic recovery. Some projections suggest global GDP growth may remain around 3% during 2026–2027. For countries like India, this period may become both a challenge and an opportunity. As global companies seek alternatives to China in manufacturing and supply chains, India is emerging as an attractive destination for investment. India is expanding rapidly in digital payments, pharmaceuticals, defense manufacturing, renewable energy, and technology services. Some international estimates project India's growth rate could

exceed 6.5% during 2026. Yet India also faces significant challenges, including unemployment, urban poverty, agricultural distress, and infrastructure pressures. To benefit fully from global economic changes, India must strengthen education, skill development, industrial expansion, and employment generation. Climate change is adding another layer of uncertainty to the global economy. Floods, droughts, wildfires, cyclones, and water shortages are increasingly affecting agricultural production and industrial activity. Reports estimate climate-related disasters caused nearly \$450 billion in global losses during 2025 alone. Food security concerns are growing, particularly in Africa and South Asia.

Global political instability is also closely tied to economic pressures. Rising unemployment, inflation, and inequality can lead to public anger, protests, and political unrest. History demonstrates that economic crises often reshape political systems and international relations. The world economy today appears to be entering a period of structural transformation. Digital technologies, green industries, artificial intelligence, cryptocurrency systems, and shifting trade alliances are changing the foundations of global economic power. The dominance of the U.S. dollar is increasingly being questioned, while countries such as China and BRICS nations are exploring alternative payment systems and trade arrangements. Ultimately, the 2026–2027 period may not simply represent another economic slowdown. It could become a defining phase that reshapes the future structure of the global economy itself. The countries that succeed will likely be those that invest in technology, strengthen energy and food security, improve education and employment systems, and reduce economic inequality through balanced policies. The warnings being discussed today should not merely create fear. Instead, they should encourage governments, businesses, and societies to prepare for the changing realities of the future global economy.



Dr. Rakkireddy Adireddy
Kakatiya University

Army Unveils AI Platform

'Kautilya' Boosts Smart Warfare

Hyderabad, May 21: Indian Army has launched an advanced AI-powered platform named Kautilya to improve real-time decision-making, operational planning and administrative efficiency. The new system supports tablet-based data entry and integrates with multiple Army data platforms, allowing faster processing and easier access to critical information. Officials said the platform uses Artificial Intelligence-enabled dashboards and Natural Language Processing technology to strengthen analytics, situational awareness and command-level assessments. Kautilya has been designed as a command intelligence platform capable of analysing data related to personnel, weapons, logistics, training, rations and operational readiness. The system is



expected to help commanders make quicker and more accurate decisions. The platform can also process handwritten reports, OCR scans, digital files and field inputs while providing secure communication and automated analytics. The launch is part of the Indian Army's broader digital transformation initiative aimed at building future-ready systems for modern warfare and defence management.

India, Korea Honour War Heroes

New Delhi/Seoul, May 21: Rajnath Singh and Kwon Oh-eul on Thursday inaugurated the Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Park to honour Indian troops who served during the Korean War. Built as part of the 75th anniversary commemorations of the war, the memorial recognises the Indian Army's 60 Para Field Ambulance unit and the Custodian Force of India (CFI) for their humanitarian service and contribution to peace on the Korean Peninsula. The two ministers laid wreaths and paid tribute to Indian personnel whose sacrifices continue to be remembered in South Korea. Rajnath Singh said the shared history and sacrifices of both nations remain a strong pillar of the India–Republic of Korea Special Strategic Partnership and would help deepen people-to-people ties. South Korean Minister Kwon Oh-eul ex-



pressed gratitude for India's role during the war and acknowledged the enduring friendship forged through the service of Indian soldiers. The 60 Para Field Ambulance, led by Lt Col (Dr) AG Rangaraj, earned acclaim for treating thousands of wounded soldiers and civilians under difficult battlefield conditions, earning the title “Maroon Angels”. The memorial stands at the site where the CFI had established “Hind Nagar” in 1954 to house prisoners of war before their repatriation.

ED Raids in ₹311 Crore SBI Fraud Case

Chennai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted searches at seven locations in Chennai linked to Thangam Steel Ltd., PS Krishnamurthy Steels Private Ltd. and their directors in connection with an alleged ₹311 crore bank fraud involving State Bank of India. According to the ED, the investigation was launched based on FIRs registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which ac-

cused the companies of cheating SBI-led bank consortiums through fabricated financial records and fraudulent transactions. The agency alleged that between 2007 and 2013, the firms obtained enhanced cash credit and letter of credit limits by submitting forged balance sheets, inflated stock statements and fake trade documents. Investigators said the accused allegedly diverted bank funds through shell

companies and benami accounts to acquire assets and conceal the money trail. During the raids, officials seized incriminating documents and digital evidence. The agency identified 43 immovable properties allegedly held in the names of family members, with an estimated value of over ₹100 crore. The ED stated that these assets were allegedly concealed to prevent recovery of the loan amount by banks.

Govt Assures Fuel Supply

New Delhi: The Central government assured that petrol, diesel and LPG stocks remain adequate across the country despite tensions in West Asia. Officials said all Indian seafarers in the Gulf region are safe and maritime operations continue normally. Government urged citizens to avoid panic buying and rely only on official information, while also announcing measures to curb hoarding and ensure uninterrupted fuel supply.

Saraswati Antya Pushkaralu Begins



Hyderabad, May 21: The 12-day 'Antya Pushkaralu' of the mystical Saraswati River commenced on Thursday at Kaleshwaram in Telangana, with Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swami taking the first holy dip. Telangana ministers D. Sridhar Babu and Konda Surekha, along with several leaders, also participated in the sacred ritual in the early hours. According to officials, nearly 20 to 30 lakh devotees are expected to attend the religious event, which will continue till June 1. The Telangana government has sanctioned ₹30.63 crore for arrangements, including sanitation, drinking water supply, security, roads and vehicle parking facilities. The 'Aadhi Pushkaralu' of the Saraswati river was observed last year, while the concluding 'Antya Pushkaralu' is being held from May 21 to June 1. Pushkaralu, dedicated to river worship, is celebrated once every 12 years. At Kaleshwaram, the Saraswati river is revered as an "Antarvahini" or invisible river, believed to merge with the Godavari and Pranahita rivers at the sacred confluence. Kaleshwaram is also known for the historic Kaleshwara Mukteshwara Swamy Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.

FBI Busts India-Based Call Centre Fraud Network

New York: The Federal Bureau of Investigation shut down an India-based call centre accused of running large-scale tech support scams targeting elderly Americans. US authorities said the network allegedly cheated hundreds of senior citizens out of millions of dollars through fake virus alerts and fraudulent technical support services. Investigators said the scam involved deceptive pop-up messages that tricked victims into calling fake support numbers, after which fraudsters convinced them to pay for unnecessary services or shared access to their computers. In several cases, personal and financial information was allegedly stolen. The investigation led to the conviction of multiple India-based accused, including Sahil Narang, Chirag Sachdeva, Abrar Anjum, Manish Kumar and Jagmeet Singh Virk. Two US-based telecom service providers, Adam Young and Harrison Gevirtz, also admitted to providing communication infrastructure allegedly used by the fraud network. According to US authorities, the telecom operators knowingly allowed scam-related services such as call routing, forwarding and tracking systems despite repeated complaints and warnings. The FBI said the fraud network caused major financial and emotional distress to victims, particularly senior citizens. Authorities estimated that tech support scams caused losses of nearly \$2.1 billion across the United States last year alone.

CSK Crash Out

GT Spinner Rashid Khan triple strike
CSK Eliminated from IPL 2026

Ahmedabad, May 21: A clinical all-round performance from Gujarat Titans saw Chennai Super Kings crash out of the Indian Premier League 2026 after an 89-run defeat at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Wednesday. Powered by a towering batting display and a decisive middle-overs spell from Rashid Khan, Gujarat overpowered CSK in the 66th match of the season, ending Chennai's campaign in emphatic fashion. Chasing a daunting 230, Chennai Super Kings never recovered from early setbacks and were eventually bundled out for 140 in 13.4 overs. The result was sealed by a devastating combination of Gujarat's pace attack and Rashid Khan's control in the middle phase, which broke the backbone of CSK's chase and extinguished any hopes of a late recovery. Gujarat Titans had earlier set up the contest with a commanding 229/4 in 20 overs. Sai Sudharsan anchored the innings with a composed 84 off 53 balls, while Shubman Gill added fluency and authority with a brisk 64 from 37 deliveries. Jos Buttler provided the finishing flourish, remaining unbeaten on 57 off just 27 balls, ensuring Gujarat posted an imposing total that immediately put CSK under pressure.

In reply, Chennai Super Kings faltered almost immediately. Mohammed Siraj struck early blows that ripped through the top order, leaving CSK struggling inside the powerplay and unable to build momentum in their chase. The early damage set the tone for a difficult pursuit of a massive target. The decisive phase arrived when Rashid Khan was introduced into the attack. With Dewald Brevis attempting to stabilise the innings and Shivam Dube launching a rapid counter-attack—scoring 47 off just 17 balls—Rashid delivered a crucial break-



through by dismissing Brevis. He followed it up with the key wicket of Dube, halting CSK's only significant resistance at a critical juncture of the innings. Rashid later added another scalp in Anshul Kamboj, tightening Gujarat's grip on the contest and dismantling any lower-order fightback. While Kagiso Rabada also played a major role with three wickets and Siraj inflicted early damage with his pace, it was Rashid's precision in the middle overs that shifted the momentum completely in Gujarat's favour. Once CSK's middle order collapsed, the chase disintegrated rapidly. For CSK, brief contributions came from Shivam Dube, Matthew Short (24 off 14), and Kartik Sharma (19 off 15), but none of the partnerships lasted long enough to challenge the required rate or Gujarat's control over the game. Gujarat's bowling unit complemented their batting dominance perfectly, with Siraj, Rabada, Anshul Kamboj, and Spencer Johnson sharing a wicket each alongside Rashid's three-wicket burst. The collective effort ensured CSK never found stability at any stage of the innings.

Brief Scores:

Gujarat Titans 229/4 (20 overs) – Sai Sudharsan 84 (53), Shubman Gill 64 (37), Jos Buttler 57* (27); Siraj, Rabada, Anshul Kamboj, Spencer Johnson – 1 wicket each.

Chennai Super Kings 140 all out (13.4 overs) – Shivam Dube 47 (17), Matthew Short 24 (14), Kartik Sharma 19 (15); Siraj 3/26, Rabada 3/32, Rashid Khan 3/18.

Gujarat Titans won by 89 runs; Chennai Super Kings eliminated from IPL 2026.

SSC CGL 2026 Notification Out for 12,256 Posts



New Delhi: Staff Selection Commission on Thursday released the SSC Combined Graduate Level (CGL) Examination 2026 notification, announcing 12,256 vacancies across various Central government ministries, departments and institutions. The online registration process has commenced on the official SSC portal, opening opportunities for graduates seeking government jobs through one of the country's largest recruitment examinations. The detailed notification, available in PDF format on the SSC website, contains information on post-wise vacancies, eligibility criteria, selection procedure, exam pattern, application process and important dates related to the recruitment drive. The SSC CGL examination is conducted annually to recruit candidates for Group 'B' and Group 'C' posts in different ministries and government offices. Candidates have been advised to carefully read the official notification before applying online and ensure they meet all eligibility requirements. The recruitment process will include multiple examination stages, and applications will be accepted only through online mode.

Pulwama Attack Mastermind Killed in PoK

New Delhi, May 21: Arjumand Gulzar alias Burhan Hamza, a designated terrorist and one of the key masterminds behind the 2019 Pulwama attack, was shot dead by the identified gunmen in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), officials said on Thursday. Hamza, who was allegedly operating under heavy security protection in Muzaffarabad, was ambushed by unidentified assailants. He was critically injured and airlifted to the Combined Military Hospital in Rawalpindi, where he later succumbed to his injuries, officials said. The attackers reportedly escaped before local security forces could respond. Originally from Pulwama district in Jammu and Kashmir, Hamza was associated with terror outfits Al Badr and later Al Baraq. He was designated a terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for his role in orchestrating the February 14, 2019 suicide attack carried out by Pakistan-based terror group Jaish-e-Mohammad on a CRPF convoy, which killed 40 personnel. The Pulwama attack had triggered India's retaliatory airstrike on a JeM training camp in Balakot on February 26, 2019. Sources said Hamza, also known by the alias "Doctor", was residing in Cheela Bandi near Muzaffarabad with a security detail comprising eight commandos, a bullet-resistant vehicle and an escort vehicle. Officials alleged that he maintained close links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and worked alongside Farooq Qureshi, a former Al Baraq commander allegedly linked to narcotics trafficking, counterfeit currency operations and cross-border militant activities. The two reportedly operated from an industrial compound known locally as the "Machis Factory" in Muzaffarabad. Further details surrounding the attack on Hamza were not immediately available.



Cyberabad Police Bust Mule Account Racket

Hyderabad, May 21: Cyberabad Police on Thursday arrested a man allegedly involved in supplying mule bank accounts used in multiple cyber fraud operations, including trading scams, digital arrest frauds, online gaming frauds and fake part-time job schemes. The accused, identified as Dilip Singh (27), a delivery executive residing in Jeedimetla in Medchal-Malkajgiri district and originally from Rajasthan, was arrested in a joint operation by the Cyber Crime Unit and the Special Operations Team (SOT). Police said the case was registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Information Technology Act. According to

investigators, the accused came in contact with cyber fraudsters through an Instagram advertisement in 2024 that offered commissions for arranging bank accounts. Communication was later carried out through WhatsApp international numbers linked to individuals identified as "Jordan" and "Pintu Bhaiya". Police alleged that the accused received ₹25,000 for each savings account and ₹50,000 for each current account supplied to fraudsters. Despite allegedly knowing that the accounts would be used for cyber crimes, including investment scams and fake job frauds, he continued supplying bank accounts and related banking materials for commissions, police

said. During the operation, police seized ₹1.02 lakh in cash, three mobile phones, 12 debit cards, one credit card, three bank passbooks, seven cheque books and 33 bank passbooks reportedly couriered to different states. Investigators also suspect the involvement of certain bank employees in facilitating the opening and supply of accounts later used in cyber fraud transactions. Further investigation is underway. Police advised citizens not to rent, sell or share bank accounts, ATM cards, SIM cards or internet banking credentials for monetary benefits, warning that mule account holders could face arrests, account freezes and criminal prosecution.

Maruti Suzuki to Raise Car Prices From June

New Delhi, May 21: Maruti Suzuki India on Thursday announced a price hike of up to ₹30,000 across its vehicle portfolio with effect from June 2026, citing rising input and operational costs. In a regulatory filing, the country's largest carmaker said the increase was necessitated by sustained inflationary pressures and higher raw material costs impacting the automotive sector. The company said it had undertaken several cost-cutting measures over the past few months to absorb part of the burden and minimise the impact on customers. However, it noted that the prevailing adverse cost environment made a partial pass-through unavoidable. "The exact quantum of change will vary from model to model," the company said in its filing. Maruti Suzuki added that despite continuous efforts to reduce operational expenses, rising costs across the supply chain have compelled the company to revise prices. The latest hike comes amid a broader trend in the automobile industry, with several manufacturers increasing vehicle prices due to escalating commodity prices, logistics expenses and inflationary pressures. Earlier, Mahindra & Mahindra had also announced a price increase of up to 2.5 per cent across its SUV and commercial vehicle range effective April 6, citing similar cost pressures.



Amaravati Will Never Materialise: Jagan

Amaravati, May 21: Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday claimed that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's vision of Amaravati as the state capital would "never become a reality" and instead proposed the 'Mavigun' region as a more practical alternative for Andhra Pradesh's capital. Addressing a press conference at the YSRCP office in Tadepalli, Jagan said the proposed Amaravati capital project was unrealistic and argued that even after decades, Andhra Pradesh may still remain without a proper capital if the current approach continues. "What Chandrababu is conceiving will never be a reality. You know that. I know that. Anybody with reasonable common sense would agree to that," he said. The former Chief Minister reiterated his support for the 'Mav-

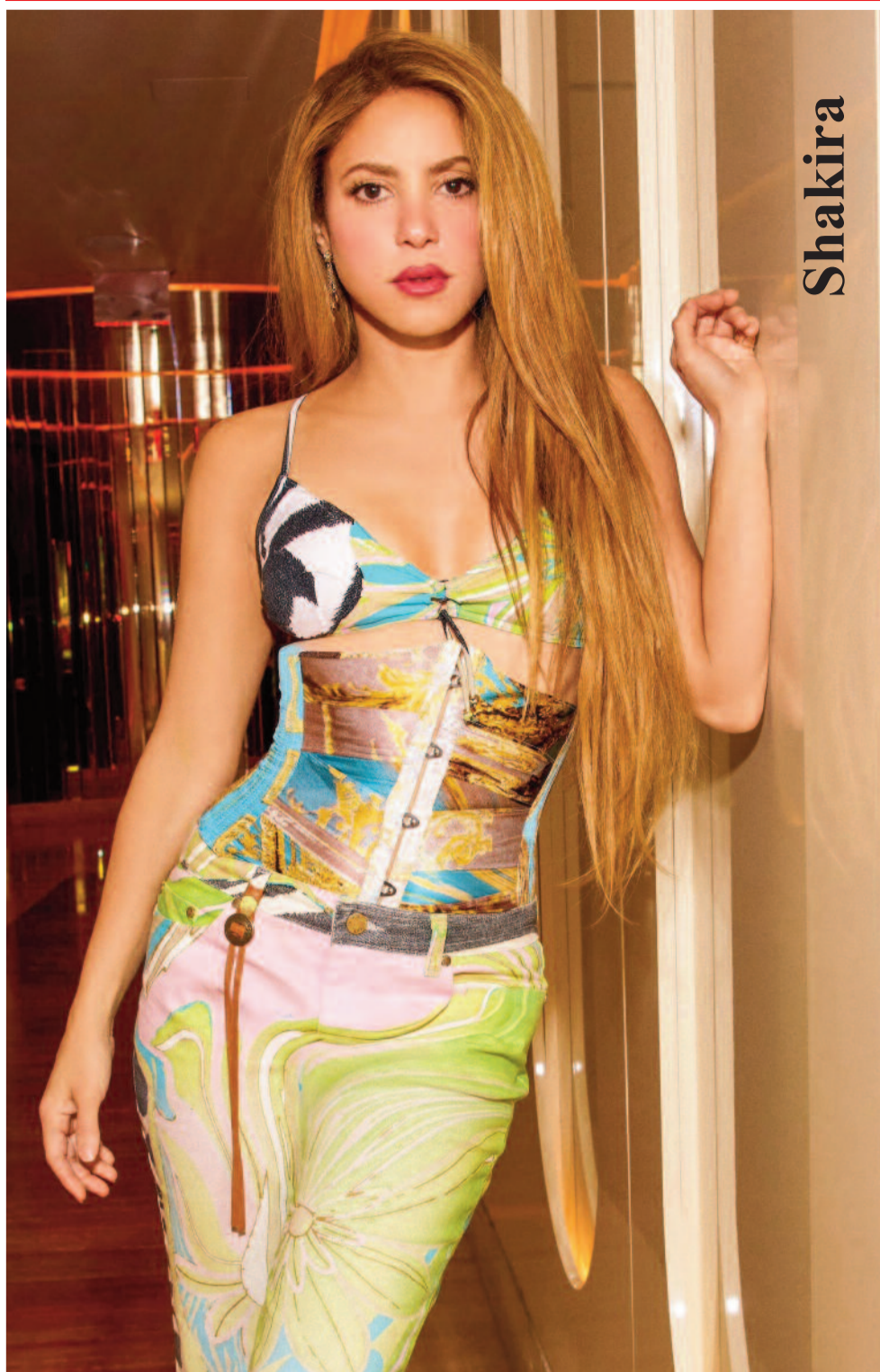


gun' model, referring to the combined region of Machilipatnam, Vijayawada and Guntur. According to him, the region already possesses strong infrastructure and connectivity, making it a practical and cost-effective choice for the state capital. "Mavigun is already in existence. From day one, it has infrastructure including a port at Machilipatnam, an international airport at Vijayawada, national highways, railway stations, medical colleges and educational institutions," Jagan stated. He argued that the government would only need to improve connectivity in the region instead of spending massive amounts on constructing a new capital city from scratch. He claimed that the required

expenditure for developing Mavigun would be only around 10 per cent of the projected Amaravati costs and could be completed within five to seven years with an investment of Rs 15,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore. The YSRCP chief also alleged large-scale financial irregularities in the Amaravati project. Comparing the costs of infrastructure projects, he said the Telangana Secretariat built during the tenure of former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu cost around Rs 615 crore, while Andhra Pradesh's Secretariat complex of five buildings had allegedly crossed Rs 10,665 crore. Jagan accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of favouring select companies through "tailor-made and rigged" tender processes. He alleged that firms which received contracts before 2019 were again awarded projects after re-tendering in 2024.

Bank of Baroda Announces 5,000 Apprentice Posts

New Delhi: Bank of Baroda has released the Apprentice Recruitment 2026 notification for 5,000 vacancies across various states under the Apprentices Act, 1961. The recruitment drive is open to graduate candidates, and the detailed notification was published on the bank's official website on May 19. The online application process has also commenced from the same date. According to the notification, apprentices will be engaged across multiple branches and regions of the bank in India. Interested and eligible candidates can apply through the official portal after checking the educational qualifications, age criteria and other eligibility conditions mentioned in the recruitment advertisement. The bank said the apprenticeship programme aims to provide candidates with practical exposure to banking operations.



Shakira

PK Launches Chiru's 'Mega 158'

Hyderabad: Chiranjeevi officially launched his upcoming film, tentatively titled Mega 158, with a grand pooja ceremony in Hyderabad, setting the stage for another major entertainer from the veteran star. The film was ceremonially introduced by Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and actor Pawan Kalyan, who gave the inaugural clap. Nagendra Babu was also present at the launch event, with the reunion of the Mega brothers drawing enthusiastic reactions from fans on social media. The film stars Chiranjeevi in the lead role, while National Award-winning actress Priyamani has been roped in for a key role. Malayalam actress Anaswara Rajan is also part of the project after earning appreciation for her Telugu debut in Champion. Produced by KVN Productions, the film marks the banner's entry into Tollywood. The production house is known for backing projects such as KD The Devil, Toxic: Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups and Jana Nayagan. The technical crew includes cinematographer Vijay Karthik Kannan, known for films like Jailer and Daaku Maharaja. Music for the film will be composed by S. Thaman, reuniting with Chiranjeevi after Godfather. Production designer Avinash Kolla has also joined the project. The shooting schedule is yet to be announced.



Delhi HC Denies Ilayaraja Copyright Claim

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court upheld an earlier order stating that legendary composer Ilayaraja does not hold copyright over the lyrics or sound recording of the iconic Tamil song En Iniya Pon Nilave. A division bench ruled that under the Copyright Act, a "musical work" only covers the composition and not the lyrics or sound recording. The court observed that the copyright for the song, which was part of the 1980 Tamil film Moodu Pani, belonged to the film producer and had been legally assigned to Saregama India Limited. The dispute emerged after the recreated version of the song was proposed for use in the film Aghathiyaa. While Ilayaraja claimed he had the right to license the musical work, the court rejected the argument and dismissed his appeal challenging the earlier interim order.



Tamannaah Calls Baahubali Budget a Big Risk Back Then

Hyderabad: Tamannaah Bhatia has said that investing nearly ₹200 crore in Baahubali: The Beginning at the time of its production appeared like a risky and potentially unsuccessful decision from a trade perspective. Reflecting on the film's journey, Tamannaah said that while every decision related to Baahubali now appears visionary in hindsight, the situation during production was very different. "At that time, the trade calculations and industry conditions were completely different. Spending around ₹200 crore on a regional Telugu film was not a small thing. From a business point of view, it looked like a dangerous path that could directly lead to failure," she said. The actress, however, added that creative industries do not always follow conventional business formulas. According to her, strong belief in a vision can lead to extraordinary results. "Someone believing strongly in their vision can create miracles. Rajamouli sir believed in his vision, and that is why Baahubali became possible," Tamannaah remarked. She also spoke about her own journey in the film industry, saying that coming from a non-film background taught her the importance of making the best use of every opportunity. Directed by S. S. Rajamouli, Baahubali went on to become one of Indian cinema's biggest blockbusters and a landmark film in Telugu cinema.



Priyanka Praises 'Peddi' Teaser

Priyanka Chopra Jonas has joined the growing list of celebrities praising the teaser of Ram Charan's upcoming film Peddi, directed by Buchi Babu Sana. The teaser of the rural action-sports drama, which also stars Janhvi Kapoor, was unveiled on Monday and has generated massive buzz online. Sharing the teaser on X, Priyanka wrote, "Fire! Congratulations @alwayramcharan @janhvikapoor #DivyenduSharma @BuchiBabuSana and the entire team. Looking forward!" Her post quickly drew reactions from fans, many thanking the actress for supporting the film. Several users praised the on-screen pairing potential of Ram Charan and Priyanka Chopra, while others described her appreciation as a major boost for the team. Produced by Vriddhi Cinemas in association with Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings, Peddi is scheduled for release on June 4 in multi-



Jwala Hits Out at Indian Badminton System

New Delhi, May 21: Jwala Gutta has strongly criticised the Indian badminton system, alleging a growing culture of silence and compromise among players, officials and former athletes. In an interaction with Media, the former World Championships bronze medallist expressed concern over the lack of bench strength in Indian badminton and accused stakeholders of failing to address structural issues within the sport. "No one is talking. Everyone is adjusting, compromising," Gutta said, adding that even former players who have joined sports administration were not pushing for meaningful reforms. Drawing comparisons with China's badminton system, she said India lacked a strong pipeline of players ready to replace injured or underperforming stars. Gutta also highlighted challenges faced in grassroots development, claiming that access to support and sponsorship often depends on influence rather than merit. Referring to her badminton academy in Hyderabad, she said she struggled to secure CSR funding despite running it as a non-profit initiative. The former Commonwealth Games gold medallist further alleged that her outspoken nature had distanced her from the sporting establishment. Recalling her playing days, Gutta said she often had to fund her own international tournaments despite being national champion and world No. 5, while lower-ranked players received federation support. She also referred to recent comments by Indian doubles star Satwiksairaj Rankireddy regarding lack of recognition for Indian athletes, saying players often realise the shortcomings of the system only after facing neglect themselves. Gutta asserted that established athletes have a responsibility to speak for future generations and advocate reforms in Indian sport.



Hardik fined for Code breach

Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya has been fined 10% of his match fee and handed one demerit point for breaching Level 1 of the IPL Code of Conduct during the match against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens. The incident occurred during the second innings when Pandya, in frustration, knocked over the stumps while returning to his bowling mark. The IPL stated that the act amounted to "abuse of cricket equipment or fixtures" under Article 2.2 of the code. Pandya, who was returning to the playing XI after recovering from injury and missing three matches, admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction imposed by match referee. Despite his comeback, MI suffered a four-wicket defeat to KKR.

Duleep Trophy to Open 2026-27 Domestic Season

The 2026-27 Indian domestic cricket season will begin on August 23 with the Duleep Trophy, marking the start of a packed schedule featuring 1,788 matches across formats and categories. The season will continue with the Irani Cup on October 1, followed by the two-phase Ranji Trophy, which will run from October to November and then resume from January to February. Between the Ranji Trophy phases, the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy and Vijay Hazare List A tournament will be held. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said the schedule aims to strengthen domestic structure and ensure better player development across formats. Women's and age-group tournaments will also run throughout the season, with several competitions adjusted for improved scheduling and weather conditions.



CWG Day Cycling Drive

New Delhi, May 21: The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports will organise a massive nationwide celebration on May 24 to mark Commonwealth Games Day, with the 75th edition of the Fit India Sundays on Cycle initiative set to unite citizens across more than 8,000 locations across the country. The special edition will celebrate India's sporting ambitions and the upcoming 2030 Commonwealth Games scheduled to be hosted in Ahmedabad. Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya will lead the main event at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad alongside Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghvi. The event, themed "A New Icon for a Fitter India - Pedalling to 2030," is expected to witness participation from thousands of cyclists, athletes, youth volunteers and fitness enthusiasts. Dr. Mandaviya said the country was enthusiastic about hosting the centenary edition of the Commonwealth Games in 2030 and described the May 24 celebrations as an effort to bring together athletes, coaches, sports fans and the wider sporting community.

Karthik Against 'Next Sachin' Tag for Vaibhav

Veteran Team India Cricketer Dinesh Karthik urged fans not to compare teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi with Sachin Tendulkar, saying the youngster faces a different era and unique off-field challenges. Praising Vaibhav's IPL 2026 form for Rajasthan Royals, Karthik said the 15-year-old's talent is special but should not be burdened with legendary comparisons.