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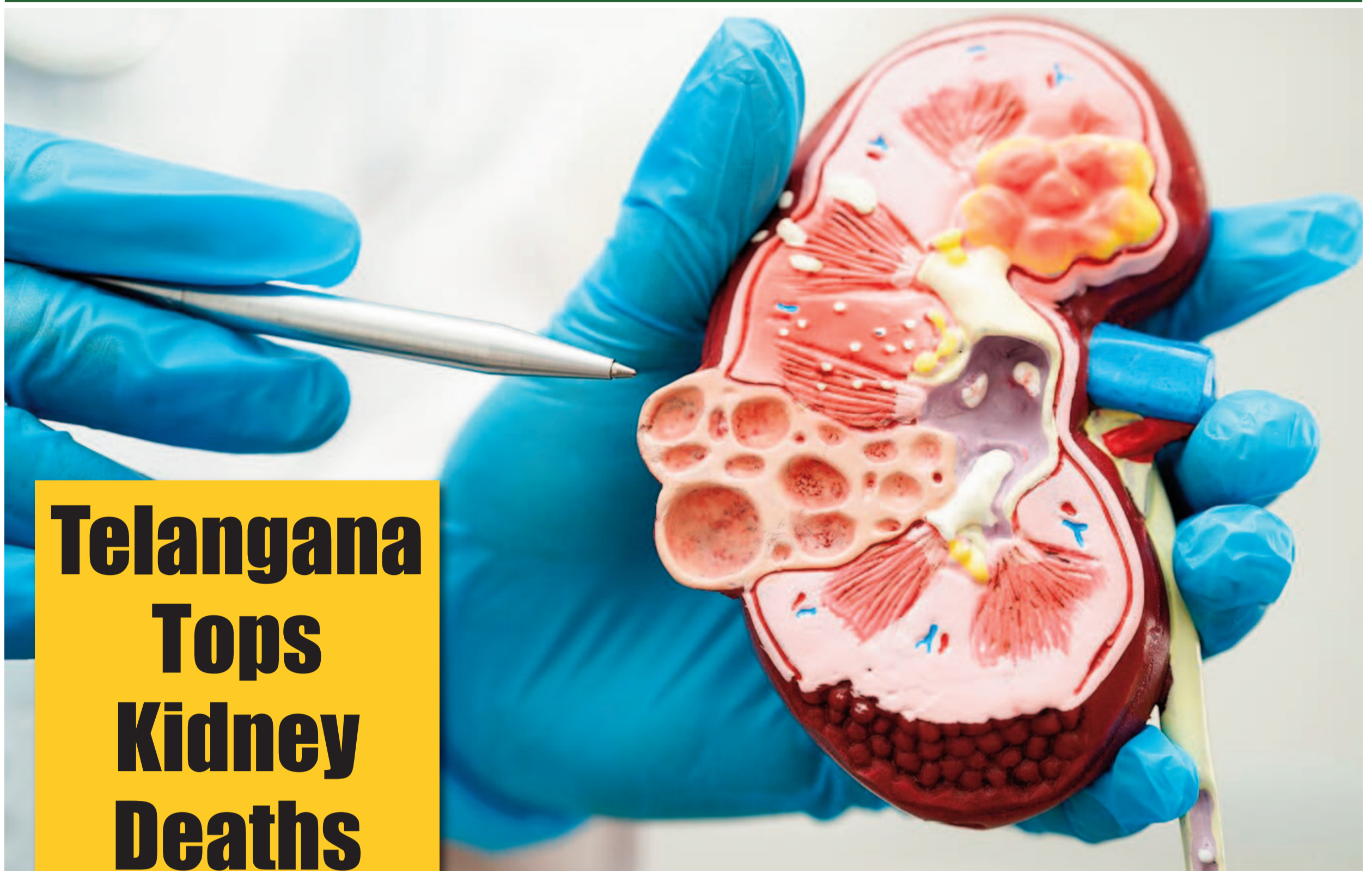
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Telangana Tops Kidney Deaths

19.84
deaths per
one lakh
population

Hyderabad: Telangana has emerged as the state with the highest mortality rate from Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in India, despite not recording the highest number of cases, according to a study published in the Indian Council of Medical Research's Indian Journal of Medical Research. The study by the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), New Delhi, found that Telangana reported 19.84 CKD deaths per one lakh population in 2023, the highest in the country. While the state registered 241.57 new cases per lakh population, Haryana recorded a much higher incidence of 316.35 cases per lakh, yet had a lower death rate. Experts say the figures point to a worrying gap between dis-

ease detection and successful treatment. States such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu, despite reporting a higher burden of kidney disease, have managed to keep mortality rates comparatively lower through better diagnosis and access to healthcare. After Telangana, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Goa recorded the next highest CKD death rates. Doctors in Hyderabad's major government hospitals report a steady rise in severe kidney ailments. At NIMS alone, around 500 to 600 new kidney patients seek treatment every month, with nearly 50 to 60 already in advanced stages. Osmania Hospital and Gandhi Hospital also receive hundreds of CKD cases regularly. Medical experts attribute Telan-

gana's high death rate primarily to uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension. The study found that Type 2 diabetes accounts for nearly a quarter of kidney disease-related deaths in the state. Excessive use of painkillers, poor drinking water quality and indiscriminate consumption of protein supplements and creatine are also believed to be contributing factors. Nephrologists warn that hypertension at a young age significantly raises the risk of kidney damage later in life, while delayed diagnosis and reliance on unqualified practitioners often worsen patient outcomes. Researchers observed that Telangana's economic progress has not translated into better kidney health outcomes, highlighting the need

for stronger public health interventions. They also noted that CKD is yet to receive adequate priority under India's national non-communicable disease programme. State health officials, however, maintain that improved screening and awareness campaigns have led to better detection of CKD cases. They point out that over 15,000 patients currently receive free dialysis services across 102 centres under govt supported schemes. The study recommends CKD as a priority disease under national health programmes, expanding funding for dialysis and kidney transplants, strengthening surveillance systems, maintaining state-level registries and ensuring routine screening of patients.

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TG Braces for Heavy Rains

Hyderabad: The Telangana government has issued a statewide alert following forecasts of heavy rainfall from June 19, directing officials to take preventive measures to safeguard lives and property during the southwest monsoon. Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, acting on the instructions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, ordered the entire disaster management and revenue machinery—from the state level to village administrations—to remain on high alert. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the southwest monsoon is advancing rapidly and is expected to cover the entire state within the next three to four days. Rainfall activity is likely to intensify from June 19 and may continue for nearly a week. Reviewing preparedness with senior officials, the

minister stressed that advance planning and preventive action are essential to minimise the impact of natural disasters. District administrations have been instructed to identify vulnerable areas, monitor weather updates continuously and implement protective measures well before heavy rains begin. The minister noted that the southwest monsoon entered Telangana through Jogulamba Gadwal district on June 8 and has since spread across southern and central parts of the state. As of now, Telangana has received 49.2 mm of rainfall since June 1, about 10% below the normal average of 54.9 mm. Officials have been directed to maintain close coordination with district collectors, revenue personnel and disaster management teams, while ensuring that emergency response systems remain ready throughout the monsoon season.

13,343 Clear UPSC Prelims

New Delhi: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has declared the results of the Civil Services Preliminary Examination 2026, with 13,343 candidates qualifying for the next stage—the Civil Services Main Examination. The Preliminary exam was conducted on May 24, 2026, for recruitment to 1,016 vacancies in various civil services. The list of qualified candidates, identified by their roll numbers, has been published on the official UPSC website. Candidates who have cleared the Preliminary examination must submit the Detailed Application Form-I (DAF-I) online between June 19 and June 28, 2026. They are also required to

pay an examination fee of ₹200, while women candidates and those belonging to SC, ST, and PwBD categories are exempt from the fee. For comparison, 14,161 candidates had qualified for the Main Examination in 2025 against 1,087 notified vacancies. UPSC has stated that the marks obtained by candidates, category-wise cut-off scores, and answer keys for the Preliminary examination will be released only after the final results of the Civil Services Examination 2026 are announced. Candidates seeking clarification or assistance can contact the UPSC Call Centre or visit the Commission's official website for further details.



EDITORIAL

PM Modi's
Global Outreach

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has often faced criticism for the frequency of his overseas visits. Opponents have questioned the costs and necessity of these trips, while supporters argue that they have become an important pillar of India's economic and strategic growth. Looking beyond politics, it is worth examining whether these foreign engagements have contributed to the country's long-term development. In today's interconnected world, diplomacy is no longer limited to political discussions. It is closely linked to trade, technology, investment, energy security, and defence cooperation. A prime minister's meetings with world leaders often create opportunities for businesses, academic institutions, and industries that can translate into jobs and economic expansion at home. During the past decade, India has strengthened partnerships with countries across Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. These engagements have supported initiatives in semiconductor manufacturing, renewable energy, digital infrastructure, defence production, and supply-chain resilience. Increased foreign direct investment and collaborations in emerging technologies have also been encouraged by sustained diplomatic outreach. Another important outcome of such visits is the strengthening of India's global image. Active participation in international forums has helped project India as a major voice on issues ranging from climate action and global health to economic governance and the interests of developing nations. This enhanced visibility can improve investor confidence and expand opportunities for Indian businesses abroad. However, foreign tours should ultimately be judged by measurable outcomes rather than optics. Agreements signed during high-profile visits must be implemented efficiently, investments should lead to tangible projects, and strategic partnerships should benefit ordinary citizens through employment, infrastructure, and technological advancement. Transparency in reporting outcomes also helps build public trust. Critics are justified in demanding accountability, just as governments are justified in pursuing active diplomacy. The real question is not how many countries a leader visits, but what those visits deliver for the nation. India's aspiration to become a leading global economy requires sustained international engagement. If foreign tours result in stronger trade ties, better access to technology, enhanced security cooperation, and increased investment, they should be viewed as instruments of national development rather than merely political events. The true measure of success lies in converting diplomatic goodwill into lasting prosperity for India and its people.

Rise of New Politics in India

India has long regarded its youth as the driving force behind national transformation. From the freedom movement and social reforms to technological innovation and democratic participation, young people have repeatedly shaped the country's future. Today, however, a new wave of frustration is emerging among India's youth. Rising unemployment, economic uncertainty, unequal opportunities, and declining trust in traditional politics are pushing many young citizens to question the existing political order. As dissatisfaction grows, so does the search for alternative political platforms, making youth-driven political movements an increasingly important feature of Indian democracy. India enjoys one of the world's greatest demographic advantages. Nearly 65 percent of its population is below the age of 35, giving the country immense potential for economic growth and innovation. For decades, economists have described this demographic dividend as India's greatest strength. Yet this opportunity can quickly become a liability if millions of educated young people remain unemployed or underemployed. Delays in government recruitment, intense competition for limited jobs, instability in private employment, and the rising cost of living have created widespread anxiety among young Indians. Education no longer guarantees stable employment. Many graduates spend years preparing for competitive examinations, only to face postponed recruitment drives or shrinking vacancies. Others migrate to metropolitan cities or overseas in search of better opportunities. Many settle for temporary or low-paying jobs that do not match their qualifications. This growing mismatch between aspirations and opportunities has deepened frustration and reduced confidence in public institutions. Politics, ideally, should provide solutions to these concerns. However, many young people believe that established political parties have failed to adequately represent their interests. Although parties frequently speak about empowering

youth, leadership positions often remain concentrated within a limited circle of influential families or long-standing political networks. Merit, innovation, and grassroots participation frequently struggle to overcome barriers created by money, caste dynamics, and entrenched power structures. As a result, politics is increasingly perceived by many young citizens as a contest for power rather than an avenue for public service. Indian politics itself has undergone significant transformation since independence. Earlier generations often debated ideology, development, social justice, and public welfare. In recent decades, personality-driven campaigns, political marketing, social media narratives, and financial influence have gained prominence. Public discourse frequently focuses on attacking opponents rather than presenting long-term solutions to pressing national issues. This shift has contributed to growing public skepticism, particularly among educated young voters who expect accountability and measurable results. The information revolution has further transformed political awareness. Unlike previous generations that relied primarily on newspapers and television, today's youth consume information instantly through digital platforms and social media. They compare policies across countries, monitor government performance, analyze employment data, and question official narratives. Political promises are increasingly scrutinized rather than accepted at face value. This has created a more informed electorate that demands transparency, evidence-based governance, and meaningful policy outcomes. The youth vote has therefore become one of the most decisive forces in Indian elections. Millions of first-time voters join the electoral rolls in every election cycle, bringing fresh expectations and priorities. Yet many of them also express disappointment when campaign promises related to employment, education, entrepreneurship, healthcare, or agricultural support fail to materialize after elections. This widening gap between promises and implementa-

tion has created a trust deficit between citizens and political institutions. Concerns over corruption, political defections, opportunistic alliances, and legislative disruptions have further weakened confidence in governance. Parliamentary debates that should focus on development often become arenas for partisan confrontation. Young people observing these trends naturally begin to question whether existing political structures are capable of addressing their everyday concerns. In such circumstances, the emergence of new political platforms should not be viewed as unusual but rather as an expression of democratic evolution. Dynastic politics is another issue frequently cited by young voters. Many parties continue to promote leadership through family succession, creating the perception that political inheritance often outweighs competence or public service. Talented individuals from ordinary backgrounds may find it difficult to advance within such systems despite possessing strong ideas and leadership abilities. This perception encourages many aspiring leaders to explore independent or youth-oriented political movements that emphasize merit and inclusivity. History demonstrates that every generation seeks political expression for its aspirations and frustrations. Regional movements, anti-corruption campaigns, and reform initiatives have all given rise to new political forces in India. The emergence of youth-centered political organizations follows this broader democratic tradition. These platforms have the potential to shift political discussions toward employment generation, skill development, digital transformation, educational reform, entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability, transparent governance, and anti-corruption measures. However, dissatisfaction alone cannot sustain a successful political movement. New political parties must possess ideological clarity, organizational strength, administrative competence, financial transparency, and realistic policy proposals. Emotional appeals may generate temporary enthusiasm,

but long-term success depends on the ability to govern effectively and maintain public trust. Around the world, many youth-led movements have inspired hope but later struggled with the practical complexities of administration and policy-making. Sustainable political success requires both passion and preparation. India's future economic progress is inseparable from the aspirations of its youth. While many developed nations face aging populations, India continues to benefit from a large and dynamic workforce. To capitalize on this advantage, governments must invest in quality education, vocational training, industrial expansion, scientific research, digital infrastructure, agricultural modernization, and startup ecosystems. Policies should empower young people to become entrepreneurs, innovators, and job creators rather than merely job seekers. Youth participation in politics should also extend beyond contesting elections. Constructive civic engagement, policy discussions, community service, local governance, and public accountability are equally important. Democracy thrives when citizens actively participate in shaping governance rather than remaining passive observers. Young people must question public policy, evaluate government performance, propose practical alternatives, and hold leaders accountable while fulfilling their own civic responsibilities. The coming decade could prove transformative for Indian politics. If traditional political parties adapt to changing aspirations and meaningfully address youth concerns, they may continue to enjoy broad public support.



Dr. Rakkireddy Adireddy
Kakatiya University

Hyderabad Wins Culinary Honour

Goa: Hyderabad has been recognised as India's National Culinary Destination at the prestigious India Today Tourism Awards 2026, highlighting the city's rich food heritage and growing appeal as a tourism hotspot. The award was presented to Telangana Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao by Union Tourism and Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat during the India Today Tourism Summit held in Goa. The event was attended by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, senior policymakers, tourism ministers and industry leaders from across the country. Accepting the honour, Krishna Rao said the recognition reflects Hyderabad's globally celebrated culinary legacy, driven by iconic dishes such as Hyderabadi Biryani, Irani Chai and authentic Telangana cuisine. He noted that the award reinforces Telangana's position as a preferred destination for visitors seeking heritage, culture, hospitality and

unique food experiences. The minister said the state government is actively promoting tourism by developing heritage sites, eco-tourism circuits, spiritual destinations, adventure tourism and cultural attractions while strengthening infrastructure and connectivity. He added that Telangana is witnessing increasing tourist arrivals and growing interest in heritage, medical, spiritual and culinary tourism, with the latest award expected to further boost the state's profile. The recognition comes shortly after Hyderabad earned global attention as one of the world's leading food destinations, enhancing its reputation as a premier culinary capital of India. Krishna Rao dedicated the award to the people of TG and all stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors, expressing confidence that the honour would further accelerate efforts to establish TG as one of the country's top tourism destinations.

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Sri Lanka A Edge India A in Super Over



Dambulla: Sri Lanka A defeated India A in a thrilling Super Over after the two teams finished tied at 265 in their 50-over tri-series clash at the Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium on Monday. Defending 16 runs in the Super Over, Kugathas Mathulan held his nerve to restrict India A to just nine runs, sealing a dramatic seven-run victory for the hosts. The match was packed with controversy and tense exchanges, particularly in the closing stages of regulation play. India A captain Tilak Varma repeatedly questioned umpiring decisions, including a final-ball call that forced the game into a Super Over. Further disagreements over wide and no-ball rulings added to the heated atmosphere, while emotions spilled over after the match with a brief confrontation involving youngster Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. Earlier,

India A recovered impressively from a precarious 143/7 thanks to a crucial 104-run partnership between Suryansh Shedge and Vipraj Nigam. Shedge scored a fighting 72 off 66 balls, while Nigam contributed 51 from 49 deliveries to lift India to 265 all out in 49.2 overs. However, India were penalised 10 runs after Nigam received two warnings for running on the pitch. In reply, Sri Lanka A stayed in contention through a composed 93-run knock by Sadeera Samarawickrama, with valuable support from Niroshan Dickwella. India A almost snatched victory in the final over through disciplined bowling by Arshad Khan, but the hosts managed to level the scores and force the Super Over. The defeat marked India A's second consecutive loss in the tri-series, leaving the team in a must-win situation against Afghanistan A on

Wednesday to keep their hopes of reaching the final alive.

Super Over.. Controversy

Tempers flared during India A's dramatic Super Over loss to Sri Lanka A in the tri-series clash at Dambulla, with captain Tilak Varma and youngster Vaibhav Sooryavanshi involved in heated exchanges. Tilak argued with umpires over the decision to play the Super Over and later questioned a crucial no-ball call. After Sri Lanka A sealed the win, Sooryavanshi appeared frustrated and was seen exchanging words with opposition players, with TV footage suggesting brief physical contact before teammates intervened. The controversy overshadowed an exciting match that ended in a tie before Sri Lanka A prevailed in the Super Over to move to the top of the points table.

El Nino Threatens Kharif

EL NINO THREATENS KHARIF CROPS

FAO warns that a new El Nino phase could weaken India's monsoon, putting rice, maize and other rainfed crops at risk and threatening food security across Asia.

- WEAKER MONSOON**
Reduced rainfall threatens kharif crops like rice and maize.
- PAST IMPACT ON INDIA**
 - 2015-16 El Nino:
 - Maize production ↓ 4%
 - Rice production ↓ 1%
- REGIONAL CONCERN**
Southeast Asia could see losses of nearly **15 million tonnes** of rice, affecting food-importing nations.
- GREATER RISK THIS TIME**
Rising global temperatures and existing food security challenges could intensify the impact.
- ADDITIONAL PRESSURES**
Rising energy and fertilizer costs due to global shipping disruptions add strain on farmers.
- PREPAREDNESS IS KEY**
Early warning systems, quality seeds and timely support can reduce losses and protect livelihoods.
- ACT NOW**
FAO urges governments and stakeholders to act early. Early warnings work only when followed by timely action.

AT-RISK COUNTRIES

India, Pakistan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia

New Delhi: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has warned that the onset of a new El Nino phase could weaken India's summer monsoon, posing a serious threat to key rainfed crops such as rice and maize during the crucial kharif season. According to the UN agency, reduced rainfall could adversely affect agricultural production, farmers' livelihoods and food security, particularly in regions heavily dependent on monsoon rains. The risk extends beyond India to several South and Southeast Asian countries, including Pakistan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia. FAO noted that historical evidence highlights the potential im-

pact of El Nino on Indian agriculture. During the 2015-16 El Nino event, India's maize production declined by 4%, while rice output fell by 1%. Across Southeast Asia, rice losses reached nearly 15 million tonnes, triggering price increases and affecting food-importing nations. The agency cautioned that the current El Nino could have an even greater impact because of rising global temperatures and existing food security challenges. More than 80% of the projected drought-related impacts are expected to be borne by low- and middle-income countries. FAO also pointed to rising energy and fertiliser costs caused by disruptions in global shipping routes, adding

further pressure on farmers preparing for the sowing season. Stressing the importance of preparedness, the organisation said timely interventions such as early warning systems, distribution of quality seeds and support for vulnerable farming communities can significantly reduce losses. It cited successful pre-season measures taken in Southern Africa during the 2023-24 El Nino episode, where millions of people benefited from proactive assistance. The agency urged governments and stakeholders to act swiftly, emphasising that early warning systems become effective only when followed by timely and decisive action.

India Women Rally to Beat USA

Auckland: The Indian women's hockey team produced a spirited comeback to defeat the United States 3-2 in its opening Pool A match of the FIH Hockey Women's Nations Cup, recovering from a two-goal deficit to begin the campaign on a winning note. The USA made a flying start, with Ashley Sessa scoring a field goal in the fourth minute before Madeleine Zimmer doubled the lead through a penalty corner just three minutes

later, putting India under early pressure. India responded strongly in the second quarter, with drag-flick specialist Deepika leading the revival. She converted a penalty corner in the 17th minute to reduce the deficit and struck again in the 24th minute with another successful penalty corner to level the scores at 2-2. Riding the momentum, Navneet Kaur netted the decisive goal in the 28th minute, converting yet another penalty corner to complete a re-

markable turnaround and give India a 3-2 lead before halftime. Both teams created opportunities in the second half and earned six penalty corners each, but disciplined defending ensured there were no further goals. India held firm to secure all three points in its tournament opener. Deepika, making an impressive return to the national side with a two-goal performance, was named Player of the Match. With the victory, India moved to second place in Pool A.

Japan Fans Win Hearts Again

Dallas: Japanese football fans once again earned worldwide admiration after staying behind to clean the stands following their team's thrilling 2-2 draw against the Netherlands at the FIFA World Cup in Dallas. While thousands of spectators exited the stadium after the match, hundreds of Japanese supporters remained with large blue trash bags, collecting bottles, food wrappers and other litter from the seating areas. Their disciplined gesture left the stadium remarkably clean and drew widespread praise on social media.



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Shilpa Shetty

Nivetha Almost Quit Films



Actress Nivetha Pethuraj has revealed that she seriously considered quitting the film industry in 2023 before making a comeback with legendary filmmaker Singeetham Srinivasa Rao's musical fantasy Sing Geetham. Speaking at the film's thanksgiving event, Nivetha said she had decided to leave cinema and pursue a different path in life but eventually found renewed purpose through the project. "I had decided to quit films in 2023. If it wasn't for producer Nag Ashwin, I probably would have been in the Himalayas meditating," she said, thanking the filmmaker for bringing her "back to life" and giving her another opportunity in cinema. The actress also praised Sing Geetham, saying the film moved her to tears and carried an important environmental message. She expressed hope that audiences would be inspired to plant a sapling for every newborn as a small step towards protecting the planet. Calling the project a dream come true, Nivetha said she had always admired musical productions and was delighted to be part of what is being described as India's first musical fantasy film. She also lauded veteran director Singeetham Srinivasa Rao, describing him as "a director's director" and thanking him for his trust and guidance. Produced by Nag Ashwin under the banners of Vyjayanthi Movies and Swapna Cinema, Sing Geetham released on June 12 and features Ayaan, Ahilya Bamroo, Shalini Kondepudi, and Nivetha Pethuraj in key roles.

'Super Subbu' OTT Debut on July 2

Hyderabad: The makers of the much-awaited Telugu comedy series "Super Subbu", starring Sundeeep Kishan in the lead role, have announced that the show will premiere on OTT on July 2. The series marks Netflix India's first Telugu original series and follows the story of Subramanyam "Subbu" Chilukuri Rao, a sincere young man whose life takes an unexpected turn after he is appointed as a sex education officer in the quirky village of Maakipur. With little experience but plenty of determination, Subbu embarks on a humorous and heartwarming journey as he navigates awkward conversations, village life and personal challenges. Along the way, he is forced to balance his career, family relationships and love life while breaking social taboos. Created and directed by Mallik Ram, the series blends comedy with socially relevant themes such as sex education and consent, presenting them through an entertaining and relatable narrative. The cast features Sundeeep Kishan, Mithila Palkar, Murali Sharma, Brahmanandam, Get Up Srinu, Maanasa Choudhary and Jeevan. Written by Mallik Ram, Ramesh Eligeti and Shivani Dhobal, the series is produced by Rajiv Chilaka and Bharath Laxmipati under Chilaka Productions.

Vijay Divorce Case Deferred Again



Chengalpattu: The divorce proceedings involving Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president C. Joseph Vijay and his wife Sangeetha were adjourned once again on Monday after neither party appeared before the Chengalpattu Family Court. Both Vijay and Sangeetha were represented by their respective lawyers during the hearing. In view of their absence, the court postponed the matter and scheduled the next hearing for August

7. The high-profile case has witnessed multiple adjournments in recent months, with both sides previously citing difficulties in attending the proceedings in person. According to sources, requests have also been made seeking permission for the couple to participate through video conferencing, citing security concerns and logistical challenges associated with Vijay's position as Chief Minister. Sangeetha had filed the divorce petition in December 2025, seek-

ing dissolution of the marriage on the grounds of irreconcilable differences. She has also sought alimony and permission to continue residing in the couple's home in Neelankarai, Chennai. The case has attracted significant public and political attention due to Vijay's prominent role in Tamil Nadu politics. With the latest adjournment, the family court is expected to take up the matter again on August 7, when further proceedings are likely to be considered.

Sushant Ignored by Bollywood

Mumbai: On the sixth death anniversary of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, fans and family members paid heartfelt tributes to the late star, while many of his Bollywood colleagues remained silent on social media. Unlike previous years, several actors and filmmakers who had earlier shared remembrance posts—including Kriti Sanon, Sara Ali Khan, Shradha Kapoor, Parineeti Chopra, Rajkumar Rao, Amit Sadh, Abhishek Kapoor, Disha Patani, Jacqueline Fernandez and Rhea Chakraborty—did not post public tributes on the occasion. Actor Bhumi Pednekar was among the few from the film industry to remember Sushant, recalling their collaboration in Sonchiriya. Actress Ankita Lokhande, who was previously in a relationship with Sushant, did not share a dedicated message but reposted fan-made tributes featuring the duo

on her Instagram Stories. Meanwhile, Sushant's sisters Shweta Singh Kirti and Priyanka Singh shared emotional messages in his memory, while fans flooded social media with tributes celebrating his life and cinematic legacy. Sushant was known for acclaimed performances in films such as Kai Po Che!, Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!, M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story, Kedarnath, Sonchiriya and Chhichhore. His final film, Dil Bechara, was released posthumously in 2020. The actor was found dead at his Mumbai residence on June 14, 2020, at the age of 34. His death led to widespread public attention and multiple investigations, while his family later filed a complaint alleging abetment of suicide against actress Rhea Chakraborty and others. The case generated extensive national debate and remained in the spotlight for months.



Sweetest: Kartik Greets Sreeleela

Mumbai: Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan has sparked fresh speculation about his rumoured relationship with actress Sreeleela after sharing a warm birthday message for her on social media. On the occasion of Sreeleela's 25th birthday, Kartik posted a candid photograph of the duo riding a motorcycle together, captioning it, "Happy Birthday Sree Sree." The actress responded with a simple yet affectionate message, writing, "Thank you sweetest." Their exchange quickly grabbed the attention of fans, fuelling ongoing rumours about their off-screen bond. Kartik and Sreeleela are set to share screen space in filmmaker Anurag Basu's upcoming untitled romantic drama, produced by T-Series. The project will mark Sreeleela's Bollywood debut and is expected to hit theatres later in 2026. Kartik was recently seen in the romantic comedy Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri and also has the comedy-adventure film Naagzilla lined up for release. Directed by Mrighdeep Singh Lamba, Naagzilla explores a fantasy world inspired by Indian folklore and is scheduled to arrive in cinemas in February. Meanwhile, Kartik has maintained a low public profile following online speculation linking his name to alleged interactions with a minor on Snapchat. The claims remain unverified and are based largely on social media posts, with no official confirmation or evidence substantiating the allegations.