

## Premier of Bollywood movie 'Ground Zero's held in Jammu & Kashmir's Srinagar

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

After 38 years, 'Ground Zero' is the first Bollywood movie whose premier was held in Srinagar city.

On Friday the premiere was held in the 'Inox' theatre in Srinagar city. Actor Emraan Hashmi expressed his gratitude at returning to Srinagar to attend the premiere of his upcoming movie 'Ground Zero'.

Emraan Hashmi described the moment as a symbolic one as it marked the beginning of a renewed cinematic journey in the valley.

Emraan Hashmi takes on the role of BSF commandant, Narendra Nath Dhar, marking his first portrayal of a security of-



ficer.

Set in the backdrop of Kashmir, 'Ground Zero' is inspired by a real-life mission which has never been shown on the big screen. Emraan emphasised that hosting a premiere in Srinagar after a long gap sends a powerful message

to encourage other filmmakers to consider Kashmir as the locale for film shoots and the venue for screenings.

"This is a positive step for the people of Kashmir. I hope more films are shot here," he said. He also praised the warmth and

generosity of the locals.

"Kashmiris are gracious and respectful. I always wanted to return and I'm glad to be back."

"With the trailer already sparking anticipation, all eyes are on director Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar to see how this gripping story unfolds on the big screen," Excel Entertainment said.

The film is produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar under the banner of Excel Entertainment and co-produced by Kassim Jagmagia, Vishal Ramchandani, Sundeeep C, Sidhwani, Arhan Bagati, Talisman Films, Abhishek Kumar, and Nishikant Roy.

'Ground Zero' is scheduled to hit theatres nationwide on April 25. **P2**

## PM Modi's Saudi Arabia visit: New avenues of strategic cooperation

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is embarking on a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia on April 22. The high-level diplomatic visit is being made at the invitation of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman with the aim of strengthening bilateral ties between the two nations in various sectors, such as energy, defense, trade and investment.

According to reports, multiple significant agreements are to be inked during this visit, apart from the meeting between Crown Prince and Prime Minister Modi. Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri addressed a press



conference, "This visit is a rare opportunity for India to take bilateral cooperation with Saudi Arabia to a strategic level."

In September 2023, the Saudi Crown Prince came to India during the G-20 summit. It was the first meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council of

Saudi Arabia with India. The visit is anticipated to bring additional progress in that continuity.

Saudi Arabia and India's relations have become unprecedentedly close over the past decade. The two nations have now established wide-ranging cooperation in a wide range

of fields like defense, security, education, health, technology and culture. In 2010, this relationship was elevated to a "Strategic Partnership".

Since the start of 2024, India has undertaken 11 ministerial trips to Saudi Arabia. Among them, the Saudi Foreign Minister and the Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources' visits stand out. Additionally, in September 2024, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar co-chaired the inaugural India-GCC (GCC) Ministerial Meeting.

Presently, Saudi Arabia is India's fifth largest trade partner. Conversely, India is Saudi Arabia's second largest trade partner. During the **P2**

## FM Nirmala Sitharaman to Travel to USA and Peru from April 20, 2025

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is all ready to initiate a crucial diplomatic and economic tour of duty as she heads to the United States and Peru on a 11-day trip from April 20, 2025. The visit is intended to enhance India's economic relations with both countries alongside increasing its visibility at international financial forums.

USA: April 20-25  
Sitharaman's travel will initially bring her to the United States, where she will be in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco from April 20 to 25. Among the notable events of this visit is her attendance at the meetings of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors



(FMCBG). The meetings will be preceded by the Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

While in Washington, the finance minister will hold talks on issues from international financial stability to trade, with a particular emphasis on discussing the possibility of a Bilateral Trade Agree-

ment (BTA) between India and the U.S. It is a critical juncture for both nations, as India aims to strengthen its economic ties with one of its biggest trading partners.

Peru: April 26-30  
Having wrapped up her assignments in the U.S., Sitharaman will travel to Peru between April 26 and 30. While the contours of her schedule **P2**

## Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi inaugurates Rs 1,500 crore projects in Gorakhpur



THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 147 projects valued at over Rs 1,500 crore in Gorakhpur today. These include 52 completed projects worth Rs 438.38 crore

and 95 new initiatives estimated at Rs 1,061 crore. Recently Inaugurated Development Projects in Gorakhpur

The CM's visit follows closely on the heels of another milestone event — the foundation laying of the 'Powergrid Vishram Sadan' at AIIMS Gorakhpur. **P2**

## J&K - Uproar Over Alleged Army Assault on Professor in Rajouri

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

A heated debate has erupted over a clash between army personnel and a university professor at a checkpoint near Lam village in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Liaquat Ali, a professor at Delhi's Indira Gandhi National Open University, has alleged that he was beaten up by army personnel without provocation.

On the night of the incident, he was returning from a wedding with his relatives. Among his relatives in the car were people working in the army and ITBP. When the army personnel stopped the car and asked for his identity, the professor got out of the



car and showed his identity card. It is alleged that the army personnel then attacked him with a weapon.

A gory video of the incident has gone viral online. In an X-post published from Delhi, Professor Ali wrote, "Those whom I have trusted all my life, attacked me with weapons on my head." He added, "This incident

made me realize that the system can silence anyone if it wants - without evidence, without trial."

The police have registered an FIR against unidentified soldiers and the Indian Army has ordered its own investigation. The army said it maintains professionalism in counter-terrorism operations and action will be taken **P2**

## "Pasha Patel Announces Special Earth Day Program Focused on Bamboo Sector and Climate Action"

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

Pasha Patel, widely recognized as "Bambu Man" and Chairman of the Agricultural Prices Commission, revealed plans for a significant Earth Day event on April 22. The program, titled Save the Earth Conclave - Special Focus on Bamboo Sector, will be held at the Subramaniam Auditorium in Delhi. High-profile attendees include Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, and Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav, alongside farmers from across the country.

Patel emphasized the pressing issue of climate change, warning that the Earth's temperature could soon hit 50°C, creating an existential crisis. He high-



lighted the importance of collective, immediate action to preserve the environment, underscoring that farmers are now evolving from merely food producers to energy providers through sustainable practices.

A key initiative will focus on promoting bamboo cultivation via cooperatives across India. Patel has urged Amit Shah's Cooperation Department to facilitate bamboo plantation to bolster the bamboo industry nationwide. This initiative aligns with Prime Minister Modi's vision of empowering farmers with clean energy generation capabilities on their lands.

Patel also discussed climate change's detrimental impact, citing alarming findings from the World Meteorological **P2**

## 50% of students who faced visa revocation were Indians

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

Indians constituted the largest international student cohort in the US in 2023-24, according to data from Open Doors. Of the 11,26,690 international students in 2023-24, 3,31,602 students were from India (29% of the total), followed by 2.77 lakh from China.

About 50 per cent of the 327 international students whose US visas were revoked or Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) records terminated recently — as per reports collected by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) so far — are Indian.

AILA's policy brief also said that 50 per cent of the 327 students were on Optional Practical



Training (OPT), which means that they have graduated and are employed in the US. OPT allows international students who are in the US on an F1 visa to work for up to 12 months, and then extend this by another 24 months in the case of STEM fields that comprise science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Asked about the In-

dia-specific cases, AILA told The Indian Express that 65% of the Indian students who faced action were on OPT. While 87% of these Indian students had some sort of interaction with the police, 23% received a ticket or misdemeanor, and 34% were not charged, not prosecuted or had their case dismissed. The charges against Indian students include speed-

ing tickets; driving without a licence or driving on a suspended licence; driving under the influence, underage drinking at a college party; theft, including accidental theft like not scanning all items in the self check-out line at a store.

It noted that those on OPT "are unable to work immediately upon the termination of their SEVIS record," and that "the road to reinstating status for those who have already graduated and are employed on OPT is much more difficult and murkier than those who are currently students."

SEVIS is a US government database maintained by the Department of Homeland Security. A terminated SEVIS record means that the student no longer maintains "F or M status" **P2**

## 'Lady Don' Zikra Nabbed in Seelampur Murder: Revenge Plot with 2024 Feud



THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

Delhi Police nabbed Zikra,



a lady alleged to be the 'don' of a Seelampur gang, for killing a local enemy, keeping in line with ru-

mors of a revenge plot with a 2024 gang feud. So-hail, the victim, was shot dead Tuesday night outside Seelampur market. Police recovered CCTV footage of Zikra's gang and herself escaping the crime scene.

The police suspect that the murder may be linked to a 2024 gang shootout over extortion and selling illicit alcohol in the district.

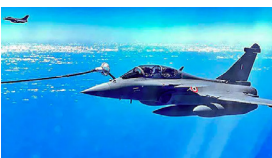
Zikra, aka "Lady Don" to locals, is said to have assumed control of the operations after **P2**

## India To Seal ₹63,000 Crore Deal with France for 26 Rafale Marine Jets on April 28

THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

India and France are likely to sign their biggest defence deal ever — a ₹63,000 crore government-to-government order for 26 Rafale Marine fighter jets — on April 28. The French Defence Minister Sebastien Lecomu, who is coming to India on Sunday, will depart the next evening after the signing of the agreement, defence sources said.

Top officials of both countries will be present on behalf of their respective sides at the signing ceremony, which is to



be organized outside the Defence Ministry headquarters in South Block, New Delhi.

This historic agreement was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this month on April 9. The deal comprises 22 single-engine and four twin-engine Rafale-M jets, along

with a comprehensive support package covering fleet maintenance, logistics support, personnel training, and a focus on local component manufacture.

These new 4.5-generation naval fighter jets will enhance the Indian Navy's air power with operations from aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, to be added to the current fleet of MiG-29K aircraft. The Indian Air Force already has 36 Rafale fighter jets in its inventory, which were purchased under a different 2016 agreement, based at Ambala and Hashimara air bases.

The introduction **P2**

## Residential Building Collapse in Delhi Claims 11 Lives, 11 Injured



THE JAZZBAAT  
NEWS DESK

A four-storey residential building in Delhi's Dayalpur area collapsed early Saturday morning, resulting in the death of

11 people and leaving 11 others injured, according to officials. Rescue operations were conducted by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), fire services, Delhi Police, and volunteers for **P2**



# PM Modi’s

financial year 2023-24, the two countries’ trade was at a volume of US\$ 42.98 billion, where India’s export was US\$ 11.56 billion and import was US\$ 31.42 billion.

In the energy area, Saudi Arabia is India’s third largest source of crude oil and LPG. Diplomatic quarters hope that this visit will advance that energy collaboration to a strategic plane.

The Prime Minister’s visit may be the start of a new chapter in the India-Saudi alliance.

# FM Nirmala

in Peru are yet to be known, the trip is likely to center around widening economic cooperation, especially in areas of trade and investment.

This trip is all part of India’s larger plan to diversify its economic partnerships and build connections with nations worldwide, especially in Latin America.

A Strategic Step towards India’s Global Economic Agenda

The visit reinforces India’s active strategy to further its position in world financial talks and its efforts to emerge as a major economic player in international affairs. As the global trade patterns evolve and new issues arise, India’s strategic outreach to leading economies such as the U.S. and Peru represents a significant step ahead.

The visit underscores India’s resolve to develop robust diplomatic and economic ties, as well as establish itself as a powerful voice in major global financial institutions.

# Uttar

This 500-bed facility, to be developed at a cost of Rs 44 crore under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative of the Power Grid Corporation of India, is designed to offer affordable accommodation for patients and their attendants. “AIIMS Gorakhpur is steadily progressing and becoming a key hub for healthcare in this region. It is situated in the heart of eastern UP, and with projects like the Vishram Sadan, we are contributing to the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of linking robust healthcare services to the foundation of a developed, modern India,” CM Yogi said during the earlier ceremony.

Enhanced Connectivity and Healthcare

Among the key projects is the highly anticipated

four-lane road connecting Gorakhpur to Deoria, which is expected to significantly improve regional connectivity. Additionally, the foundation for a 50-bed hospital in Bangsao was laid, aimed at strengthening the local healthcare infrastructure.

These projects focus on the infrastructural and social development of eastern Uttar Pradesh, with a special emphasis on upgrading roads, expanding public health services, and improving overall connectivity in the state.

## J&K

if the allegations are proven.

PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti strongly criticised the incident, saying, “This kind of behaviour tarnishes the image of a respected institution.”

Now the question arises—is such behaviour towards ordinary citizens acceptable in the name of security? And has justice really become an integral part of the uniform?

# “Pasha

Organization (WMO) report, which reveals 2024 as the hottest year ever recorded. The urgent need for climate action was emphasized at the event, which will feature three main sessions, each with speeches from Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, and Bhupendra Yadav.

In a significant step towards advancing bamboo cultivation, Maharashtra’s Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis allocated Rs. 4,300 crore in the 2025-26 budget for bamboo development. Patel stressed the need for sustainable development to be integrated into all sectors, stating that environmental awareness should be a fundamental pillar of national progress.

The Save the Earth Conclave is organized by the Phoenix Foundation, Lodga, Latur, Bharti Public Policy Institute, ISB, Hyderabad, ICFA, New Delhi, and AARDO, New Delhi. This one-day symposium will focus on environmental sustainability and policy solutions.

Earlier in the day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Saxena, and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta participated in the ILBS event for World Liver Day. PM Modi encouraged citizens to take small steps, like reducing oil intake, to combat obesity and promote healthier living.

# 50% of

(student visas are either F or M visas), and if that happens, the student loses employment authorisation, cannot re-enter the US on the terminated record, and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents may investigate to confirm the student’s departure.

Sharing AILA’s note on X, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh wrote: “The press statement issued by the American Immigration Lawyers Association yesterday is a matter of concern for India. Of the 327 visa cancellation cases of international students collected so far by the organisation, 50% are Indian students. The reasons for visa cancellation are inconsistent and vague. This is constantly increasing fear and apprehension among the students. Will the External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar take cognizance of this matter and raise it with his US counterpart?”

Asked about Indian students whose visas have been revoked in the US, Ministry of External Affairs’ spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a press briefing Thursday: “We are aware that several Indian students have received communication from the US Government regarding their F-1 visa status, which happens to be the student visa. We are looking into the matter. Our embassy and consulate are in touch with the students to provide support.”

According to AILA’s policy brief, the reports “paint a concerning picture of the arbitrary nature of these visa revocations and terminations.” While 86 per cent of the reports that AILA collected pointed to some level of interaction with the police, 33 per cent had their case dismissed, were never charged, or were never prosecuted, according to the policy brief.

Police interactions included students who “encountered the police for infractions most US citizens would consider a daily occurrence”: students who were issued speeding tickets for going 70 mph in a 65-mph zone, or 80 mph in a 70-mph zone; a student on OPT who had tickets for illegal parking, not wearing a seatbelt, and expired plates; a nursing student who was arrested for evading a vehicle when the police tried to pull them over (the student thought it was a fire truck and changed lanes to let them pass).

Of the 327 cases, only two students “reported any history of engaging in political protests”, AILA said. Most of the students who received notices of their visa revocations reported getting an email from the consulate that issued their visa.

The policy brief noted that the stated rationale for SEVIS terminations was not “always consistent with the record.” Of the instances of SEVIS terminations, 83 per cent received notices only from their university, while 14 per cent reported receiving a notice from ICE.

# ‘Lady Don’

her husband was incarcerated in 2023. She allegedly used social media to harass rivals and organize attacks, sources say.

The arrest follows weeks of surveillance, police citing Zikra’s history of violent crimes such as attempted murder and weapons possession. An A.32 pistol was found in her hideout. While no definite threat in the context of the 2024 feud was noted, authorities are probing if Sohail’s murder was an act of retaliation for him having been involved in a previous battle that had seen one of Zikra’s aides seriously injured.

The case again put in the limelight rising syndicate crime in Northeast Delhi, particularly in the form of women syndicate leaders.

The government is also investigating potential political patronage extended to such organisations. Zikra has been remanded in police custody to be further questioned.

# India To

of the 26 Rafale-M fighter jets will increase India’s Rafale strength to 62, and add to its aerial combat capability.

In the meantime, the Indian Air Force is likely to float a new tender shortly for an acquisition of a multirole fighter aircraft. Competitive bidding is expected, though the IAF has shown a strong desire for a particular airframe to meet its near-term operational requirements.

# Residential

over 12 hours in the Mustafabad area.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta expressed her condolences and announced a probe into the incident, promising strict action against those responsible. “May God grant peace to the departed souls and provide strength to the grieving families,” she said on social media.

The collapse occurred around 2:39 am while the occupants were asleep, as shown in CCTV footage. The Delhi Fire Service received an alert at 2:50 am. Authorities believe several families living in the building on rent were affected by the tragedy.

In other news, Delhi experienced a break from the heat on Friday evening, as light rain and gusty winds swept across the city. The weather department indicated the rain would continue with similar intensity.

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### ADMISSION NOTIFICATION

Notification No: - 01 - GPCL of 2025    Dated: - 17.04.2025

**Subject: Admission Notification for Three Year Diploma Courses in Government Polytechnic College Leh / Kargil for the Academic Year 2025 - 26.**

As per JKUT Board of Technical Education Notification No. 13-BOTE of 2025 dated 16-04-2025, Online Applications are invited from the residents of Union Territory of Ladakh who are eligible and desirous for admission to Three Year Diploma Courses in Government Polytechnic College Leh / Kargil for the Academic Year 2025 - 26. The selection of the candidates will be purely on the marks obtained in 10<sup>th</sup> class. The details and guidelines as contained in the Electronic Information Brochure -2025 are available at [www.jksbotelive.com/admission.jksbotelive.com](http://www.jksbotelive.com/admission.jksbotelive.com).

**Details of Three Year Diploma Courses offered by Government Polytechnics Colleges of UT Ladakh**

- Government Polytechnic College, Leh**

S. No	Name of Diploma Course	Intake Capacity
1	Diploma in Civil Engineering	30
2	Diploma in Computer Engineering	30
3	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	30
- Government Polytechnic College, Kargil**

S. No	Name of Diploma Course	Intake Capacity
1	Diploma in Civil Engineering	30
2	Diploma in Computer Engineering	30
3	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	30

**Online Application Forms:**  
Candidates can submit their applications **Online Only** on the website <https://admission.jksbotelive.com> from **17-04-2025 to 17-05-2025** and also submit a Fee of Rs.100 (Rs One Hundred only) online through Credit Card/ Debit Card/ Net Banking/ UPI etc. The Procedure for filling application Form and Eligibility etc. of the candidates has been given in detail in the information Brochure.

**Eligibility:**  
The applicant must:

- Be a Domicile Certificate holder of UT of Ladakh.
- Have passed 10<sup>th</sup> class Examination from a recognized Board / Institute.
- Have obtained percentage greater than or equal to 35% in aggregate in the 10<sup>th</sup> class Examination.

(Note: - However the candidates who have appeared in 10<sup>th</sup> class examination may also apply and marks certificates on the portal to be uploaded as and when available).

# World Heritage Day Celebrated in Ladakh

Leh, April 19, 2025: The Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museum, UT Ladakh, and Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation (HCHF), in collaboration with the Government Higher Secondary School Baima, the Preservation of Aryan Culture and Education Society, and the Aryan Heritage Labdak Museum, organised heritage talks and a quiz competition at the Government Higher Secondary School Baima.

The organisers honoured village elders and folk singers Tsering Punchok from Hanu, Tsering Sonam from Baldes, Tsering Angchuk from Garkon and Tsetan Gurmet from Darchik as special guests. Scholar and Dard Aryan expert, Dr Sonam Paldan, was the chief guest during the occasion.

The registering officer of the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museum, in his welcome speech, highlighted the activities undertaken by his department in documenting and conserving historical and archival records.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Sonam Wangchok has highlighted the importance of celebrating World Heritage Day by organising awareness programmes and imparting heritage education to school children. He also stressed the importance of preserving Ladakh’s rich cultural and natural heritage for generations to come. Dr Wangchok also shared his experiences working in the field of cultural preservation for the last two decades.

Chief guest Dr Paldan appreciated the organisers, especially Dr Sonam Wangchok for working tirelessly in preserving and promoting cultural heritage in Ladakh. He highlighted the rich heritage of the Aryan valley of Ladakh and expressed the need for more awareness programmes to educate the villagers about the values of their cultural heritage.

Principal, Govt. Higher Secondary School Baima, Smt. Deachen Angmo and Sh. Tashi Lhundup, Director of Aryan Heritage Labdak Museum, also spoke on the occasion about the importance of preserving cultural heritage. The special guests and folk singers entertained the audience by singing folk songs. The organisers felicitated them with mementoes and Khatak (white scarves).

Finally, students who beg first, second and third position in the quiz competition received certificates and prizes. First position went to Government High School Hanu Yokma, followed by Government Higher Secondary School Biama and Government High School Garkon. The competition was also participated in by students of the eighth class of Govt. High School, Achinathang.

World Heritage Day is observed annually on April 18th to increase awareness of the importance of safeguarding the world’s historical sites and monuments as the most precious resources. The day seeks to unite the global community in support of the preservation of these historical sites and monuments, which serve as a reflection of cultural diversity and historical legacy. This year’s theme is “Heritage under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts: Preparedness and Learning from 60 years of ICOMOS Actions”.



# Mamata Banerjee attacks BJP, RSS for ‘playing divisive politics’ over Murshidabad, urges people to remain calm

**UNI**

Kolkata, Apr 19 (UNI) Amid West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose's visit to violence-hit Murshidabad and his criticism of the situation, state Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday night attacked the BJP and the RSS, who she said have together "initiated a vicious false campaign" in her state. She alleged that the BJP and its allies are "using the backdrop of an unfortunate incident that happened on provocation. They are using the backdrop to play divisive politics."

Appealing to the people of the state to remain calm, the Trinamool Chief Minister accused the BJP and its allies of playing a "sinister" divide and rule game



in the state. "We condemn communal riots and must curb them. The criminals behind the riots are being strongly dealt with. But, simultaneously, we must avoid mutual mistrust and distrust. The majority and the minority communities must work together and take care of each other," she said.

"They want to incite riots, and riots can affect everyone. We love all. We want to stay together. We condemn riots. We are against riots. They want to divide us for some narrow electoral politics. For maintaining law and order and for saving human lives and dignity, we have taken strong actions. Two police officers-in-charge have been re-

moved. Police is investigating. Further actions are being taken," the Chief Minister said. She appealed to the people to stay calm and stay united, adding "Do not be diverted by their false communal rhetoric. Let us remain together and combat their bad propaganda. Let us fight their hooliganism and falsehood. Let us remain united as Indians." The CM's appeal comes as the West Bengal Governor ignored Banerjee's appeal against visiting Murshidabad. The Governor voiced unhappiness over the law and order situation in the state. "A particular community in society has been targeted here. One group attacking while another is being victimised — this can never be acceptable in a democratic system."

# Hailstorm Causes Widespread Damage to Orchards in Kulgam District

**THE JAZZBAAT NEWS DESK**

Kulgam, April 19, 2025 – A sudden and intense hailstorm swept through several areas of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday, causing widespread destruction to fruit orchards and plunging the local farming community into distress. The unexpected hailstorm, which lasted only a few minutes, struck with severe intensity, affecting regions including Noorabad, Gudder, Pranhel, Ashmuji, the main market Kulgam, Malwan, Khaloora, Bani-mulla, Laisoo and Be-hibhag. According to orchardists and local



residents, the storm damaged a significant portion of blossoming fruit trees, particularly apple and cherry crops that were in their early flowering stages. "This was going to be a good season," said Mohd Younus, an orchardist from Malwan. "But the hailstorm has shattered our hopes.

Entire fields are ruined." Local growers are now urging the district administration to immediately assess the losses and initiate relief measures. They have also called for compensation, crop insurance assistance, and long-term preventive strategies to mitigate such unexpected weather events in the future.

## Sakina Itoo directs Shopian, Kulgam admins to assess hailstorm damage for farmer compensation

**Danishwar Hameed THE JAZZBAAT**

Cabinet minister, Sakina Itoo on Saturday directed the district administrations of Shopian and Kulgam to conduct an immediate assessment of damages caused by a severe hailstorm that struck parts of south Kashmir, devastating orchards and threatening the livelihood of local farmers. The hailstorm, which occurred on Friday afternoon, hit several areas across the region, with Shopian among the worst affected. Villages including Aglar, Reshinagar, Balpora, Ganopora, Ladijan, and Trenz suffered extensive damage to apple orchards. Locals expressed alarm over the destruction. "The hailstorm destroyed our orchards severely. We appeal to the government to compensate for the losses," Sakina Itoo, responding



to the widespread damage, directed officials to immediately evaluate the situation and initiate the process for compensation to the affected farmers. "It is essential that the losses are properly recorded and timely relief is provided," she said.

## GHSS Qaimoh Becomes First Govt Higher Secondary School in J&K to Go Fully Digital

**Danishwar Hameed THE JAZZBAAT**

In a significant step towards modernizing education and administrative systems, Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Qaimoh in Kulgam district has become the first government higher secondary school in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to fully embrace digital technology. The school has launched a comprehensive digital transformation initiative aimed at improving administrative efficiency, enhancing record-keeping, and providing better facilities for students. This includes the introduction of an online data management system for vital student-related documents such as Bonafide Certificates, Date of Birth Certificates, and more. The new system ensures that all student records are maintained digitally, enabling faster, more efficient access to essential services while promoting



transparency and accountability in institutional operations. Dr. Sajad Ahmad Mir, Principal of GHSS Qaimoh, said, "We are committed to evolving as a future-ready institution, where educational delivery is efficient, transparent, and inclusive. These initiatives are steps towards building a digital academic ecosystem that serves the aspirations of

our students and the expectations of our community." The move is being hailed as a milestone in institutional modernization and is expected to serve as a model for other government schools across the region. GHSS Qaimoh's initiative underscores its dedication to academic excellence, administrative innovation, and community-focused progress.

## District Police Kulgam Bids farewell to outgoing ADDL. SP Kulgam

**Danishwar Hameed THE JAZZBAAT**

Kulgam : April 19, 2025; District Police Kulgam today accorded a farewell to the Addl. SP Kulgam Shri. Tanveer Ahmad-JKPS on his transfer at a function held at Kulgam. Senior Superintendent of Police Kulgam Shri Sahil Sarangal-IPS speaking on the occasion praised the outgoing officer for his dedication and commitment to the assigned duties as Addl. SP Kulgam. He congratulated the officer for his new posting, memento was presented to outgoing Addl. SP Kulgam as a token of love.



Outgoing Addl.SP Kulgam thanked all the officers and officials of District Police Kulgam for cooperation and support in his tenure and express gratitude to SSP Kulgam for applauding his role.

## Technician arrested for sexual assault of a flight attendant:-

**THE JAZZBAAT NEWS DESK**

A 25- year old machine technician has been arrested at the Intensive Care Unit of Medanta of the Gurugram hospital by the Gurugram police in connection with the alleged sexual harassment of a flight attendant. Deepak, the accused, a resident of Bihar's Muzzaffarpur has been a worker at the hospital for the last five months. Holding a press conference, Deputy Commissioner of Police (headquarters) Arpit Jain, who led a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the case, said they checked the footage of 800 closed-circuit television cameras installed in the hospital and interrogated 50 staff members, including doctors, to zero in on the accused. The SIT, which was constituted on Thursday, went into the finer details of the case, re-questioned the doctors and the employees and analysed the CCTV footage multiple times to arrest the accused on Friday, said Mr. Jain. "Further investigation is on. The accused would be pro-



duced before the court on Saturday," said the senior police officer. Admitted to the private hospital after nearly drowning in a hotel pool, the flight attendant was allegedly sexually harassed while on a ventilator in a semi-conscious state during treatment. The alleged incident took place on April 6, but the complaint was lodged at Sadar police station on April 14, a day after she was discharged from the hospital.

## Arvind Kejriwal's daughter Harshita wed IIT classmate Sambhav Jain

**THE JAZZBAAT NEWS DESK**

Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party leader Arvind Kejriwal's family is in a celebratory mood. His daughter Harshita Kejriwal wedded IIT Delhi classmate and entrepreneur Sambhav Jain. The auspicious marriage ceremony was held on April 18, 2025, in a private function at historic Kapurthala House in Delhi. Both Harshita and Sambhav have studied at IIT Delhi. They became close friends while being students, but it blossomed into love eventually. Both of them are students, but in addition to studying, they've also estab-



lished a healthcare startup as a team named Basil Health working in the medical field. Professionally and personally, both couples' relationships turn out to be successful. The wedding was witnessed by near relatives, as well as a number of fa-

mous political faces—Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia being two notable examples. The function was happy and upbeat. Arvind Kejriwal and his wife Sunita also danced together to a tune from

popular movie Pushpa 2: The Rule at the ring-exchange ceremony that preceded the wedding. The groom, Sambhav Jain, is a project management consultant since graduating from IIT Delhi. The bride, Harshita, joined Boston Consulting Group upon graduating in 2018. Bollywood singer Mika Singh sang at the wedding to enhance the festive mood. But there's more—the post-wedding reception will be taking place on Sunday, April 20. This marriage is not only an alliance of two individuals, but also the advent of two families, two destinies and a new journey. This family bliss gave a sense of profound calm to Arvind Kejriwal's life, which was surrounded by the din of politics.

## 14,965 beneficiaries in Kashmir avail Marriage Assistance Scheme

**UNI**

Srinagar, Apr 19 (UNI) Nearly 15000 cases have been sanctioned under the Jammu and Kashmir Government's Marriage Assistance Scheme during this year. The scheme has emerged as a significant support system for underprivileged families, enabling thousands across the Kashmir division to solemnize weddings with dignity. According to official data, a total of 14,965 cases have been sanctioned

under the scheme in the Kashmir division during the financial year 2024-25 alone. The Department of Social Welfare, which implements the scheme, has disbursed a substantial Rs 74.82 crore in financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries during this period, an official spokesman said. Launched with the objective of aiding families unable to bear the financial burden of marriage, especially of daughters, the scheme has played a vital role in extending socio-economic relief to

economically weaker sections. An official spokesman said the residents of Baramulla District have turned out to be most aware of the scheme, with 2472 beneficiaries availing the benefits of the scheme involving assistance of Rs. 12,36,00,000 followed by Anantnag District with 2293 cases worth Rs. 11,46,50,000. Ganderbal District has figured at the last among all districts in Kashmir division, with only 592 cases registered during 2024-25 and Rs.2,96,00,000 amount sanctioned to

the beneficiaries. Under this scheme, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) or Priority Household (PPH) Ration Card Holder families are eligible to apply for financial assistance for marriage. The financial assistance under the J&K Marriage Assistance Scheme for poor girls from the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) ration card holder families is Rs.75,000 while for Priority Household (PHH) ration card holders the assistance being provided amounts to Rs 50,000.

**THE JAZZBAAT NEWS DESK**

Kulgam, April 19, 2025: In view of the prevailing inclement weather conditions, the Health Department Kulgam has established District and Block Level Control Rooms to ensure uninterrupted healthcare services and effective coordination across the district. These control rooms will function round-the-clock to monitor health services, address emergencies, and coordinate patient referrals and logistics in real time. The initiative aims to strengthen the

DISTRICT AND BLOCK CONTROL ROOMS FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER			
Institution/Block	Name	Designation	Contact Number
CMO Office Kulgam	Dr. Mohd Yousof	District Health Officer	7066799800
	Mr. Nisar Ahmad	DMEO	9906231600
	Mr. Rayees Rehman	Comp. Assistant	9449533391
	Dr. A R Raina	Medical Superintendent	7066899922
District Hospital Kulgam	Mr. Hilal Ahmad	Junior Assistant	9797159160
	Mr. Tariq Ahmad	MPW	9797295252
	Mr. Shabir Ahmad	BHW	7780882659
	Dr. Shagufta Salam	Medical Superintendent	7066942926
Emergency Hospital Qazigund	Mr. Musdir Ahmad	Sanitary Inspector	9149410952
	Mr. Gh Ahmad Malik	MTS	9797660162
	Dr. A R Shan	Block Medical Officer	9906685127
	Mr. Hilal Ahmad	CHO	9622624057
Block Kulgam	Mr. Shafeeq-ul-Rehman	Store Keeper	9796750777
	Dr. Gowhar Ali	Block Medical Officer	7066687097
	Mr. Mohd Yousof	CHO	7066360927
	Mr. Mohd Shafi	Pharmacist	7899533150
Block Qaimoh	Dr. Ab Gani	Block Medical Officer	7899307640
	Mr. Anees Ahmad	CHO	7066355817
	Mr. Javaid Ahmad	JHI	9797200561
	Dr. Riyaz Ahmad	Block Medical Officer	9906318051
Block DH Pora	Mr. Mohd Ahas	CHO	7066188221
	Mr. Mohd Iqbal	Store Keeper	9858990976
	Dr. Nighat Nareem	Block Medical Officer	7066063913
	Mr. Munir Shahzeq	CHO	7899461252
Block Qazigund	Mr. Farooq Ahmad	Store Keeper	9622490015

emergency response system and ensure timely med-

ical assistance during adverse weather conditions.



*True strength is  
being gentle in a  
hard world.*

## India to Host 2025 Asia Cup in T20 Format



India will host the 2025 Asia Cup, which will be played in the T20 format. This aligns with preparations for the 2026 T20 World Cup, offering teams a competitive platform ahead of the global event. The format change from ODI to T20 reflects the growing popularity of the shorter version of the game. India remains the most successful team in Asia Cup history, with eight titles—seven in ODI and one in T20 format. In 2023, India won the championship under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, dominating the final against Sri Lanka. However, the 2025 edition

will be notable as India will compete without Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, both having retired from T20 internationals after their 2024 World Cup triumph. The tournament presents a valuable chance for new and young players to prove themselves on an international stage. With several teams rebuilding and testing new combinations, the matches are expected to be high-energy and closely contested. Fans eagerly await the action, hoping to witness the rise of future stars and thrilling cricketing moments that add to the legacy of this prestigious tournament.

## India Expects Strong 2025 Monsoon



India has projected above-average monsoon rainfall for 2025, estimating it at 105% of the long-term average. This marks the second consecutive year of positive rainfall predictions, offering a major boost to the agriculture sector. With nearly half of India's farmland depending on monsoon rains due to limited irrigation, the forecast promises improved crop yields and better food security. A good monsoon can help stabilize food prices and support rural economies. In 2024, strong rainfall enabled the easing of export restrictions on key crops like rice and onions, and allowed limited sugar exports. A similar

trend in 2025 could strengthen India's position as a global exporter while reducing dependency on imported edible oils. However, forecasts suggest that some regions—especially in the northwest, northeast, and southern peninsular areas—may receive below-average rainfall. This calls for regional planning and support to minimize potential agricultural setbacks. Overall, the expected rainfall brings optimism for farmers and policymakers alike. It could fuel growth in the agriculture sector, enhance exports, and play a key role in maintaining economic stability throughout the year.

# Career Guidance and Counselling A Transformative Initiative by the Directorate of School Education Kashmir



## Javeed Abdullah

In today's fast evolving academic and professional landscape, career guidance and counselling are no longer optional add-ons to the education system rather they are essential. The Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK), recognizing this critical need, has initiated a comprehensive, structured, and impactful programme aimed at empowering students through timely and meaningful career guidance. This initiative has seen career counselling sessions being systematically conducted across all higher secondary schools of the Kashmir Division, culminating in impactful district-level programmes that serve as a guiding light for students standing at the threshold of crucial academic decisions. One such landmark district-level programme was recently conducted at Girls Higher Secondary School Sogam in Kupwara, setting a benchmark in the effective delivery of counselling services. This daylong session was not just an event, but a well-thought out convergence of students, educators, administrators, civil society, and policymakers, all committed to sculpting a brighter, well-informed future for the student community. The Directorate of School Education Kashmir has institutionalized career counselling as a part of its academic and developmental strategy. Trained counsellors, equipped with contemporary understanding and methodologies, have been deployed to interact with students, especially those in classes 10th and 12th, who are at a pivotal stage of their academic journeys.

Each higher secondary school in Kashmir Division has been the site of focused career guidance sessions, ensuring that no student is left unaware or unguided about the array of career paths available to them. These sessions are not limited to classroom lectures but include interactive presentations, real-life testimonials, and hands-on assistance in making subject and stream choices. The success of the initiative is most visibly manifested in the district-level

programmes. These larger, more elaborate events bring together multiple stakeholders, students, teachers, principals, civil society members, public representatives, and educational officers and officials, in a shared space of learning, dialogue, and inspiration.

The District level Career Guidance and counselling session at Kupwara hosted by the Chief Education Officer and Girls Higher Secondary School Sogam, was one such vibrant example. It stood out for its high-level participation, meticulous organization, and inspirational outcomes. The presence of Dr. G.N. Itoo, (JKAS) Director School Education Kashmir, at Girls Higher Secondary School Sogam underscored the department's commitment to student welfare. His participation was more than symbolic. It included direct interaction with students, insightful addresses, and a sincere effort to bridge the gap between policy and ground realities. DSEK Dr. G.N. Itoo's words on the importance of timely career decisions, the broadening scope of opportunities, and the transformative role of education deeply resonated with both students and teachers alike.

Joint Director North, Mr. Hakeem Tanveer, (JKAS) further enriched the programme through his articulate and motivational speech. His message, filled with golden words of wisdom, focused on self-belief, strategic planning, and the evolving nature of career landscapes, encouraging students to aim high and work with dedication. He also stressed upon teachers regarding their role in shaping the future of the students and the nation. He believes that such session will bring unparalleled changes in the society.

One of the most unique aspects of this district level Career Guidance and counselling at Sogam was the silent yet powerful communication of values such as discipline, decency, dressing to aim high and work with dedication. He also stressed upon teachers regarding their role in shaping the future of the students and the nation. He believes that such session will bring unparalleled changes in the society. One of the most unique aspects of this district level Career Guidance and counselling at Sogam was the silent yet powerful communication of values such as discipline, decency, dressing to aim high and work with dedication. He also stressed upon teachers regarding their role in shaping the future of the students and the nation. He believes that such session will bring unparalleled changes in the society.

Equally commendable was the role of the trained counsellors who conducted highly engaging sessions on career planning. Their presentations showcased the diverse career avenues available after class 10th and 12th, covering conventional paths like medicine, engineering, and civil services, as well as emerging sectors like digital marketing, aviation, design, and entrepreneurship.



These sessions were prepared with real world insights, success stories, and practical strategies, making them not only informative but also aspirational. Students were given clarity on entrance exams, eligibility criteria, scholarship schemes, vocational alternatives, and skill-based career choices. For many students, it was the first structured exposure to the broader professional world and it left them with clarity and confidence. The session was presented by DEPO Kupwara Mohd Iqbal Shah and Mohd Abbas Gojrey Teacher Zone Handwara

Students who had appeared in the recent 10th and 12th board examinations were the primary audience of the programme. Their participation was marked by keen attention, curiosity, and active questioning. Many students reported leaving the event with renewed motivation and a clearer sense of direction. The interaction helped them evaluate their own interests and abilities in light of the opportunities presented to them. For students from remote areas like Sub division Sogam and adjoining areas, this platform was especially significant. It brought the world of possibilities closer to them and showed them that regardless of geography, determination, the right guidance can open doors to success.

The Road Ahead: Institutionalizing Counselling in Schools  
The success of this and similar district level programmes sets the stage for even more ambitious interventions. Career counselling must be embedded as a permanent and integral part of the school curriculum. It should not be a once in a year event, but a continuous engagement, beginning from middle school stage.

The Directorate of School Education Kashmir is very keen about this important component of career building and in institutionalizing this process conducts regular refresher training for counsellors, digital resources for students, parent engagement workshops, and industry academia collaborations etc. Furthermore, a career guidance cell in every higher secondary school—with linkages to district and state-level cells need to be established which will create a sustainable framework that can adapt to changing times and career dynamics.

The Career Guidance and Counselling Programme by the Directorate of School Education Kashmir is not just a policy initiative; it is a vision, a vision of informed students, empowered choices, and brighter futures. The district-level events in all the districts and at Girls Higher Secondary School Sogam, Kupwara, stands as a model of how collective effort, inspirational leadership, and professional counselling can converge to create meaningful impact.

In a world that demands clarity, confidence, and competence from its young generation, such initiatives are not just commendable, they are indispensable. As this journey continues, the hope is that every student in India and Jammu and Kashmir, regardless of background or circumstance, will have access to guidance that helps them unlock their true potential.

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# India Launches 'BharatGPT': A Major Step Toward AI Independence

In a groundbreaking move for the Indian tech industry, the government-backed AI initiative 'BharatGPT' was officially launched earlier this month. Developed by a consortium of Indian tech firms, startups, and research institutions, BharatGPT is being hailed as India's answer to global AI giants like ChatGPT and Google's Gemini. The initiative aims to make AI more accessible, culturally relevant, and linguistically inclusive for the Indian population. BharatGPT stands out primarily because of its support for over a dozen Indian languages, including Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, and Marathi. Unlike most Western-developed models, BharatGPT is being trained specifically on Indian content, data sets, and socio-cultural nuances. According to developers, this allows it to better understand the context, sentiment, and expressions unique to India's diverse population.

The AI model is also being aligned with national interests. From boosting education in rural areas to improving digital governance, BharatGPT is expected to play a key role in sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and small businesses. For instance, farmers will be able to ask questions in their native language and receive AI-driven suggestions about crop diseases, market prices, and weather conditions. Tech experts believe this move reflects



India's growing emphasis on technological self-reliance, especially in critical areas like artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. The project is also seen as a pushback against the monopolization of AI technology by Western corporations, which often do not address the specific needs of non-English-speaking users. However, concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and ethical use remain.

Critics urge the government to ensure transparency in how the AI is trained and used. Some have called for independent oversight and public audits to prevent misuse or surveillance. Despite these challenges, the launch of BharatGPT signals a significant leap for India in the global AI race. As digital transformation accelerates across the subcontinent, an AI tool that under-

stands and responds to the country's linguistic and cultural diversity could become a game-changer.

With BharatGPT now live in beta testing across multiple government platforms, its full-scale rollout is expected later this year. All eyes are on how effectively it delivers on its promise—and whether it truly becomes the voice of 1.4 billion Indians.



# Taliban strongly condemn Pakistan's treatment of Afghan refugees, during Ishaq Dar's Kabul visit

UNI

Kabul/Islamabad, Apr 19 (UNI) The Afghan Taliban's Acting Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund strongly condemned Pakistan's treatment of Afghan refugees, during his meeting with Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Kabul today.

Dar's visit to Kabul came amid Pakistan's deportation of over 85,000 Afghans, including mostly children, in just over two weeks, causing significant concern and hardship to the displaced families.

lies. Pakistan has launched a strict campaign to deport over 800,000 Afghans by the end of April. The deportations include individuals who were born in Pakistan or have lived there for decades. Convoys of Afghan families have been heading to border towns daily, fearing raids, arrests, or being separated from family members due to the deportation order. Hamdullah Fitrat, Deputy Spokesperson of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, said of the meeting between Dar and the Acting Prime Minister: "The prime minister of the Islamic

Emirate of Afghanistan thanked Pakistan for hosting Afghan migrants thus far, but stressed that recent treatment of Afghan migrants is unacceptable and strongly condemned it," Tolo News said. Idris Zazai, a political affairs expert, noted: "Numerous meetings have been held between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and many promises exchanged, but Pakistan has repeatedly broken its commitments." Amir Khan Muttaqi, Acting Foreign Minister, also expressed concern about the treatment of Afghan migrants in Pakistan and

urged Ishaq Dar to prevent violations of the rights of migrants and returnees. In response, the Pakistani Foreign Minister said that customs duties on many trade items have been reduced to boost bilateral trade and that Afghan migrants will not be mistreated. He added that Islamabad would prevent any arbitrary seizure of Afghan migrants' property. Dar also invited Amir Khan Muttaqi to visit Pakistan to further elevate the bilateral engagement. Zia Ahmad Takal, head of public relations at the Foreign Ministry, said: "Mr. Muttaqi also reminded the Pakistani

delegation that serious steps must be taken to address the mentioned issues." According to a statement posted by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, the two sides exchanged views on key issues of mutual interest, including security, trade, transit cooperation and ways to enhance people-to-people contacts. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continued engagement and agreed to maintain high-level exchanges aimed at further strengthening what the Pakistani Foreign Ministry described as "relations between the two brotherly countries."

# Man killed by son over property in Jaunpur

UNI

Jaunpur (UP), Apr 19 (UNI) A 65-year-old man was hit with a stick and killed by his son allegedly over property dispute in Sarpatha area of Jaunpur district here in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, a police officer said here. Superintendent of Police (City) Ayush Srivastava said that Prabhakar Singh (65), a resident of Deeh Asharfabad village, has four-five semi-constructed rooms on the side of Lucknow-Ballia highway in the village and mostly lived there. "On Saturday at around 11 am, his son, Akhilesh Singh alias Otu Singh, came inside the room and killed his father by hitting him on the head with a stick," he said. He



said that the son killed his father over selling of land and money transactions. "It is being said that there used to be some dispute between father and son re-

garding selling of land," he said. The SP said that the deceased's wife Savitri Singh has filed a complaint against the son for murdering her husband.

# 35 taken to hospital after house fire in Japan's Osaka

UNI

Tokyo, Apr 19 (UNI) A fire broke out around Saturday noon in a 14-story prefectural housing complex in Japan's Osaka Prefecture, with 35 residents taken to hospital and one in serious condition, local media reported. The fire started on the fourth floor of the building and smoke quickly spread to the upper floors, national broadcaster NHK reported. Emergency services dispatched 38 fire trucks to the scene, and the blaze was brought under control approximately four hours later.



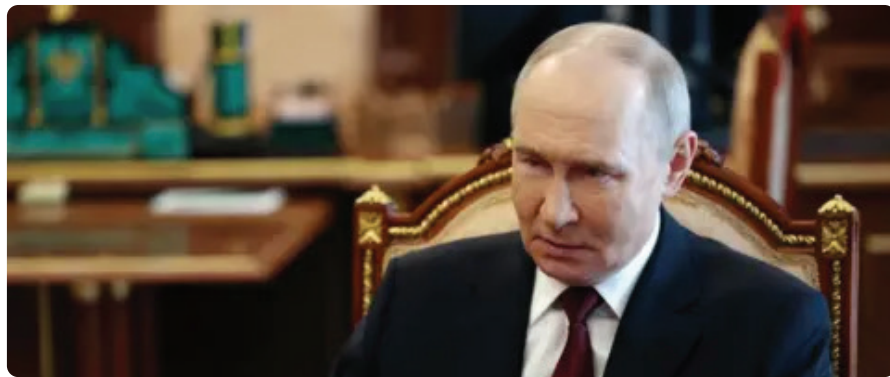
er. Residents evacuated to a nearby parking lot, and no one is believed to have been trapped in the building,

according to the report. Police and fire officials are currently investigating the cause of the fire.

# Russian President Vladimir Putin declares Easter truce in Ukraine

UNI

Moscow, Apr 19 (UNI) Russian President Vladimir Putin has declared an Easter truce in Ukraine, the Kremlin press service said on Saturday. The break in fighting is scheduled to last from Saturday evening until Monday morning local time. "During a meeting in the Kremlin, the commander-in-chief heard a report by Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff of the Russian armed forces, on the situation on the line of contact and said that the Russian side stops all hostilities from 1800 [1500 GMT] on April 19 to 0000 on April 21," the Kremlin's official Telegram channel said. Putin was quoted as saying that while Russia "assumed" that Ukraine would follow suit, he



warned that Russian troops should be ready to repel possible "provocations by the enemy". According to the statement on Telegram, Putin said the truce would show how sincere Kyiv was in its willingness to "participate in the process of peace talks aimed at eliminating the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called the ceasefire "another attempt by Putin to play with human lives". He wrote on X that "air raid alerts are spreading across Ukraine", and "Shahed drones in our skies reveal Putin's true attitude toward Easter and toward human life". Putin's announcement of truce came

after US President Donald Trump on Friday said negotiations between Ukraine and Russia are "coming to a head" and insisted that neither side is "playing" him in his push to end the three-year war. Last month, Ukraine endorsed a 30-day ceasefire deal proposed by the US, but Moscow rejected the plan. The Russian Defense

Ministry said it had instructed all group commanders in Ukraine on the ceasefire. It said in a statement that Moscow's troops would adhere to the truce provided it is "mutually respected" by Ukraine. The announcement comes as Russia's Defense Ministry said Saturday its forces have taken control of the village of Oleshnya, in the Kursk region on the border with Ukraine. According to Russian state news agency Tass, Russia is still fighting to push Ukrainian forces out of the village of Gornal, some 11 km south of Oleshnya. "The Russian military has yet to push the Ukrainian armed forces out of Gornal ... in order to completely liberate the Kursk region. Fierce fighting is underway in the settlement," the agency reported, citing Russia security agencies.

## BUSINESS

# Actress Parvathy Nair launches CoBeing-Skin Glow Collagen

UNI

Chennai, Apr 19 (UNI) The Co Being, a leading player in health and wellness space, on Saturday launched its flagship project Skin Glow Collagen featuring popular film actress Meena. The product was launched by actress Parvathy Nair at a vibrant gathering in the presence of Rubeena Afroz, renowned Fashion Designer, Dr Nikita Suresh, PhD Nutritionist, and Dr Roopa, Clinical and Aesthetic Dermatologist. It brought together wellness experts, beauty enthusiasts, and lifestyle influencers for an afternoon celebrating the power of Collagen and holistic wellness.



A key highlight of the event was the unveiling of the Co Being's one-of-a-kind Collagen Ad campaign featuring actress Meena. The fresh, quirky film offered a fun and relatable take on the importance of collagen and

how it helps build lasting glow, radiance, and confidence—at any age, according to a press release. "With this campaign, we wanted to educate people about collagen in a way that's both entertaining and em-

powering," Mr Mani, Managing Director of Indus Life Sciences, Chennai, the parent company of The Co Being, said. "Meena's timeless appeal and authenticity made her the perfect fit to bring that message to

life", he said. The event showcased Skin Glow Collagen, a next-generation beauty-from-within supplement powered by clinically proven Japanese Wellnex marine collagen peptides, hydrolyzed for fast and effective absorption. Enriched with Glutathione, Resveratrol, Hyaluronic Acid, and essential skin vitamins, the formula is designed to support skin elasticity, hydration, and overall wellness. Available in tropical flavors like Pina Colada and Mango Peach, Skin Glow Collagen is crafted for both efficacy and enjoyment, free from fishy aftertaste or gut discomfort.

# Singareni is preparing to undertake more mines in other states and countries : CMD

UNI

Hyderabad, Apr 19 (UNI) Inspired with the successful inauguration of the Naini coal mine in Odisha, Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) Chairman and Managing Director N. Balaram on Saturday said that the company is preparing to undertake more mines and other mineral productions in various other states and countries. The opening of the Naini coal mine has instilled confidence and assurance among everyone that Singareni can expand anywhere. Balaram said at a function held at Singareni Bhavan here on the occasion of the recent inauguration of the Naini coal block, marking Singareni's first step in expanding to other states. The CMD stated that the achievement of the Naini coal block was made possible through the special initiative of Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with the support of the Union Coal Minister Kishan Reddy, the Odisha Chief Minister, the local MLA, and officials from various departments. He extended his congratulations to the many former Singareni officials who contributed their efforts over the long nine-year period to achieve this Naini Coal block.



Balaram also stated that Singareni Company will no longer be solely a coal production company but will also grow as a producer of other minerals, expanding not only in thermal power but also in the renewable energy sector. On the occasion, Janak Prasad, Secretary General of the Representative Workers' Union and Chairman of the State Minimum Wages Committee, along with Rajkumar, General Secretary of the Recognized Workers' Union, praised the commendable special efforts of CMD, ac-

knowledging the proactive support of the state government in achieving these milestones, and honoured him with a grand tribute. In the video meeting held on this occasion, all area general managers, union leaders of officials, leaders of recognition and representative associations, and representatives of C.M.O.A.I. praised Singareni for achieving the Naini coal mine, calling it a historic milestone and acknowledging the significant efforts of the Chairman.

# Hyderabad: MSN Realty launches first luxury residential project 'One by MSN'

UNI

Hyderabad, Apr 19 (UNI) MSN Realty, the real estate arm of the MSN Group, which entered into the real estate sector in August last year, launched its first luxury residential project, 'One by MSN', at Neopolis, Kokapet on the outskirts of the city. The project will be spread over in 7.7 acres and comprises five towers with 655

residences, ranging from 5,250 to 7,460 square feet, across 55 floors, MSN Group Founder, Chairman and Managing Director Dr MSN Reddy told reporters on the sidelines of the launch here on Friday evening. He said more than Rs 2,750 crores are being invested in this maiden project to be completed by next five years. Reddy said the unit price starts from Rs 7 crores up to Rs 12 crores and added

that our vision is to develop over 20 million sq.ft across Hyderabad in the next five years. Backed by the financial strength and credibility of the MSN Group, the 4 million sq. ft. project reflects a long-term commitment to reshaping urban living through integrated, high-value developments that blend thoughtful design with modern infrastructure, he said. "We are also planning to develop another residen-

tial project in 7 acres area om Hyderabad, comprising three towers, ranging from above 2,000 square feet and this project would start in next one and half year", he said the investments in this project also would be similar to the luxury residential project launched today. To a question, he said the company has comfortable land banks in Manchirevula, Tellapur, Patancheru and Isnapur and we also have plans to develop

commercial spaces. With views of Osman Sagar Lake, the project includes features such as private lobbies, dual access, and layouts designed for seamless indoor-outdoor transitions, the MSN Group CMD said, adding that the development includes 1.8 lakh sq. ft. of amenities, spanning the clubhouse, podium, and a Skypark. In addition to community spaces, the project integrates sports infrastructure, he informed.



# HEALTH

## At which ages might interventions for cognitive decline be the most effective?

Corrie Pelc

As we grow older, every organ in our body — including the brain — ages along with us.

The brain undergoes some changes as it ages, including shrinkage and loss of some neuronsTrusted Source, which can lead to symptoms of age-related cognitive declineTrusted Source, such as memory loss, slower thinking, and trouble learning new things.

Researchers are constantly looking for new interventions to help slow down the progression of age-related cognitive decline, including medications, cognitive stimulation, and lifestyle changes like dietTrusted Source and exercise.

Now, a new study recently published in the journal PNAS has found that because of the way the brain gets older, there are certain ages where cognitive decline interventions might be most effective.

Focusing on brain networks

For this study, researchers analyzed neuroimaging data of more than 19,000 people from four datasets, including the U.K. Biobank and Mayo Clinic Study of Aging.

Using that data, scientists investigated how the different brain regionsTrusted Source, or brain networks, communicated at different ages.

“Brain networks are groups of brain regions that communicate with each other to perform specific functions,” Lillianne R. Mujica-Parodi, PhD, Baszucki Endowed Chair of Metabolic Neuroscience, professor of biomedical engineering, and director of the Laboratory for Computational Neurodiagnostics (LCNeuro) at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and lead author of this study told Medical News Today.

“These networks can be observed using fMRI (functional MRI), which measures blood flow in the brain, and EEG (electroencephalogram), which measures neurons’ activity,” she said.

How aging affects the brain

“When these [brain] networks ‘destabilize,’ they become less consistent in their communication patterns over time. Instead of maintaining steady connections, they switch between different configurations, defaulting from ones that are more energy-consuming to those that require less energy to maintain. This switching behavior may reflect a compensatory strategy by the brain to conserve energy when resources are limited, but also has functional consequences for cognition.”

— Lillianne R. Mujica-Parodi, PhD

Effects of degrading brain networks first seen around age 40

At the study’s conclusion, researchers found that brain networks degrade in a non-linear way with clear transition points.



For example, they found the effects of the degrading of brain networks is first seen around age 44, with the degeneration hitting peak acceleration around age 67, and then plateauing by age 90.

“In general, physiological systems are tasked with maintaining homeostasis: in this case, a balance between the cell’s energy demands and their energy supply,” Mujica-Parodi explained. “When physiological systems lose the ability to maintain that balance (i.e., they become ‘dysregulated’), it puts stress on the system. That stress itself further disrupts the balance, which is why chronic diseases often are degenerative — they become worse and worse over time.”

“After a point, the system is so disrupted, with so many secondary and tertiary effects, that fixing the original problem no longer helps,” she continued.

A critical age window

“Our study suggests that, while diminished access to energy is the driving mechanism, seen in the 40’s, eventually, the degenerative effects compound, thereby accelerating a process in the 60’s that sets the trajectory for a path that is harder to reverse. By analogy, we can think of the brain’s neurons like a bustling city. Each building needs a steady supply of electricity to function properly. When the power grid experiences a brief outage, the town goes dark, but once power is restored, everything returns to normal with no lasting damage.”

— Lillianne R. Mujica-Parodi, PhD

“However, imagine that same city experiencing a prolonged, severe power outage lasting months. Initially, emergency generators keep essential services run-

ning, but eventually, those backups fail,” Mujica-Parodi added.

“Water systems stop working, causing pipes to freeze and burst. Buildings deteriorate without climate control, and infrastructure begins to crumble. By the time power is finally restored, significant structural damage has occurred that simply turning the electricity back on cannot fix. Thus, the significance of our finding is that it’s easier to cure a problem while it’s still small,” she explained.

Aging and insulin resistance in the brain

During this study, Mujica-Parodi and her team also discovered that the primary driver of aging brain networks is neuronal insulin resistance, led by an Alzheimer’s risk factor protein called APOE and the insulin-dependent glucose transporter GLUT4Trusted Source.

However, researchers did find that a neuronal ketoneTrusted Source transporter called MCT2 might provide protection against these drivers of brain network aging.

“Neurons can use two types of fuel for energy: glucose (sugar) and ketones (derived from fatty acids). Most neurons in the brain primarily use GLUT3 (not GLUT4) transporters to take up glucose. GLUT4, which is the insulin-responsive glucose transporter found abundantly in muscle and fat tissue, is present in only specific regions of the brain,” Mujica-Parodi detailed.

“This limited distribution of GLUT4 in the brain is significant because it means most brain energy metabolism was traditionally thought to be insulin-independent. However, the neuroscience field is gradually

discovering that insulin signaling in the brain is more important than previously believed,” she continued.

Linking ketones and brain aging

“When neurons become insulin-resistant, they lose the ability to access glucose as fuel, but not ketones. This means that ketones can function as a ‘back door’ to feeding neurons whose access to glucose would otherwise be blocked by insulin resistance. MCT2 is the primary transporter that enables ketones to enter neurons in the brain. This distribution allows neurons to efficiently uptake ketones when glucose availability is limited, such as during fasting or on a ketogenic diet. Therefore, the presence of MCT2 is essential for the brain’s ability to utilize ketones as an alternative fuel source, which explains why it might be protective as the brain ages.”

— Lillianne R. Mujica-Parodi, PhD

Can the keto diet protect against age-related cognitive decline?

Based on this study’s findings, we asked two experts whether or not following a keto diet might help protect the brain as it ages.

Verna Porter, MD, a board certified neurologist and director of the Dementia, Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurocognitive Disorders at Pacific Neuroscience Institute at Providence Saint John’s Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, told MNT she found the identification of neuronal insulin resistance and the role of metabolic interventions to be very interesting, particularly the potential of ketones, since this may offer a promising direction in the prevention of cognitive decline.

“Based on the findings of the study, the concept of using ketones as an alternative brain fuel is intriguing,” Porter continued. “Ketosis may indeed help protect against cognitive decline by providing neurons with energy when glucose metabolism is impaired.

“[M]ore research is needed to confirm whether a ketogenic diet can consistently be maintained and offer long-term protection, particularly in individuals at risk for Alzheimer’s, and whether it can be effectively incorporated into a broader treatment regimen.”

— Verna Porter, MD

MNT also asked Gary Small, MD, chair of psychiatry at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey for his thoughts on this topic.

“This research not only confirms the importance of early intervention in preventing cognitive decline, but it also elucidates a mechanism for what’s triggering the decline and the therapeutic timing for effective intervention,” Small explained.

“The findings do support the hypothesis that a keto diet during mid-life may be an effective strategy for preventing cognitive decline in late life,” he said.

“A clinical trial of a keto diet that increases insulin resistance in the brain in middle-aged volunteers could lead to a whole new intervention strategy for preventing late-life cognitive decline,” he added.

Courtesy: Medicalnewstoday

## Could an imbalance in gut bacteria predict MS severity?

Corrie Pelc

Around 2.9 million people globally live with multiple sclerosis (MS), a chronic neurological disorder where the body’s immune system attacks the central nervous system.

People with MS can experience different levels of disease severity. MS symptoms can also flare up, worsen, or expand over time, a phenomenon known as MS exacerbations.

There are a number of risk factors for MS, including nonmodifiable factors such as genetics, and modifiable factors like smoking, vitamin D deficiency, diet, and gut health. The latter includes having an imbalanced gut microbiome.

Ashutosh K. Mangalam, PhD, an associate professor of pathology at the Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa, and clinician scientist at Iowa City VA health Care System, explained for Medical News Today that:

“There are several environmental factors that could contribute to MS, including viral infections, sunlight exposure (and vitamin D), and the bacteria in our gut, which [have] gained a lot of attention in recent years. Studies from our group, as well as others, have shown that the bacteria found in people with MS differ from those in healthy individuals. However, the exact composition of these bacteria varies across different studies, indicating that more research is needed to understand how changes in gut bacteria might influence the disease.”

Mangalam is the lead author of a new study recently published in the journal PNAS, which found that the ratio of two types of bacteria in the gut microbiome may be able to predict disease severity in people with MS.

Gut imbalance may play key role in MS

During the first portion of this study, researchers analyzed the gut microbiomes of 45 people with MS.

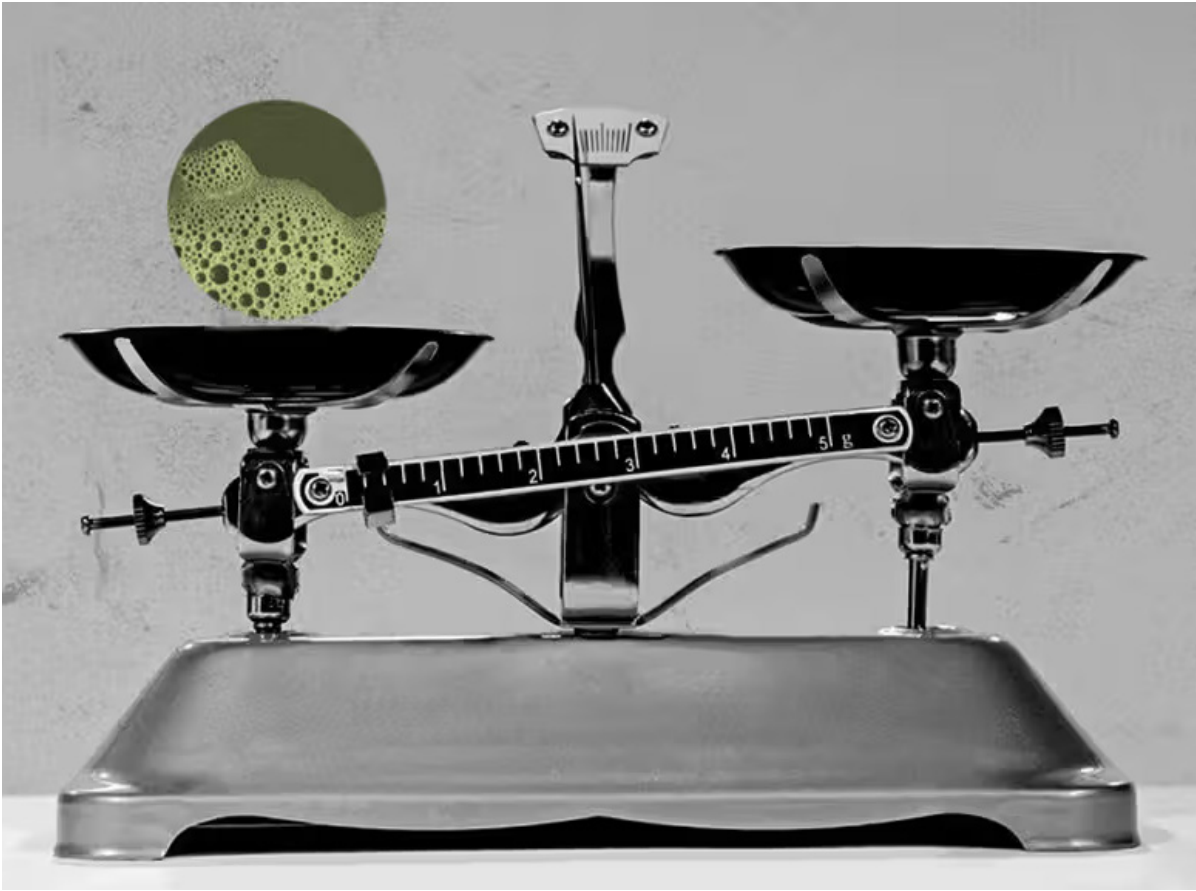
Scientists discovered that a type of bacterium called Blautia was more commonly found in study participants with MS. Previous research shows that Blautia helps to maintain gut healthTrusted Source and lower inflammation.

They also found that participants with MS had lower levels of the bacterial species Prevotella. Past studies have linked an imbalanceTrusted Source of Prevotella in the gut microbiome with certain diseases.

“The finding that Blautia is more common in multiple sclerosis (MS) patients, while Prevotella is found in lower amounts, is significant because it suggests that specific bacterial populations may be linked to the disease,” Mangalam explained.

“In our study of MS patients from the Midwest region of the U.S., we observed an enrichment of Blautia genera. This is interesting because Blautia genera was previously classified under the genus Ruminococcus, and one of its members, R. gnavus, has been associated with various inflammatory diseases like lupus,” he added.

“On the other hand, the reduction of Prevotella in MS patients might indicate a loss of beneficial bacteria



that help maintain a healthy gut microbiome, further supporting the idea that dysbiosis — an imbalance in the microbiome — could play a role in MS.”

— Ashutosh K. Mangalam, PhD

“Overall, these findings suggest that the gut microbiome plays an important role in MS, with the enrichment of Blautia potentially contributing to the inflammatory processes associated with the disease, while Prevotella may offer protective benefits. Further research is needed to confirm these associations and to understand the mechanisms behind this imbalance in the microbiome,” said Mangalam.

Ratio of 2 bacteria may help predict MS severity

Mangalam and his team then took their research one step further by using a mouse model where mice received either Blautia, Prevotella or, in the case of the control group, a bacterium called PhocaeicolaTrusted Source.

Researchers observed that mice given Blautia developed more gut inflammation and worse MS-like symptoms than those that received the other types of bacteria.

Additionally, the scientists found that the Blautia

mice had low levels of the bacterium Bifidobacterium and high levels of Akkermansia before their MS symptoms appeared.

Researchers believe this suggests that an imbalance between these two types of bacteria might help predict the severity of MS.

“The finding that mice given Blautia had low levels of Bifidobacterium and high levels of Akkermansia, which we also observed in MS patients, is significant because it provides further insight into how the gut microbiome may contribute to MS and inflammation,” Mangalam told us.

“Both Blautia and Akkermansia share the ability to feed on gut lining (mucin) as a food source, but they target different parts of the mucin sugar chain,” he explained. “Blautia creates a pro-inflammatory environment by consuming one part of the mucin, leaving other parts of the mucin exposed, which can then be utilized by Akkermansia. This results in the expansion of Akkermansia and may contribute to inflammation in the gut and potentially in the brain, as seen in MS.”

“In contrast, our data also indicate that Bifidobacterium thrives in a healthy, noninflammatory environ-

ment,” continued Mangalam.

“In mice with MS-like disease, Bifidobacterium levels were reduced, suggesting that it may not survive well in an inflammatory environment. Interestingly, we found that the increase in Akkermansia levels in these mice was associated with disease. This led us to hypothesize that the ratio of Bifidobacterium to Akkermansia could serve as a potential marker for MS and its severity.”

— Ashutosh K. Mangalam, PhD

Could taking probiotics help slow MS progression?

Based on this study’s findings, MNT asked Mangalam if taking probiotics and/or consuming probiotic yogurt or kefir — containing Bifidobacterium — could possibly help manage MS symptoms, or help slow down disease progression.

“While probiotics, including those containing Bifidobacterium, are often associated with gut health, we should be cautious in assuming they can help manage MS symptoms or slow disease progression,” he told us.

“At this point, we have not directly tested whether colonizing mice with Bifidobacterium reduces disease severity or alters disease progression. However, we have tested Prevotella, which appeared to ameliorate disease in our studies,” Mangalam said.

He further noted that: “It’s important to remember that autoimmune diseases like MS are akin to a civil war — where the environment within the body is not necessarily conducive to the survival of beneficial bacteria. So, even if Bifidobacterium is introduced, will it survive and exert beneficial effects in such a harsh environment? That remains an open question.”

“Rather than focusing solely on probiotics, I would recommend incorporating a healthy, plant-based diet into daily meals, as diet plays a crucial role in shaping the gut microbiome,” Mangalam advised. “I recognize that maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be particularly challenging for MS patients, but even small dietary changes — such as increasing the intake of fiber-rich fruits and vegetables — may support a more balanced microbiome.”

“Combining such a diet with probiotics might provide benefits, but at this point, we do not have direct evidence to support that claim,” he cautioned.

More human studies needed to confirm findings

MNT also had the opportunity to speak with Barbara Giesser, MD, a board-certified neurologist and MS specialist at Pacific Neuroscience Institute at Providence Saint John’s Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, about this study.

“This study expands previous work highlighting the importance of the gut microbiome in persons with MS,” Giesser, who was not involved in the research, said. “This study suggests that the kind of bacteria and ratios of different bacteria to one another in the gut may serve as markers of disease severity.”

“Most of this work was done in the animal model and larger and longitudinal studies need to be done on humans,” she continued. “The gut microbiome is very responsive to external factors such as diet and exercise. Further work in this area may lead to more recommendations for lifestyle choices in persons with MS.”



# Deepika Padukone, Amitabh Bachchan announce re-release of Piku, pay tribute to Irrfan Khan

ANI

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], April 19 (ANI): Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone's Piku joins the list of movies which are set to re-release in theatres. While announcing the re-release, the actress's touching tribute to late actor Irrfan Khan warmed the hearts of the fans. Taking to her Instagram handle, Deepika shared a video which featured legendary Amitabh Bachchan sharing his experience of the film. The clip also included emotional and funny scenes from the film. The movie is set to release on May 9, 2025. Apart from this, the 'Jawan' actress also paid a heart-touching tribute to late actor Irrfan while remembering him in the post. The actor played the role of Rana Chaudhary in the film. Many fans of Khan's on-screen work anticipate a range of emotions in the re-release.



The film was directed by Shoojit Sircar. While sharing her love for the film, she wrote, "A film that will always have my heart - PIKU is

back in theatres on 9th May, 2025 to celebrate its 10th Anniversary! Irrfan, we miss you! And think about you every so often..." Piku, a comedy-drama,

is widely regarded as one of the best Bollywood films in its genre. The critics appreciate the film for its unique storyline and the stellar performances of its lead cast. Deepika played the titular character in the film. She was a very realistic character, who, with a frowning forehead, dealt with her father Amitabh Bachchan's childlike behaviour. Irrfan played Rana Chaudhary, a pragmatic taxi company owner who finds himself entangled in the eccentricities of the titular character's family dynamics. Khan's effortless charm and subtle humour complement the film's slice-of-life narrative, making his performance a standout. Shoojit Sircar's 'Piku' was released in 2015. The film received positive reviews from both critics and the audience. Deepika won her second Filmfare Award for Best Actress category for her role in the movie. (ANI)

# Preity Zinta calls out “fake” quote about Rishabh Pant’s performance

ANI



Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], April 19 (ANI): Bollywood actor and Punjab Kings' co-owner Preity Zinta on Saturday shut down the reports that claimed that her IPL franchise chose Shreyas Iyer over Rishabh Pant due to performance-based preferences. An X user recently alleged that Zinta and the PBKS management had picked Iyer over Pant, on terms of a "big performer, not a big name." "Rishabh Pant had said in an interview that I could go anywhere but not to Punjab Kings. But now Punjab owner Preity Zinta exposed Rishabh Pant and said, WE HAD BOTH RISHABH PANT AND SHREYAS IYER- OPTIONS WE COULD HAVE TAKEN IN THE TEAM. BUT WE WANTED A BIG PERFORMER,

NOT A BIG NAME...SO WE TOOK SHREYAS IYER IN THE TEAM," the user wrote. This particular post caught Zinta's attention. And in no time, she responded to the claims and said that the quote has no truth to it. "I'm so sorry, but this is FAKE NEWS" she wrote. Shreyas Iyer was initially the most expensive IPL player in history, bought by PBKS for Rs 26.75 crores after a title-winning campaign

with Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) as a captain. He outdid Australian pacer Mitchell Starc, who was picked by KKR during the auction for 2024 edition of the tournament at Rs 24.75 crores. However, just minutes later, Pant managed to attract a bid from LSG which outdid that of Iyer and the left-handed wicketkeeper-batter went from Delhi Capitals (DC) to LSG for a record-breaking Rs 27 crore. (ANI)

# Malayalam actor Shine Tom Chacko arrested for alleged drug use, taken for medical test

ANI

Kochi (Kerala) [India], April 19 (ANI): Malayalam actor Shine Tom Chacko was arrested on Saturday and later taken to the General Hospital by Kochi City North Police officials for a medical test in connection with alleged drug use, Kerala police officials said in an official statement. As per the statement, the Malayalam actor appeared before the police in connection with an incident where he ran away from a hotel room in Kochi during a raid. Earlier, the police had stated that Shine would appear at 10:30 am. However, he reached the Ernakulam North Police Station with his lawyers at 10 am, half an hour earlier than expected. Shine appeared in response to a notice issued by the police, which asked him to explain the reason behind his attempt to flee from the hotel room. On April 17, BJP leader Nivedita Subramanian slammed the Kerala government for its silence on the rising number of abuse cases against women in the state's film industry. This follows Malayalam actress Vincy Alosious filing a complaint against Shine Tom Chacko, accusing him of inappropriate behaviour and substance abuse on set. Subramanian slammed the Kerala government for "remaining silent" on the growing cases of abuse against women. While speaking to ANI, Subramanian said, "In Kerala, abuse of women and children is on the rise, especially in sectors like the film industry. There have been many issues, such as the casting couch, but the ruling party is actually silent on these matters and is blind to the atrocities happening to women." Subramanian went on to say that similar complaints had been raised in the past, but the government continues to ignore them. "We have raised this issue many times before the ruling party and the leaders of the state, but the government is actually doing nothing to address it and is facilitating such mafias," she added. Alosious recently filed a formal complaint against Shine Tom Chacko with the Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce and the film industry's internal complaints committee. Known for her roles in Rekha, Vikruthi, and Jana Gana Mana, Vincy shared her discomfort in an Insta-



gram video, saying the actor's behaviour-especially on the sets of Suthravakyam-was inappropriate and unprofessional. In the video, Vincy said, "Some days ago, at an anti-drug campaign, I made a statement that I would not work with people I know who use drugs. After that, several comments were made questioning my statement, and I felt the need to clarify why I had made it. I am doing this video to make my stand clear." She went on to describe specific incidents that made her feel uncomfortable during the shoot. She alleged that the actor, who was the lead artist in the film, misbehaved with her and a fellow colleague while under the influence of drugs. One such incident, she said, involved the actor offering to accompany her to fix a wardrobe malfunction in front of the entire crew. Vincy said she found the offer inappropriate and difficult to accept. She also described another unsettling moment where the actor was allegedly seen using a white powder during a rehearsal. "He was spitting some kind of white powder onto the table, which was very evident that he was using drugs on set," Vincy said. She added that although she felt uncomfortable, she continued working on the film because the actor played a major role in it. Vincy further claimed that the production team was aware of the issue. While the director addressed the matter, the shooting went on as planned due to the actor's importance in the film. The Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce, one of the leading bodies in the state's film industry, is now reviewing the complaint filed by Vincy. (ANI)

# Indian opener Abhishek Sharma mourns the demise of his pet Leo

ANI

New Delhi [India], April 19 (ANI): India and Sunrisers Hyderabad opener Abhishek Sharma who recently lost his pet dog 'Leo' on Saturday took to Instagram and penned an emotional note in beloved memory of his animal companion. "Thank you for each and every memory I have with you LEO you'll be missed always Love you and RIP," Abhishek posted. He also shared a couple of pictures with his dog. [https://www.instagram.com/p/DIn-35Dx-o2R/?hl=en&img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/DIn-35Dx-o2R/?hl=en&img_index=1) \Abhishek's sister Komal also expressed her grief over the demise of Leo. "2019 - 2025 LEO, you were the most beautiful soul to ever walk into my



life. The best dog in the entire world. I don't know how my days are going to be without you now. But I just want to thank you-for being there for me through every high and low, for being my constant, my comfort, my companion. You were my little baby, and

you'll always be. I'll miss you every single minute-from eating food together to our endless Geddis, from our peaceful late-night walks to those early morning strolls. You were my nariyal paani partner, my car ride buddy, my sleeping buddy, my saviour, my soulmate... my everything," she wrote. Meanwhile, on the work front, Abhishek lit up the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 with a jaw-dropping knock of 141 off just 55 balls against Punjab Kings (PBKS) in Hyderabad, drawing praise from cricketing legends. The left-hander's innings, decorated with 14 boundaries and 10 sixes, came at a staggering strike rate of 256.36 and will go down as one of the most explosive knocks in IPL history. (ANI)

# Actress Kayadu Lohar visit Tirumala Temple to offer prayers

ANI

Tirumala (Andhra Pradesh) [India], April 19 (ANI): Actress Kayadu Lohar visited Tirumala in Andhra Pradesh to offer prayers at Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple. The temple, dedicated to Lord Venkateswara, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, is one of the most visited religious sites in India, attracting millions of devotees annually. She looked stunning in her traditional red attire as she visited the temple. Kayadu Lohar is a model and actress who works in Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu films. She made her acting debut with the 2021



Kannada film Mugilpete. She is best known for her role in the 2025 Tamil language film 'Dragon'. Her first Malayalam film, 'Pathonpatham Nootandu', was released in Septem-

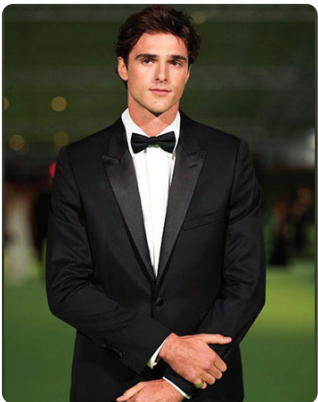
ber 2022. Alluri, her first Telugu film, was released on September 23, 2022. I Prem U, her first Marathi film, was released in March 2023, and Dragon, her first Tamil film, was released on February 21, 2025. She will be seen in 'Idhayam Murali', a Tamil coming-of-age romantic drama film directed and produced by Aakash Baskaran. The film stars Atharvaa in the titular role, and Kayadu Lohar in lead roles, alongside Preity Mukhundhan, Natty Subramaniam, Niharika NM, Thaman S, Rakshan, Pragya Nagra and Sudhakar. It is Aakash's first film as a director and also marks Thaman's return to acting after a 22-year hiatus. (ANI)

# Jacob Elordi says he was “going to take a break” before Wuthering Heights’ director texted him

ANI

Washington [US], April 19 (ANI): Actor Jacob Elordi talked about his project 'Wuthering Heights' and shared that he was planning to take a break until he got a text from the director. Shooting for Wuthering Heights recently wrapped in the UK, and it's Elordi's second time working with director Emerald Fennell. So, when it came to casting for the project, the actor was

able to skip the audition, as per The Hollywood Reporter. "I was really lucky. I was going to take a break for a while, and then Emerald just very simply texted me, and you can't run from that text," Elordi said. The film stars Margot Robbie opposite Elordi, and is an adaptation of Emily Bronte's novel of the same name, which follows the tumultuous relationship between Catherine Earnshaw (Robbie) and Heathcliff (Elordi) that's passionate and intense



after meeting at the eponymous residence and the impact the relationship has on their families, as per the outlet. The actor shared his working experience with Margot. "She's incredible in the film, she's a livewire. I'm so, so excited for people to see it," he said. "She's a beautiful actor and she gave so, so much." Elordi has built up quite the filmography as of late, starring in Sofia Coppola's "Priscilla," Emerald Fennell's "Saltburn," Paul Schrader's

"Oh, Canada", and the forthcoming "On Swift Horses." He will next be seen in Guillermo del Toro's "Frankenstein" as the Monster in November, before "Wuthering Heights", which he leads alongside Margot Robbie, is set to debut in 2026. Wuthering Heights is set to be released by Warner Bros. in February of next year. Robbie's production company, LuckyChap Entertainment, is producing, as per The Hollywood Reporter. (ANI)



ANI

Washington [US], April 19 (ANI): After her directorial debut on 'Blink Twice', Zoe Kravitz seemed to have found another project. She is in talks to direct 'How to Save a Marriage' for Sony Pictures. Ross Evans penned the script, and Robert Pattinson is producing with partner Brighton McCloskey via their Ickl Eneo Arlo banner along with Geoff Shaevitz and Evan Silverberg via Entertainment 360, reported Deadline. However, the plot details are kept under wraps, as per the studio source, the project is still under development. Evans will also exec produce. As of now, Pattinson, who starred with Kravitz in 2022's The Batman, is only producing the pic. While plot details are unknown, sources say Marriage has edgy undertones similar to Blink Twice that made that film

work, and helped inform the execs' decision to tap Kravitz as director. While still busy on the acting front, she showcased her helming talent with the thriller, released in August 2024 and starring Naomi Ackie and Channing Tatum. The Amazon MGM Studios film earned strong reviews and put Kravitz on the map as a director, as per the outlet. "Blink Twice" follows cocktail waitress Frida (Ackie), who becomes infatuated with tech billionaire Slater King (Tatum) and joins him on a trip to his private island, where strange things begin to happen. Written by Kravitz and E.T. Feigenbaum, the movie also stars Alia Shawkat, Haley Joel Osment, Simon Rex, Geena Davis, Kyle MacLachlan, Christian Slater and Adria Arjona," as per the outlet. On the acting front, Kravitz can be seen next opposite Austin Butler in the Darren Aronofsky thriller Caught Stealing, reported Deadline. (ANI)





# IPL 2025:

## LSG clinch last-ball thriller against RR by 2 runs

UNI

Jaipur, Apr 19 (UNI) Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) edged out Rajasthan Royals (RR) by a slender margin of two runs in a nerve-wracking Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 encounter at the Saiwasi Stadium here on Saturday. Chasing 181 for victory, the RR fell just short, ending at 178/5 despite a valiant 74 from opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and a late push from Riyan Parag. Avesh Khan starred with the ball for Lucknow, claiming 3 crucial wickets, including that of Jaiswal, to halt the RR's charge in the death overs. Earlier, put in to bat, LSG posted a competitive 180/5, riding on a steady 66 by Aiden Markram and a brisk 50 from young Ayush Badoni. Abdul Samad provided the finishing fireworks with a blazing 30\* off just 10 balls, including four sixes. RR got off to a flier in response, with Jaiswal and debutant Vaibhav Suryavanshi (34) adding 85 for the opening wicket. However, wickets at regu-



lar intervals in the second half of the innings pegged them back. Avesh's double blow—dismissing Jaiswal and Hetmyer in quick succession—turned the match decisively in Lucknow's

favour. Wanindu Hasaranga (2/31) and Tushar Deshpande (1/26) were the pick of the bowlers for Rajasthan, while Jofra Archer and Sandeep Sharma struggled

with the ball. With this win, LSG strengthened their position on the points table, while the Royals suffered a setback in their playoff chase.

## Buttler's blitz helps GT hunt down 204 in style

UNI

Ahmedabad, Apr 19 (UNI) Jos Buttler and Sherfane Rutherford stitched together a dazzling 119-run stand as Gujarat Titans (GT) chased down Delhi Capitals' imposing 203/8 with seven wickets in hand and four balls to spare in a high-octane IPL clash at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Saturday. Chasing 204, GT lost skipper Shubman Gill early, run out for 7, thanks to Karun Nair's sharp direct hit. But that was as good as it got for Delhi. Sai Sudharsan and Buttler then counterattacked in style. Sudharsan unleashed a flurry of crisp boundaries, including consecutive fours off Mitchell Starc and Mukesh Kumar, even hoisting Axar Patel for a soaring six over fine leg. The pair brought up their 50-run stand in the sixth over. Sudharsan eventually fell for a fluent 36 (21 balls), caught off Kuldeep Yadav attempting a pull, but GT were already motoring at 74/2 in the 8th over. Buttler, meanwhile, shifted gears seamlessly. He tore into Starc in the 15th over, smashing five boundaries in a row, the last of which saw him grimacing in pain, possibly cramps, but unfazed in timing. Rutherford, on the other end,



provided powerful support. After hammering Kuldeep and Mohit Sharma for sixes, he clubbed a 91-metre monster over square leg. He eventually perished for 43 (34), caught by Starc off Mukesh Kumar, bringing an end to the game-defining 119-run partnership. With 11 needed off the final over, the ever-dependable Rahul Tewatia finished in vintage style. Starc's first delivery was walloped for a massive six over deep midwicket, and the next, an in-swinging yorker, was inside-edged past leg stump to the fine leg fence. A hug from Buttler and beaming smiles followed, as GT romped home with four balls to spare. Earlier, Delhi Capitals posted a competitive 203/8, powered by breezy knocks from Karun Nair (31 off 18), Axar Patel (39 off 32) and a blistering late cameo by Ashutosh Sharma (37 off 19). Abhishek Porel gave them a flying start, but it was Prasidh Krishna's timely

four-wicket haul that prevented DC from surging past 220. Gujarat's bowling was erratic at times, with Siraj and Rashid Khan struggling for control. Krishna, however, kept pulling Delhi back into the contest with wickets at crucial junctures, including Axar and Nair, while also surviving an injury scare after a fierce Ashutosh flick. But the night belonged to Buttler, who remained unbeaten on 97 off 54 balls, with 11 fours and 4 sixes, a masterclass in measured aggression. With this win, GT bolstered their playoff hopes, while DC were left rueing a wasted opportunity after posting 200-plus. Brief Scores: DC 203/8 in 20 overs (Axar Patel 39, Ashutosh Sharma 37; Prasidh Krishna 4/41) GT 204/3 in 19.2 overs (Buttler 97 no, Rutherford 43; Kuldeep 1/30) Gujarat Titans won by 7 wickets.

## Bibiano Fernandes names 35 probables for SAFF U19 Championship

UNI

New Delhi, Apr 19 (UNI) India U19 men's team head coach Bibiano Fernandes, on Saturday, announced 35 probables for the SAFF U19 Championship that will be held in Yulia, Arunachal Pradesh, from May 9 to 18. 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. The Golden Jubilee Stadium will host all matches of the tournament. The Blue Colts are currently camping at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru. India's 35 probables for the SAFF U19 Championship 2025: Goalkeepers: Aarush

Hari, Aheibam Suraj Singh, Alsabith Sulaiman Thekkaramel, Rohit. Defenders: Ashik Adhikari, Takhellambam Bungson Singh, Jodric Abranches, Malemngamba Singh Thokchom, Mohammed Kaif, Mukul Panwar, Nirbhay Singh, Pramveer, Sumit Sharma Brahmacharimayum, Thougamba Usham Singh, Vumlenlal Hangshing, Sohumi Utreja, Roshan Singh Thangjam, Karish Soram. Midfielders: Ahongshangbam Samson, Danny Meitei Laishram, Gurnaj Singh Grewal, Levis Zangminlun, Md Arbash, Ngamgouhou Mate, Ningthoukhongjam Rishi Singh, Chaphamayum Rohen Singh, Singamayum Shami, Yohaan Benjamin, Lalruatfela. Forwards: Bharat Lairenjam, Danyal Makakmayum, Omang Dodum, Prashan Jajo, Vishal Yadav, Hemneichung Lunkim.

## Nagaland off to a flier in Group H of Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's NFC

UNI

Narainpur (Chhattisgarh), Apr 19 (UNI) Nagaland beat Madhya Pradesh 4-2 on the opening day of Group H in the Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's National Football Championship at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Ground here on Saturday. Nagaland forward S Aienmomba gave his side an early lead in the 2nd minute. K Arap Konyak doubled Nagaland's lead with a header from inside the box in the 36th minute. Mohammad Yaseer and Rohit Yadav scored a goal each in the 41st and 43rd minutes, respectively, to bring Madhya Pradesh back on level terms before the end of the first half. It was only in the 89th minute that Nagaland retook the lead thanks to Aienmomba's penalty. Ghughe Chishi hammered the last nail in Madhya Pradesh's coffin as he scored a left-footed curler from inside the box in the 96th minute to end the



game. In the other match, Bengal and Haryana drew 2-2. Nagaland are placed at the top in Group H with three points, followed by Bengal and Haryana with one each, and Madhya Pradesh with none. Only the group winner will qualify for the quarter-finals. Anni scored first for Haryana in the 33rd minute with

a tap-in, off an assist from the captain Yaman Sheoran. Bengal's Santanu Naskar restored parity in the 50th minute before forward Irfan Sardar put them ahead in the 60th minute with a well-dribbled solo effort. Haryana defender Sanjay, in the 73rd minute, scored a header from a loose ball off a corner and secured a point for his side.

## Alcaraz to face Rune in final of Barcelona Open

UNI

Barcelona, Apr 19 (UNI) Top seed and home favorite Carlos Alcaraz will play Holger Rune in the final of the Barcelona Open on Sunday after beating seventh-seeded Arthur Fils of France 6-2, 6-4 on Saturday. Fils had taken Alcaraz to three sets in the quarterfinals of the recent Monte Carlo Open, including winning the opening set, but this time the Spaniard was in no mood for a repeat and began the match by dominating his French opponent and racing to win the first set 6-2. Alcaraz had to work harder in the second set but with the support of the fans in Barcelona, he closed out the match despite two double faults in the final game. "It was a complete performance from start to finish with no ups and downs in my performance. It was windy, but I knew what shots to take in every moment," Alcaraz told Spanish TV network RTVE afterward, expressing his satisfaction being able to play in Barcelona. "It is a privilege to be here, we travel all year, and it is very spe-



cial for a tennis player to be able to perform in front of their fans and get a lot of love when I come here," he said. Alcaraz will face Denmark's Holger Rune after the sixth seed advanced to the final earlier in the day with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Karen Khachanov, who is ranked 27th in the world. Rune found his form in the middle of the first set, winning seven consecutive games to go from 2-3 down to claim the first set and take a decisive 3-0 lead in the second against his Russian opponent.

## Former Croatia player Pokrivac dies in car crash

UNI

Zagreb (Croatia), Apr 19 (UNI) Former Croatia international Nikola Pokrivac has died in a car accident in his home country, the Croatian Football Federation has confirmed. The 39-year-old midfielder played for Dinamo Zagreb, AS Monaco and RB Salzburg over his career and won 15 international caps from 2008 to 2010. Pokrivac was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2015 which forced him to retire from professional football, the BBC reported. But he returned to amateur football in 2021 and joined lower league side NK Vojnic last summer. Local media said he was in a vehicle with three team-mates from NK Vojnic when they were involved in a four-vehicle collision in Karlovac in central



Croatia on Friday evening. It has been reported a 42-year-old person in another car was also killed, while the other occupants of Pokrivac's car were taken to hospital with serious injuries. "Nikola was a great football player, who lived football until his last moment in this world, and who showed great courage in life by overcoming a terrible disease," said Croatian Football Federation president Marijan Kustic. "This is a great loss for our football community, and especially painful for the family." Pokri-

vac played at Euro 2008, where Croatia reached the quarter-finals, and faced England twice in qualifying for the 2010 World Cup. "It is impossible to find words of comfort in such a shocking and unimaginably sad moment when we have lost a young life," added Kustic. "I can only express my deepest condolences to Nikola's family and loved ones for this irreparable loss, and the HNS [the national football association] and the Croatian football family will be with them in these most difficult moments."

## Afghanistan win Asia Qualifier to clinch U19 Men's Cricket World Cup berth

UNI

Kathmandu, Apr 19 (UNI) Afghanistan emerged victorious from a competitive Asia Qualifier on Saturday, landing top spot and becoming the latest nation to qualify for the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2026 in Zimbabwe and Namibia by virtue of superior net run rate, with the final round of fixtures in Kathmandu abandoned due to rain. Their campaign began with dominant eight-wicket wins against Oman and Hong Kong China, before a mammoth score of 359 for four helped them defeat the UAE by 180 runs (D/L) and put them into the driver's seat



heading into Saturday's winner-takes-all tie against Nepal. With the hosts also enjoying an unbeaten week, fans had hoped to witness a dramatic conclusion to the competition, however persistent rain meant no play was possible at the Lower Mulpani ground. As a result, Afghanistan's net run rate of

+4.82 was enough to secure top spot from Nepal (+3.58) and deliver their ninth appearance at an U19 Men's Cricket World Cup. The post-match celebrations, led by captain Mahboob Khan, also honoured top-scorer Khalid Ahmadzai - the wicketkeeper-batter taking home the Player of the Tournament

prize with 202 runs during the week which included a stellar 132 in the win over the UAE. Reacting to their qualification, Afghanistan skipper Mahboob said: "Qualifying for the World Cup is a dream come true. This is a proud moment for every Afghan. We played with heart, and today our hard work paid off. "This victory is for our nation, for every young boy who dreams of wearing the Afghanistan jersey. We are going to the World Cup and it is just the beginning. We will continue to work harder, stay humble, and fight for glory on the world stage. "In the end, I want to thank my teammates, coaches, and the entire support staff.