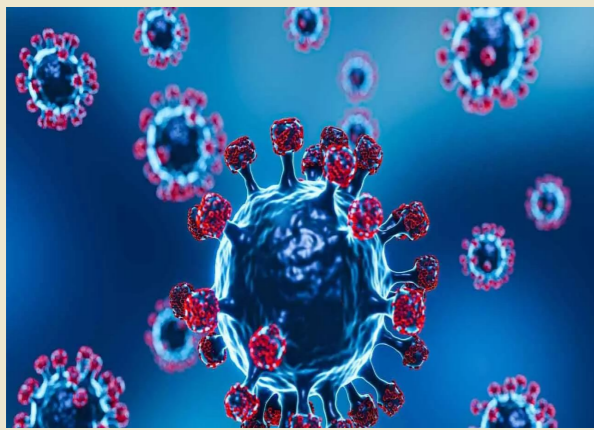




## India Detects Two More New Covid Variants Under WHO Monitoring Amid Rising Cases



India has identified two new Covid-19 variants, LF.7 and NB.1.8.1, as reported by the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (Insacog) on May 25, 2025. These variants, detected amid a slight uptick in cases across several cities, are currently classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as Variants Under Monitoring, not Variants of Concern or Interest. One case of NB.1.8.1 was found in Tamil Nadu in April, while four LF.7 cases were reported in Gujarat in May. The dominant variant in India remains JN.1, constituting 53% of tested samples, followed by BA.2 (26%) and other Omicron sublineages (20%). Although WHO considers NB.1.8.1 a low global health risk, its spike protein mutations (A435S, V445H, T478I) may enhance transmissibility and immune evasion. The variants are reportedly driving case surges in China and parts of Asia. As of May 19, India recorded 257 active Covid cases, with Kerala reporting 273 cases in May alone, followed by Delhi (23 new cases), Andhra Pradesh (4), Telangana (1), and Bengaluru, where a nine-month-old tested positive. Most cases are mild and managed at home. Maharashtra has seen 257 positive cases from 7,144 tests this year, with 93 new cases in the last two days, primarily in Mumbai (47), Pune (30), Navi Mumbai (7), Thane (3), and Nagpur (6). The state currently has 166 active cases. Recent Covid-related deaths include an 84-year-old with comorbidities in Bengaluru and a 21-year-old with diabetic ketoacidosis in Thane, Maharashtra. Maharashtra reported four deaths this year, all involving patients with severe coexisting conditions like cancer and nephrotic syndrome. A review meeting, led by the Director General of Health Services and involving experts from the National Centre for Disease Control and ICMR, assessed the situation. The Union Health Secretary also reviewed the national scenario on May 24, noting that cases are concentrated in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka. Health authorities continue to monitor the evolving situation closely.

## First-of-its-kind AI literacy drive for women

The programme goes beyond traditional learning by hosting in-depth discussions on critical issues such as AI-driven crimes, digital privacy, and practical safety strategies. Actively engaging students, educators, and women from the police force, Yashoda AI Abhiyan sets a new standard for community-driven digital education, ensuring that women are not only participants but leaders in shaping India's tech-savvy future. The launch of 'Yashoda AI—Your AI Sakhi' for shaping horizons with digital awareness to advance women's AI literacy across India, took place at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University, Bareilly. This initiative is a key step toward empowering women to contribute meaningfully to a Viksit Bharat driven by technology and inclusion. Led by the National Commission for Women (NCW), the Yashoda AI Abhiyan stands as India's pioneering nationwide effort to empower women—especially from rural and semi-urban communities—with essential skills in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital safety. More than just a training initiative, this campaign is designed to spark a transformation: it equips women with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the digital world with confidence, fostering digital literacy, safety, and



self-reliance. The program goes beyond traditional learning by hosting in-depth discussions on critical issues such as AI-driven crimes, digital privacy, and practical safety strategies. Actively engaging students, educators, and women from the police force, Yashoda AI Abhiyan sets a new standard for community-driven digital education, ensuring that women are not only participants but leaders in shaping India's tech-savvy future. Building on India's bold step toward AI leadership at the Global Summit on AI Governance in Paris, Yashoda AI reflects the nation's commitment to inclusive digital empowerment. It marks a decisive move towards Viksit Bharat, ensuring that women across India are not left behind in the AI-driven future. Aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of women-led development and a Viksit Bharat, the Yashoda AI Abhiyan is a decisive step

towards building an inclusive, technologically empowered India. At the Global Summit on AI Governance in Paris, Prime Minister Modi emphasized India's commitment to inclusive, responsible AI that builds trust and serves the most vulnerable. Yashoda AI embodies this vision by empowering women to lead in the digital age. In Viksit Bharat, technology must be a tool for inclusion, not exclusion. Speaking at the launch event, NCW Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar said, "True change begins when a woman masters the tools of the future. Yashoda AI Abhiyan is not just about learning technology it is about igniting confidence, enabling informed choices, and empowering every woman to shape a secure and inclusive digital tomorrow." She reiterated NCW's strong commitment to protecting women's rights in digital spaces, adding that this campaign is a natural extension of NCW's work in

the areas of cyber awareness, gender justice, and women-led safety innovations. The Commission has been a forerunner in running multiple digital safety campaigns, helplines, and policy dialogues addressing online abuse and tech-based discrimination. Yashoda AI is a sole initiative of the National Commission for Women (NCW) in collaboration with Future Shift Labs (FSL). Nitin Narang, Founder of FSL, highlighted the campaign's broader vision, saying, "This is not just about AI literacy, it is about inclusion, dignity, and digital empowerment for India's women—key pillars for building a Viksit Bharat." The launch event also featured remarks from the Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University, Sagar Vishnoi, Co-founder and Director of FSL, and Pranav Dwivedi, Convener Yashoda AI, who collectively emphasized the importance of digital empowerment and women's leadership in India's AI journey. Their messages were powerfully echoed by the presence of dignitaries from the National Commission for Women — Ramawtar Singh, Shivani Dey, and Santosh Kulkarni — whose support underscored the need for equity and representation of women in every step of India's technological journey.

## Varanasi residents listen to 'Mann Ki Baat', say PM Modi's thoughts inspire generations

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, addressing the 122nd episode of Mann Ki Baat - his monthly radio broadcast on Sunday, spoke on a multitude of issues, including Operation Sindoor. While PM Modi's monthly radio program engages and enthuses the public across the country, many from his Lok Sabha constituency praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government for various achievements, including Operation Sindoor, the cleaning up of Maoist-infested zones and more. Also Read - PM Modi to visit Gujarat on May 26-27, will launch projects worth over Rs 77,000 crore Varanasi residents described PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat as encouraging and inspiring. A couple of residents also spoke to IANS, sharing their experience of listening and watching the Mann Ki Baat. They said that PM Modi's thoughts and ideas infuse energy in all generations, encouraging



them to take steps and achieve more. Sandeep Singh, a Kashi resident, praised India's 'Operation Sindoor' under PM Modi's leadership. Councillor Shiddharth Sharma said that PM Modi always gives inspirational talks through Mann Ki Baat. "In today's episode, he mentioned Operation Sindoor and all of us countrymen are proud of our Prime Minister. Due to his strategy, our army successfully destroyed the terrorist hideouts. Along with this, 'Vocal for Local' was also mentioned. We all pledge to use

local products as much as possible," he said. Ganga Dhar Rai, another local, praised the government for the vast improvement and developmental works in Maoist-affected areas. PM Modi's message for 'Vocal for Local' and also the call for countrymen's participation in the self-reliant India dream also found a strong connect among them. Talking about people's resolve towards a self-reliant India, PM Modi pointed out, "Few parents said that now we will buy only toys made in India for our children. Patriotism will start from childhood. Some families have pledged that we will spend our next vacation in some beautiful place in the country." "Many youngsters have taken a pledge to 'Wed in India', they will get married in the country itself. Someone has also said that whatever gift they give now, it will be made by the hands of an Indian craftsman," the Prime Minister noted.

## Pawan Kalyan highlights India's Economic Milestone at NDA Meeting

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has proclaimed that India has ascended to the position of the fourth-largest economy globally, attributing this milestone to the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the progressive governance of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government since 2014. Kalyan noted that India's GDP has reached an impressive 4.18 trillion, as reported by NITI Aayog. He highlighted that this historic achievement can be credited to four key drivers of



growth during the last decade: Kalyan remarked that this development is a significant step towards India becoming the

third-largest economy in the world, moving towards the vision of Vikasit Bharat by 2047. He shared his thoughts on social media, emphasizing the importance of this achievement. Meanwhile, a meeting of NDA alliance partners convened today at the Ashoka Hotel in Delhi, chaired by Prime Minister Modi. This gathering marked the one-year anniversary of the NDA's third consecutive term in office. During the meeting, Modi engaged in discussions regarding a range of topics, including the government's accomplish-

ments over the past year, Operation Sindoor, and national security. Prominent figures such as JP Nadda, Amit Shah, and Rajnath Singh, along with Chief Ministers and Deputy Chief Ministers from NDA-ruled states, attended the meeting. Notably, Pawan Kalyan represented Andhra Pradesh, while CM Nara Chandrababu Naidu was unable to attend due to prior commitments. The meeting featured presentations from various state CMs showcasing best practices and policies implemented in NDA-governed regions.

## A group of Hyderabad dance artists for a trip to Japan



Hyderabad, May: 25, Metroodayam

The friendship between Hyderabad, Hicon and Japan has been a matter of six decades. Bharat Biotech Group Finance Officer Tadepalli Srinivas said. He was the chief guest of the event organized by the Navya Nataka Samiti and the Hyderabad Wize Men Club at a hotel in Narayanaguda on Sunday and unveiled the wall poster of the state treasury and counting department. G.Vasundhara, Hyderabad choreographers, Kalaratna Madhavi mala, Reni Sreejith and BS Mekha, spoke on a tour of Kuchipudi dance in the cities of Nagoya and Utsunomia from May 29 to 10 days. said that cultural alliance and friendships should be developed among the people of different countries. G.Vasundhara, a guest of honor, said that even Indian classical music dance style is unprecedented. Dance artists and artists from the twin cities congratulated the dance artists on a trip to Japan. Vemaraju Vijay Kumar, K. Chakrapani, Madhumati Kulkarni, RN Sudharani, BV Narayana Rao, H.Haranath Babu, Balajisarma and C. Krishnanarao participated.

## Ushashree Srikanth Goud, president of the Khairatabad Disturbed Congress Womens Committee



Hyderabad May:25 (Metro udayam)

Ushashree Srikanth Goud, president of the Khairatabad Disturbed Congress Womens Committee, today, has been appointed as the General Secretary of the Khairatabad District Congress Womens Committee, Purnima as Executive Secretary and Sujatha as Vice President. They were presented with appointment letters. The event was attended by Congress womens state president Sunita and senior leaders

## On the Occasion of Telangana Formation Day, Sisters Achieve Sixth Consecutive World Record in Karate!

Hyderabad, May:25, Metroodayam

Marking the Telangana Formation Day celebrations, two sisters have once again created history by achieving a unique world record in karate for the sixth consecutive time. This extraordinary feat was showcased at a special event organized by the GVR Karate Academy, Narayanaguda. The sisters, G.Amrutha Reddy, a degree student, and G. Gana Santhoshini Reddy, performed 121 self-defense techniques across 11 categories in just 9 minutes and 36 seconds, earning them a place in both the Wonder Book of Records and the Limca Book of Records. Its worth noting that the original target was to complete the challenge in 11 minutes, but the duo accomplished it in a significantly shorter time, proving their exceptional skill and dedication. These sisters have been setting a new record every alternate year since 2015 on the occasion of



Telangana Formation Day. Including this one in 2025, it marks their sixth world record, making this achievement all the more remarkable. During the event, Bingi Narender Goud, representative of the Wonder Book of Records, and Lions Vijayalakshmi, representative of the Limca Book of Records, officially recognized and presented certificates to the sisters. Distinguished guests who attended and con-

gratulated them included Himayatnagar Corporator Mahalaxmi Ramanna Goud, Kachiguda Corporator Kanney Uma Ramesh Yadav, Nallakunta Corporator Y.Amrutha, Somajiguda Corporator Sangeetha Yadav, Monda Market Corporator Potam Deepika, former Information Commissioner Dr. Krishnareddy, M.D. of Vivek

Subrahmanyam, and others. Dr. G.S.Gopal Reddy, Director of GVR Karate Academy, said, It is truly extraordinary that sisters from the same family have achieved world records six times in a row on the occasion of Telangana Formation Day. In honor of this remarkable success, students, parents, and instructors of the academy celebrated the moment with great enthusiasm and pride.

## 9th Anniversary Celebrations of the Vishwakarma Knowledge Center



Hyderabad, May: 25, Metroodayam

The 9th anniversary celebrations of the Vishwakarma Knowledge Center was held at Bagh Lingampally Sundarayya vignana Kendram. The event was organized under the auspices of the founding presidents of the Organization Vishwanadula Pushpagiri. Telangana state presi-

dents Akarapu Srinivasa Vishwakarma and General Secretary Soleti Prabhakar Chari coordinated the program. On this occasion, Gandadeepam - written by Vishwanadula Pushpagiri - Poetry book was conducted. Vishwakarma Yung Leader Awards were awarded. Gandhadeepam book is a famous poet. Ambati Surendra Raju unveiled.

Veteran journalist Ramesh Hazare analyzed Pushpagiri poetry. K.Kiran Kumar Achari - ACP Crime Branch Kondapi Ganesh Babu, Dr. KNR Foundation was guests. Ramesh Hazare said that all the people of our Telangana movement should be conscious and fighting for the rights to protect the rights.

## Congress Criticizes BJP Over Operation Sindoor Credit Claims; Alka Lamba's Slip Sparks Controversy

New Delhi: The Congress party has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of attempting to give undue credit for the success of Operation Sindoor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sidelining the role of India's defence forces. The party also demanded an apology from the Prime Minister and BJP president, alleging that senior party members have made repeated remarks that disrespect the military and families of martyrs. At a press conference in New Delhi, All India Mahila Congress president Alka Lamba showcased video clips of statements made by BJP leaders including Madhya Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Jagdish Devda, minister Vijay Shah, and MP Ram Chander Jangra. She claimed these comments undermined the sacrifices and valor of Indian soldiers. One of the videos featured BJP MP Ram Chander Jangra suggesting that the wives of civilians




killed in the Pahalgam terror attack lacked courage. According to Lamba, this statement reflects a dismissive attitude toward the victims and their families. Lamba also highlighted the online trolling faced by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, allegedly by BJP supporters, after he pre-

sented the government's official position on the issue. She added that Himanshi Narwal, the widow of martyr Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, was similarly abused online after she called for peace. While pointing out that legal proceedings are underway—some on the orders of the judiciary—Lamba questioned the BJP's moral position in defending such remarks made by its leaders. During her address, Lamba mistakenly referred to Operation Sindoor as Operation Blue Star—a historical reference to a 1984 military action. She later clarified that the slip was being used by BJP leaders to distract from the real issues she was raising. Responding to the incident, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla criticized the comment and accused Congress of attempting to undermine the armed forces. Lamba renewed her party's call for an all-party meeting chaired by the Prime

Minister and demanded a special Parliament session to discuss Operation Sindoor. She questioned the government's rationale for sending opposition MPs abroad to explain India's stance while avoiding a discussion in Parliament. She also referred to concerns from residents along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, who felt overlooked in the Prime Minister's recent addresses. In contrast, she noted, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi visited the region twice to express solidarity with victims of terrorism and cross-border shelling. Operation Sindoor, launched by the Indian armed forces, targeted multiple terror hideouts in response to the Pahalgam attack, which claimed the lives of 26 civilians. The operation marked a significant counter-terrorism initiative across Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.


**UDAYAM Poetry's**



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### ENDLESS DESIRES!

When desire ends?  
No answer with me!  
Have you any?  
Cent percent no!  
Since desires are endless!

Birth itself parents desire!  
Well brought up too their wish!  
Good education desire of both!  
Grown up suitable job desire!  
Desire of earning starts!

Good looking girl wedding desire!  
Children birth another desire!  
Own house, saving money another aspire!  
Wish of family welfare endless desire!  
Maintenance of social status too a desire!



Desire is a non stop wheel!  
Down to up and up to down!  
Restless cycling process!  
As far as my knowledge goes,  
as explained by well versed Say!  
Till the last breath wheel of desires  
always in momentam only!  
HENCE DESIRES ARE ENDLESS!

Composed by:  
**B. Satyanarayana Rao,**  
(Ba. Sa. Raa)  
Vijayawada.

### PM Modi to visit Gujarat on May 26-27, will launch projects worth over Rs 77,000 crore



Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Gujarat on May 26 and 27, during which he will launch and inaugurate a series of development projects across Dahod, Bhuj, and Gandhinagar, cumulatively worth more than Rs 77,000 crore. According to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office, the Prime Minister will begin his Gujarat tour in Dahod on May 26, where he is scheduled to arrive around 11:15 a.m. In a boost to the Make in India initiative, he will dedicate to the nation the Indian Railways' Locomotive Manufacturing Plant, which will produce 9,000 HP electric locomotives for both domestic use and export. He will also flag off the first electric locomotive manufactured at the plant. These high-powered locomotives, equipped with regenerative braking systems, are expected to enhance Indian Railways' freight capacity while promoting energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. In addition, the Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone for development projects worth around Rs 24,000 crore in Dahod. These include major railway infrastructure works and initiatives led by the Government of Gujarat. He is also expected to flag off a new Vande Bharat Express between Veraval and Ahmedabad, further improving regional connectivity. Later in the afternoon, the Prime Minister will travel to Bhuj, where he is scheduled to arrive at 4 p.m. There, he will launch and inaugurate a series of projects exceeding Rs 53,400 crore in investment value. He will also address a public gathering, focusing on the region's development trajectory. On May 27, PM Modi will be in Gandhinagar to participate in the 20-year celebration of Gujarat's Urban Growth Story. The event, scheduled for 11 a.m., will also mark the launch of Urban Development Year 2025. The Prime Minister is expected to address urban stakeholders and officials at the event.

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### Siddharth's '3 BHK' gears up for grand July release with heart-warming family melody



Actor Siddharth is all set to charm audiences once again with his upcoming bilingual family entertainer 3 BHK, directed by Sri Ganesh. Backed by Maaveeran producer Arun Viswa under the banner of Shanthi Talkies, the film is being made in both Telugu and Tamil, aiming to appeal to a wide family audience. Veteran actors Sarathkumar and Devayani, along with comedian Yogi Babu, play crucial roles in this emotional family drama. The film's title teaser has already received a strong response from viewers, setting the tone for its promotional campaign. Taking the musical promotions forward, the makers recently unveiled the song "Kalalanni", a soothing family melody composed by Amrith Ramnath. Written by Rakendu Mouli, the lyrics strike a chord with listeners, capturing universal emotions of love and belonging. Vocals by Hemachandra Vedala, Gopika Poornima, Sahithi Chaganti, and PVNS Rohit add a warm and pleasant feel to the track. struggling to generate significant hype The song beautifully highlights the characters portrayed by Siddharth, Sarathkumar, and Devayani, enhancing the film's emotional appeal. With commercial elements and strong family sentiments, 3 BHK promises to be a wholesome entertainer. The film features cinematography by Dinesh Krishnan B and Jithin Stansilas, while Ganesh Shiva handles editing duties. Dialogues are penned by Rakendu Mouli. 3 BHK is slated for a grand worldwide release on July 4, and the team is confident that it will resonate deeply with family audiences across languages.

### Tripti Dimri joins on board for Prabhas- SRV's 'Spirit'

Rebel Star Prabhas, who continues to dominate the Indian box office with his string of Pan-India blockbusters, is set to headline the much-anticipated action thriller Spirit, directed by the sensational Sandeep Reddy Vanga. Adding to the excitement, Bollywood's rising star Tripti Dimri, who stole hearts with her performance in Animal, has officially been roped in as the female lead opposite Prabhas. Industry insiders question double standards in actor demands The announcement has set expectations soaring. Tripti, elated to reunite with director Sandeep Reddy Vanga, expressed her excitement over working alongside Prabhas for the first time. "It's a dream team. To collaborate again with Sandeep and now with Prabhas is a huge opportunity," the actress shared. What makes Spirit stand out even more is Vanga's ambitious vision — the film will be released in nine languages, underscoring its massive Pan-World appeal. The multilingual release strategy aims to reach a global audience, pushing the boundaries of Indian cinema like never before. Featuring Akshay Kumar The project is being bankrolled by Pranay Reddy Vanga, Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, and Murad Khetani under the prestigious banners of Bhadrakali Pictures and T-Series Films. Given the scale, star power, and creative force behind the film, Spirit is shaping up to be one of the most monumental ventures in Indian cinematic history. With this dynamic pairing of Prabhas and Tripti, and Vanga's cinematic vision, Spirit is not just a film—it's a global phenomenon in the making.

### 'Garuda 2.0' soars on Aha OTT, turns golden goose for producer Balu Charan

Garuda 2.0, the Telugu remake of the Tamil blockbuster Aarathu Sinam, has become a major streaming success on Aha OTT. Featuring Aishwarya Rajesh in the lead, the crime suspense thriller is currently trending at #1 on the platform and is raking in impressive profits for producer Balu Charan. Balu Charan, known for delivering hits under his Hanuman Media banner — with titles like Super Machi, Shakahari, Kalaratri, Nene Naa, Kajal Karthika, Teenagers, and Katha Kanchiki Manam Intiki — has struck gold yet again. His previous film, Sankranthiki Vasthunnam, was a super blockbuster, and Garuda 2.0 continues



that winning streak. Aishwarya Rajesh's power-packed performance has emerged as one of the film's biggest highlights. Her portrayal in the gripping narrative has won

accolades from audiences and critics alike. Directed by Arivazhagan Venkatachalam, the film keeps viewers on the edge of their seats with its masterful direction, tight

screenplay, and intense background score. The film, adapted from the original Tamil version which grossed over ?50 crore at the box office, has managed to recreate the same thrill in its Telugu avatar. Since its digital release, it has sustained its top trending position on Aha, drawing in large viewership numbers and generating steady revenue. With its gripping plot and family-friendly appeal, Garuda 2.0 is being widely praised as a perfect watch for audiences of all ages — "from six to sixty." If you haven't watched it yet, now might be the perfect time to catch this blockbuster sensation.

## Always big holes to fill: Agarkar on Test retirements of Rohit, Virat and Ashwin

Mumbai: The Indian Test team has officially entered its long-awaited transitional phase when Shubman Gill was named as the captain for the upcoming five-match tour of England, with Rishabh Pant named his deputy. Chief selector Ajit Agarkar admitted that it's always tough to fill in big holes left by retirements of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin. The last time a Test played without Rohit, Kohli and Ashwin was on tour of England in 2011. "When guys like that retire, always big holes to fill. Ashwin also retired. Those three have been stalwarts. Always difficult. One way of looking at it is, opportunity for someone else. Had conversations with both of them." "Virat reached out early April, seen him give 200% on every ball he plays even when he's not batting or on the field. Felt he'd given everything he had, if he can't keep up to the standards it was time for him. It's come from him. Have to respect that. They've earned that respect." "It is a new WTC cycle, you are looking at whole lot of scenarios. All we need to do is show them respect and move on. It is a big job and big transition. We are all confident that Gill is the guy to take us forward. We



are all very hopeful," said Agarkar in the press conference at the BCCI HQ on Saturday. Karun Nair, who's handed a Test call-up after seven years on the back of consistent performances in domestic cricket, has been backed by Agarkar to come good in England after getting the nod ahead of Sarfaraz Khan. "Sometimes you just have to make good decisions. Sarfaraz, I know he got a 100 in the first Test and then didn't get runs. Sometimes it's decisions the team management takes." "At the moment, Karun has scored heaps of runs in domestic, has played a bit of Test cricket,

played a bit of county cricket. With Virat not there, clearly we're lacking a bit of experience. We felt his experience could help." With Mohammed Shami not fully fit, left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh has been handed a maiden Test call-up. Both Arshdeep and Karun have had county stints with Kent and Northamptonshire respectively. "He's a quality bowler and has had a taste of county as well. He plays domestic when he can. A tall guy, can bowl with the new ball, has body of work in red-ball cricket and in recent form in the last couple of years. Bumrah unlikely to play all five

Tests, we needed a bit of variety." Shardul Thakur and Nitish Kumar Reddy are the seam-bowling all-rounders, with Agarkar backing the duo to shine in England. "Shardul a bowling allrounder, sometimes you need a player like that depending on team balance. he's going on the A tour as well. Nitish is a batting allrounder at this point, hopefully his bowling will come along as well." Agarkar signed off by saying there's no room at the moment for Shreyas Iyer in the Test team. "Shreyas had a good one-day series, played well in domestic as well but right now there's no room in Test cricket."

## Varun Tej's 'VT15' gears up for Korean schedule after electrifying Indian schedules



Mega Prince Varun Tej is set to push cinematic boundaries with his upcoming genre-bending Indo-Korean horror-comedy, tentatively titled #VT15. Directed by Merlapaka Gandhi, the film has already generated immense buzz following the release of a visually arresting poster on Varun Tej's birthday. Jointly produced by UV Creations and First Frame Entertainment on a grand scale, the film promises a unique blend of horror and humour, elevated by S Thaman's high-octane musical score. Production is progressing at a brisk pace, with two impactful schedules already wrapped. Also Read - Pragya Jaiswal slays in purple as she celebrates 10 years in Tollywood The team kicked off shooting with a traditional pooja ceremony in Hyderabad, followed by intensive filming across Hyderabad and Ananthapur. The latter included iconic locations such as the KIA grounds and scenic village landscapes, capturing much of the film's action-packed and humour-laced first half. The film features a vibrant ensemble cast including Ritika Nayak, Satya, and Mirchi Kiran, who have brought comedic flair to the spooky narrative. A key highlight from the Ananthapur schedule is a visually captivating song sequence between Varun Tej and Ritika Nayak, set against the rustic backdrops that perfectly complement the film's quirky, eerie tone. Also Read - Mega Couple Varun Tej, Lavanya Tripathi expecting their first child Now, all eyes are on the film's next leg, which takes the team to Korea. This international schedule is expected to delve deep into the cross-cultural horror-comedy fusion, fully unleashing the film's ambitious Indo-Korean premise. With its unique concept, star power, and international scale, #VT15 is poised to be a genre-defining cinematic ride.

# Politics over patriotism: Congress campaign against India's heroes

In a dangerous descent into political opportunism, the Congress and its allies in the INDIA bloc have crossed a red line—mocking India's military triumph in Operation Sindoor and parroting enemy propaganda. This isn't dissent; it's disinformation warfare waged from within. As soldiers risk lives to dismantle terror, the opposition dismantles truth, morale, and unity. Their refusal to acknowledge India's strategic victories is not just shameful—it's treacherous. When lies become the only currency left, even national security becomes fair game. This piece exposes the toxic ecosystem where leadership is absent, fakery is rampant, and the only war the opposition wants to win is against India's own pride. The time has come to call their bluff—loud and clear. There was once a time when war was above politics, when the firing of bullets for national security wasn't met with slander from within. That era is gone. Today, the Congress and its INDIA bloc allies have crossed a dangerous line—repeating Pakistan's talking points in their desperate bid for political relevance. Operation Sindoor was a precise, bold strike that dismantled terror camps and propaganda hubs across the border. It should have been a moment of national pride. Instead, the Congress chose to spin lies, malign the armed forces, and slander the government—not in dissent, but in disinformation. Congress's colonial cringe As the operation was still underway, Congress's propaganda machine roared into life. Instead of standing with the soldiers, they chose mockery over respect, and sabotage over solidarity. Jairam Ramesh dismissed PM Modi's address as "hollow film dialogues" and bizarrely invoked Donald Trump's outdated claims about US involvement. This, despite categorical denials from the Prime Minister, the External Affairs

Minister, and the DGMO, all of whom affirmed that Operation Sindoor was entirely an Indian effort. Even Trump retracted his claims. But Congress? Stuck in a colonial mindset, it trusts foreign powers over its own institutions. It's pathetic—and dangerous. Courts, corrigenda and hypocrisy While India celebrated, Congress was busy chasing shadows. A digital platform mistakenly labelled a Turkish building as a Congress office. The platform issued a full correction, but the party still dragged the matter to court. Their overzealousness earned them a reprimand from the Karnataka High Court. Worse, they refused to respond to a voice recording from a Turkish official explicitly referring to a Congress office. No denial. No explanation. Just convenient silence. Meanwhile, brave Indian soldiers were risking their lives. Yet Congress persisted in peddling third-rate conspiracies, recycling Pakistani propaganda with impunity. This isn't politics. It's betrayal. Peddling lies easier than leadership Why won't the Opposition stop? Because lies are easier than leadership. Because it's simpler to insult than to inspire. Because they can't stomach the fact that under Modi, India has transitioned from making paper statements to precision strikes. Even supposedly seasoned leaders like Mallikarjun Kharge joined the circus. He called Operation Sindoor a "chhutput yudh" (trivial war). You can hate Modi—that's your democratic right. But mocking the armed forces who executed a complex, deep-strike mission? That's despicable. Congress today is blind like Dhritrashtra but lacks even a Vidura to offer reason. Pakistan's own DGMO acknowledged the Indian assault and called India pleading for a ceasefire. Yet Kharge had the audacity to claim Modi had surrendered to Trump. This isn't mere ignorance. It is

treason disguised as opinion. From ignorance to insult Kharge went further, ridiculing the PM's 72 foreign visits, as if diplomatic reach undermines military action. Does India need Twitter endorsements from foreign governments to validate its sovereignty? What warped logic is this? Rahul and Sonia Gandhi remained silent, as always—complicit in their silence. Their silence speaks louder than words. Even as families in Pahalgam mourned their loved ones, Congress showed no empathy. No solidarity. Just scorn and sabotage. Khera and Mehbooba: Sympathies laid bare Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera took the discourse into the gutter, branding Foreign Minister S Jaishankar a "Pak informer" and calling him "Sindoor ka Saudagar." He implied Delhi was the enemy—not the terrorists across the LoC. This is not critique. It's delusion laced with venom. Mehbooba Mufti, forever sympathetic to Pakistan, called Operation Sindoor "Zero over Zero" and mocked it with lines fit for street theatre. She knows who she's defending—and it isn't the Republic of India. That even Pakistan acknowledged the damage, while Indian leaders spewed doubt, tells you who is on which side of the border—philosophically, if not physically. Distorting legacy to justify cowardice When cornered, Congress retreats into history: "Indira Gandhi broke Pakistan in 1971." Yes, she did—by listening to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw. When she pushed for war amid logistical chaos, Sam warned her: "If you insist, I will resign. If I go now for war, we'll lose." Indira listened. He waited, planned, and won. That's called strategy—not stunt. Contrast that with today's Congress: ignorant of defence, arrogant in rhetoric, and reckless in action. There's a tale of a post-retirement Manekshaw sitting next

to a minister who whispered, "What is a howitzer?" At least the minister was ashamed of his ignorance. Today's crop has no such restraint. Treason wrapped in tricolour This isn't political naivety. It's calculated sabotage. Congress and its cohorts are spreading malicious propaganda, undermining the armed forces, and eroding national morale under the guise of free speech. Yes, dissent is a right. But rights come with responsibilities. Without the sacrifices of the armed forces, these politicians wouldn't be able to hold a press conference or even step out of their house. And yet, they use every media byte to mock those in uniform. This is not opposition. This is digital sedition. Time to call the bluff Let's be clear: Congress and the INDIA bloc aren't questioning the government. They are aiding the enemy's narrative. Every hashtag, every jibe, every courtroom drama is calibrated chaos—designed to distract, divide, and derail. Operation Sindoor was not a "chhutput yudh." It was a decisive strike that dismantled terror logistics, sent shockwaves through enemy ranks, and demonstrated India's new military doctrine—no tolerance, no ambiguity. Yet the Congress mocks. Because that's easier than admitting Modi's India did what they never dared: hit back hard and clean. It's time we stop tolerating this charade. The Congress party—frozen in its colonial mindset, riddled with bitterness, and obsessed with Modi—has outlived its utility. What it lacks in vision, it makes up for in venom. But venom doesn't build nations. It poisons them. India deserves better. Our soldiers deserve better. And our democracy deserves an opposition that can stand by the country, not just scheme against the government. Enough fakery. Enough sabotage. Shut down the circus. Wind up the party. (The author is former Chief Editor of Hans India)