



Ramesh Chennithala @chennithala
Dijo Kappan was a rare public servant who gave 'social service' its true meaning...

HOTELS IN STATE TO DOWN SHUTTERS ON MAY 6

As Centre raises prices, cost of LPG cylinder crosses ₹3,000 in state | Eateries warn of 50-60% hike in menu prices

SHAINU MOHAN @TPuram

THE steep rise in commercial LPG prices has jolted Kerala's restaurant industry, with eateries warning of a 50-60% hike in menu prices.



A small hotel near the Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram puts up a revised price list, reflecting the hike in the cost of LPG cylinders | B P DEEPU

Warning of job losses and a spike in food prices, the Kerala Hotel and Restaurants Association (KHRA) has called for a statewide shutdown on May 6, while demanding immediate relief measures from the Centre and state governments.

KHRA state president G Jayapal said the sector is already under severe stress and will not be able to absorb the latest LPG price hike.

He said that the situation is grave and the cumulative rise in cost of LPG, milk, vegetables, pulses, and cooking oil has made operations unsustainable.

once cost ₹100 is now nearing ₹300. Pulses are around ₹150 per kg, chickpeas have crossed ₹100, and even small lentils are touching ₹170.

At the same time, operators fear reduced footfall and decline in sales if the menu rates

are hiked. "A steep hike is not practical. Even increasing the price of a cup of tea from ₹12-14 to ₹18-20 overnight is not feasible.

KHRA said the burden of LPG price hikes is disproportionately borne by commercial cylinder users. "Around 85%

Feeling the heat

Recent trend of commercial LPG prices in Ernakulam, per cylinder

Table with 2 columns: Date and Price. Dec 2025: ₹1,587; April 2026: ₹2,090; May 2026: ₹3,085

Instead of increasing domestic prices, the entire burden is shifted to the commercial segment.

This results in higher GST collections for the government while oil companies also maintain profits - G Jayapal, KHRA state prez

of LPG usage is domestic and only 15% is commercial. Yet, instead of increasing domestic prices, the entire burden is shifted to the commercial segment.

The association has urged both the Centre and the state government to intervene and offer relief measures such as subsidies, waiver or extension of loan repayment deadlines, reduction or deferment of licence fees, and relaxation of various taxes.

The Kerala Vyapari Vyavasayi Ekopana Samithi and political parties have announced solidarity with KHRA's statewide strike on Wednesday.

The CPM state secretariat called for widespread protests

against the steep hike in commercial LPG prices, alleging that the move would trigger inflation and ultimately burden the public.

The hike in LPG prices right after the latest series of assembly elections also raises questions about the legitimacy of the central government's claims denying any shortage in the country.

With inputs from Kochi bureau

Consumer activist Dejo Kappan dies at 69

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kottayam

DEJO Kappan, who worked beyond party politics to protect the rights of consumers and farmers and was an active presence in the public sphere of Kerala, passed away. He was 69.

life through student politics and served as state president of the Kerala Congress students' wing and Youth Front. In 1998, he quit active politics to focus on championing consumer and farmer rights.



He was undergoing treatment following a car accident in Thiruvananthapuram on October 16, 2025 and passed away at 9.30 am on Friday at a private hospital in Cherupunkal.

Through the organisation, Centre for Consumer Education, he obtained verdicts beneficial to the public in at least two dozen cases through public interest litigations filed in the Supreme Court and the High Court.

He was a relentless advocate for improving the services of the KSRTC and the KSEB for the benefit of the public.

₹10 lakh aid announced for Valparai victims' kin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @TPuram

THE state Cabinet on Saturday announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh each to the families of those who died in the Valparai accident.

The Cabinet decided to provide financial assistance from the Chief Minister's Disaster Relief Fund (CMDRF) to the families of five victims who did not have insurance coverage.

The government will also bear the treatment expenses of the injured, including Muhammed Shahadin and Masneen - children of a deceased teacher - and driver Muhammed Fahis.

The accident occurred on April 17, when teachers of Government UP School, Pang, in Malappuram, along with their family members, were on a tour. Ten people were killed in the accident.

OBITUARY

Unni S Nair



Kochi: Journalist and former secretary of the Ernakulam Press Club, Unni S Nair, 53, passed away on Sunday.

worked with The New Indian Express, Manorama News, PTI, Jeevan TV and NTV. The funeral will be held at his residence, Krishnavilasam, at Perumpara Junction, Cherthala, at 11 am on Sunday.

Expatriate's death: Tribunal awards ₹9-cr reparation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kozhikode

IN A significant verdict, the Kozhikode Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal (MACT) has awarded a record-breaking compensation of ₹9,01,67,500 to the family of an expatriate killed in a road accident.

The victim, Shijin, a native

Historic settlement

In determining the historic settlement, the tribunal factored in the victim's high overseas salary, his age at the time of death, and the financial dependency of his young family

of Thiruvangoor, was employed as a senior operator for Abu Dhabi Polymers in the UAE.

The tragic incident occurred on March 28, 2023, at Malikkadavu, Kozhikode, while Shijin was home on leave. He was travelling on his motorcycle around 1 am when he was hit by a lorry that was reportedly being driven in a rash and negligent manner.

taken to the Kozhikode Medical College Hospital immediately, his life could not be saved.

The compensation petition was filed by Shijin's wife, Nikhila Karunakaran, their two children, Ishan and Parthiv, and his mother, Radha.

In determining the historic settlement, the tribunal factored in Shijin's high overseas

salary, his age at the time of death, and the financial dependency of his young family.

Legal experts noted that the court also considered the loss of various international allowances, such as educational support for his children and free accommodation provided by his employer in Abu Dhabi.

The case was represented by advocates P M Ramesh Babu, Shameem Ahamed, and Anilesh. Shijin's family's advocate Ramesh Babu responded, "It was a historic court verdict and the family of the victim deserves the compensation."

TVK prepares resort to corral winning candidates

PRABHAKAR TAMILARASU @Chennai

STARING at the possibility of a hung Assembly once the poll results are out on May 4, TN parties are bracing themselves for the infamous 'resort politics' as Vijay's Tamila Vетtri Kazhagam (TVK) has made arrangements to corral its victorious candidates at a resort at Poonjeri near Mahabalipuram.

With different exit poll surveys giving the upper hand to different parties - DMK alliance, TVK, and AIADMK bloc - TVK chief and actor C Joseph Vijay had asked his party functionaries to keep the resort ready for accommodating at least 100 winning candidates.

"After the meeting with party candidates on Thursday, Vijay asked the functionaries to book the resort to accommodate the winning candidates," a source privy to the developments told TNIE.

According to sources, TVK usually arranges state-level functionaries' meet at the private resort at Poonjeri. The resort could accommodate more than 100 people. The source also added that Vijay had sarcastically told the candidates at the meeting "not to go anywhere after winning the seat".

EXPRESS READ

Dog dies as cylinder explodes at gas filling stn

Krishnagiri: A storage cylinder at a CO2 gas filling station near Hosur exploded on Saturday morning, killing a stray dog and damaging two electricity poles.

Burnt body of woman found in Bannerghatta

Bengaluru: The burnt body of an unidentified woman was found on the Kaggalipura Road near Bilwaradahalli on Saturday morning around 9.30 am.

Couple kills labourer, buries body in grove, arrested

Coimbatore: Anamalai police arrested a couple on charges of murdering a labourer and burying him at a grove in Kaliyapuram on Saturday.

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