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Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | 8 FEBRUARY 2026

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HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | 8 FEBRUARY 2026

WEATHER

Max: 31.7° C
Min: 17.0° C
RH: 33%
Rainfall: 0mm

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky
Max/Min temp. 31/17 °C

ASTROGUIDE

Vishwawasur; Uttarayana
Tithi: Magha Bahula Saptami till 5.01 am (Monday)
Star: Swati till 5.02 am (Monday)
Variyam: 8.41 am to 10.27 am
Durmuhurtam: 4.40 pm to 5.26 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm
HIJRI CALENDAR
19th Shabaan 1447 H
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.44 am
Zohar: 12.40 pm
Asar: 4.38 pm
Maghrib: 6.20 pm
Isha: 7.29 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 06.45 AM
SUNSET TODAY 18.14 PM
MOONRISE 23.57 PM
MOONSET 10.44 AM

COUNTER POINT



We, stressed unemployed graduates, also need Job Pe Charcha!

IN BRIEF

Five cubs born at Kuno

Bhopal, Feb. 7: Namibian cheetah Aasha on Saturday gave birth to five cubs at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh, becoming a mother for the second time and taking the number of India-born cheetah cubs at the park to 24. Forest officials said both the mother and the cubs were healthy. "Both the mother and her cubs are in good health," Kuno National Park Field Director Uttam Kumar Sharma said. A video shared by park officials showed Aasha, known as the "Wanderer" for her wide-ranging movements after her arrival from Namibia, tending to her newborn cubs.

Full report on Page 13

Min. apologises for Qureshi remarks

Indore, Feb 7: With a Supreme Court-mandated deadline for his prosecution looming large, Madhya Pradesh Minister Vijay Shah on Saturday apologised again for his objectionable remarks about Colonel Sofia Qureshi, saying he had uttered the words in a moment of "patriotic excitement". Speaking to reporters here, Shah said he never intended to insult a woman officer, the armed forces or any section of society.

Full report on Page 13

Shivakumar: I will be CM one day

Mangaluru: Karnataka deputy chief minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday said time will answer as to when he will be elevated, and that everyone will have to abide by the Congress high command's decision on this. The comments by Mr Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress President, come amid the power struggle between him and CM Siddaramaiah over the top post once again coming to the fore, with the latter's son Yathindra insisting that his father will complete his five year term, with the party high command having given signal in this regard.

Full report on Page 15

WORLD | 16

Clintons call for their Epstein testimony to be public



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SPORTS | 18

SKY, Siraj shine for India



TABLOID

Dil Raju seals ₹120 cr deal for Yash's 'Toxic'



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18% US tariffs on Indian goods take effect

Modi says India, US trade deal boosts Make in India, thanks Trump for robust ties between 2 nations

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, FEB. 7

India and the US formally announced the interim trade agreement under which tariffs on New Delhi will be reduced to 18 per cent by the US. Terming the deal as a "historic milestone" in their partnership, the two countries said it demonstrates a common commitment to reciprocal and balanced trade based on mutual interests and concrete outcomes. Lauding the trade pact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it will strengthen 'Make in India' by opening up new opportunities in various sectors and will help create jobs. The PM thanked US President Donald Trump for his personal commitment to robust ties between India and the US.

Modi said India and the US share a commitment to promoting innovation and this framework will further deepen investment and technology partnerships between the two nations. "Great news for India and USA! We have agreed on a framework for an Interim Trade Agreement between our two great nations. I thank President Trump for his

SHARED-BENEFIT

INDIA COMMITMENTS	U.S. COMMITMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">India to eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods.Tariff cuts on wide range of US food and farm products including grains and animal feed, tree nuts, fruits, soybean oil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">US to apply 18 per cent reciprocal tariff on Indian goods.Affected Indian sectors include textiles and apparel, leather, footwear, plastics and rubber.Covers organic chemicals, machinery, home décor and artisanal products.US may remove tariffs after successful interim agreement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wine and spirits included under tariff reductions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tariff removal to cover generic pharmaceuticals, gems, diamonds and aircraft parts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agreement to strengthen Make in India, says Prime Minister Narendra Modi.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agreement to generate jobs for women and youngsters.Framework to deepen investment partnerships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">New opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs, MSMEs, start-up innovators and fishermen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technology partnerships between India and US to expand.Supply chains to become more resilient and trusted.

personal commitment to robust ties between our countries. This framework reflects the growing depth, trust and dynamism of our partnership. It strengthens 'Make in India' by opening new opportunities for India's hardworking farmers, entrepreneurs, MSMEs, StartUp innovators, fishermen and more. It will generate employment for women and young-

sters," Modi said in a post on X tagging Trump. "This framework will also strengthen resilient and trusted supply chains and contribute to global growth. As India moves forward towards building a Viksit Bharat, we remain committed to building global partnerships that are future-oriented, empower our people and contribute to shared prosperi-

ty," added PM. India has also agreed to address long-standing non-tariff barriers to the trade in US food and agricultural products and proposed opening up parts of its agriculture industry to cheaper imports from the US by eliminating import duties on US food and agricultural products, including distillers dried grains, red sorghum for animal

feed, soybean oil, tree nuts, and fresh and processed fruit. India also agreed to address long-standing non-tariff barriers to the trade in US food and agricultural products. "Agricultural output from India will now be able to go to the US on zero duties," said Piyush Goyal.

Pg 12: Trump removes additional 25% tariff

India-US trade pact to open \$30 tn market for exports

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 7

Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday said the interim trade agreement between India and the US will open access to a \$30 trillion market for Indian exporters, while safeguarding the interests of domestic producers.

Briefing the media, the minister said the agreement had been framed with adequate protection for Indian farmers, fishermen, handloom workers and micro, small and medium enterprises. He said India's trade approach was aimed at guarding against predatory pricing and irrationally cheap imports that undercut domestic manufacturing. He added that India already had among the lowest tariff regimes compared to several competitors in the region. He declined to comment on



Piyush Goyal

questions relating to the purchase of Russian oil, stating that the ministry of external affairs would respond.

Goyal said India had not extended any duty concessions to the US on dairy products, sugar or millets. He said quota-based duty concessions had been provided for certain products such as apples to protect domestic producers. India imports about six lakh tonnes of apples annually, including from the US.

Pg 12: Min: India global sourcing hub for Boeing

CG busts illegal oil smuggling

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, FEB. 7

The Indian Coast Guard has busted an international oil smuggling racket operating through a sea-air network and apprehended three vessels about 100 nautical miles west of Mumbai, officials said.

The vessels were allegedly involved in smuggling large quantities of cheap oil and oil-based cargo sourced from conflict-affected regions and transferring it mid-sea to motor tankers in international waters to evade duties.

According to the Coast Guard, the syndicate operated through a network of handlers based in multiple countries, coordinating sales and transfers between sea-going vessels.

The three vessels were intercepted by Coast Guard ships on February 5. Officials said sustained rummaging, verification of documents, analysis of electronic data on board and interrogation of crew helped establish the modus operandi and sequence of events.

Pg 13: Surveillance leads to tanker seizure

Shah in Raipur; to chair review meet over LWE today

RABINDRA NATH CHOUHURY | DC
BHOPAL, FEB. 7

Union home minister Amit Shah arrived in Chhattisgarh on Saturday on a three-day visit to review the anti-Naxal strategy ahead of the March 31 deadline to end Maoism.

Shah is scheduled to hold a high-level meeting of state and Central security officials late on Saturday night to assess counterinsurgency measures in view of the target date. Sources said the meeting would be attended by senior officials from security forces and intelligence agencies.

On Sunday, the home minister is expected to chair another high-level review meeting focusing on the security situation in Naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Odisha. The meeting will review the progress of anti-Naxal operations, sources said. "The meeting may prepare a strategy to end the remaining vestiges of Left Wing Extremism in the country," a senior police officer said.



Amit Shah

Top Maoist Swamy killed in encounter

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, FEB. 7

CPI (Maoist) Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee member CPI Loketi Chander alias Swamy was killed in a police encounter in Chhattisgarh, police sources said.

Swamy, who had been associated with the organisation for about 35 years, hailed from Isrojiwadi village in Kamareddy district. His son Ramesh has travelled to Chhattisgarh to bring the body to the native village.

India trusted partner for growth: Modi in Malaysia

DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, KUALA LUMPUR, FEB. 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India is seen as a "trusted partner for growth" and it was reflected in the recent trade deals it has agreed with various countries, including the UK, USA and EU. Addressing a community programme in Kuala Lumpur, Modi said that the Indian diaspora continues to serve as a strong bridge between India and Malaysia.

Earlier, the Prime Minister landed in Kuala Lumpur for a two-day visit to a grand red-carpet reception, with Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim receiving him at the airport, signalling a new momentum in the bilateral ties. Modi and Ibrahim will hold bilateral talks on Sunday.

From the airport, the two PMs travelled in the same car to the venue where Modi addressed the Indian community. In his address, Modi said, "Ibrahim came to the airport to welcome me, and he brought me here in his car. Not only his car but also his seat. These special gestures reflect his love



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by members of the Indian community upon his arrival at a hotel, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Saturday. — PTI

and respect for India and for all of you. I am grateful for your warm words, hospitality and friendship."

Malaysian Indians largely comprise Tamils, Malayalees, Telugus and some Punjabis and other North Indians. The Prime Minister complimented the Indians living there for connecting India with Malaysia. "You have connected roti chanaai with the Malabar paratha, coconut, spices and of course the tareek. The flavours feel so familiar, whether it is in Kuala Lumpur or Kochi. We

understand each other so well. It must be due to the large number of common words between our languages and Malay. I have heard that Indian movies and music are popular in Malaysia," said Modi. The Prime Minister thanked the Indian diaspora for standing up for India in its hour of need, such as the Gujarat earthquake of 2001, and before that, for supporting India's freedom movement.

Pg 13: Indian diaspora is a valuable partner: PM

GROWTH | PATH Farmers seek clarity on compensation before carrying out surveys, boundary marking

Land acquisition for Future City picks up pace

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Land acquisition for the proposed Bharat Future City has gathered pace, with officials initiating the process to take over government and assigned lands in Rangareddy district.

Under the supervision of the TGIC, about 2,200 acres in Kothapalli within the mandal limits are being surveyed and readied for transfer to the project. Surveys have been conducted in Survey No.s 32, 178, 182, 222, 242 and 317 to identify government and assigned land parcels.

Officials said land acquisition in Yacharam, Kandukur and Kadthal mandals was largely complete, with disputes pending only over 432 acres of patta land that are under court litigation.

During the BRS regime, the then government had decided to acquire 19,333 acres across 10 villages in Yacharam, Kandukur and Kadthal mandals for Pharma City. Of this, nearly 10,000 acres were identified in villages such as Nakkarthamedipalli, Nanaknagar, Tadiparti and Kurmidda in Yacharam mandal. More than 7,000 acres were acquired, which now form

FARMERS OWNING about 2,200 acres of patta land moved the court, refusing to part with their land for Pharma City. Following this, officials passed awards overnight and deposited compensation for around 1,800 acres belonging to over 800 farmers.



part of the land being repurposed by the Congress government for

Bharat Future City. Farmers owning about 2,200 acres of patta land moved the court, refusing to part with their land for Pharma City. Following this, officials passed awards overnight and deposited compensation for around 1,800 acres belonging to over 800 farmers with the competent authority (Rangareddy district collector), while transferring land records in their names to TGIC.

Officials are preparing to issue registration documents for pharma plots after the municipal elections, with the Yacharam tahsildar tasked with the process on the directions of

higher authorities. Ibrahimpatnam RDO A. Anantha Reddy said, "Farmers who lost land for Pharma City should not be misled by others. We have deposited compensation with the authority. Any enhancement of compensation will be decided by the authority judge. We have identified that only 432 acres are under dispute. Plot documents will be distributed soon to farmers who have completed registration."

Land acquisition for the proposed 100-foot road from Nagarjunasagar highway at Takkallapalli Gate to the outskirts of Nakkarthamedipalli, lead-

ing up to the Hyderabad Green Pharma City layout, has also begun. The road is planned over a stretch of 5.9 km. Officials noted that along the alignment, agricultural land belonging to about 10 farmers would be affected, while the remaining land belonged to private ventures.

FCDA commissioner K Shashanka said the 100-foot road corridor would emerge as a commercial hub and assured tax exemptions and land conversion relaxations for those interested in business development in the area.

Pg 12: Unrest over surveys for Future City

Normalcy returns to Manipur after unrest

DC CORRESPONDENTS
NEW DELHI/IMPHAL FEB. 7

Normalcy has been returning to parts of Manipur's Churachandpur district on Saturday morning after two days of protests.

The violent protests began on Thursday after three BJP legislators from the Kuki-Zo and Hmar communities joined Meitei MLAs to form a government in the ethnic strife-hit state which saw over 260 people killed and thousands displaced.

MLA Nemcha Kipgen joined the Y. Khemchand Singh-led government as Deputy Chief Minister, while L.M. Khaute and N. Sanate supported her.

Two tribal bodies imposed a "total shutdown" in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur, while rallies were held in Kangpokpi and Tengnoupal districts, alleging that the legislators betrayed their community.

The Kuki-Zo groups have been demanding a separate administrative unit for them, as the violence that broke out in May 2023 deeply divided the state on ethnic lines, with members of the two communities not venturing into each other's areas.

The demonstrations were largely confined to the stretch between Tuibong and Kangvai in Churachandpur town, unlike earlier instances when disturbances had spread across the district headquarters, police said.

While most areas of Churachandpur town witnessed a resumption of business activities, several shops in the Tuibong area remained closed, they said.

Additional security forces have been deployed to prevent any untoward incidents, the police officials added.

Meanwhile, the Zomi Council, the apex body of the Zomi tribe, has summoned the three legislators who joined the government.

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Revanth: None can erase KCR's 'loot history' in TG

Says BJP is getting B-forms from BRS for civic elections

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said he would undertake the responsibility of keeping alive the legacy of BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao in the annals of Telangana history, but alleged that the history was about fake passports, counterfeit currency cases and false election promises.

"This history will remain in public memory," Revanth Reddy said at a civic polls related meeting in Parigi in Vikarabad district, referring to his predecessor "papala bhairavudu".

The Chief Minister took exception to statements by BRS leaders K.T Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao that he was trying to erase Chandrashekar Rao's history by issuing notices to him in the phone-tapping case. He questioned whether it was wrong to issue notices for the purposes of investigation.

Revanth Reddy noted that former IPS officer R.S. Praveen Kumar, now a BRS leader, had previously stated that a fake currency case had been registered



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy addresses a public meeting in Parigi in Vikarabad district on Saturday.

against Chandrashekar Rao, and asked whether such history could be erased. He also alleged that no one could erase Chandrashekar Rao's history of what he described as "10 years of loot."

The Chief Minister accused Chandrashekar Rao of cheating Dalits by promising to make a Dalit leader the first Chief Minister of Telangana and failing to do so. Revanth Reddy said the Congress government had given opportunities to Dalits as Speaker and ministers, and claimed that this was why Chandrashekar Rao had avoided attending the Assembly sessions.

Revanth Reddy accused the BRS chief of deliberately stalling the Pranahita-Chevella project, sanctioned in undivided Andhra Pradesh, to deny water to Rangareddy district.

He said the foundation stone laid near Chevella was evidence of the project's abandonment, and said that providing 3 tmc ft of Godavari water would have irrigated thousands of acres.

The Chief Minister said that Chandrashekar Rao had promised to develop Rayalaseema in Andhra Pradesh as "Ratanalaseema", during a visit to YSRC leader Roja's

house in Chittoor, and but had never promised Godavari water to Rangareddy district. He alleged that the district had suffered due to Chandrashekar Rao's negligence and said that the Kaleshwaram project, built at a cost of ₹1 lakh crore, had collapsed within three years. He alleged that Kaleshwaram funds were used by the BRS president's family members to build farmhouses.

Revanth Reddy referred to a statement by Sabitha Indra Reddy that she had joined the BRS for the development of Rangareddy district, and questioned why necessary permissions were not obtained for completion of irrigation projects there if that was the case.

Assuring completion of land acquisition for the reservoir at Lakshmidhevipally, the Chief Minister said plans had been formulated to complete the project.

"It is our responsibility to bring Godavari waters and make Tandur, Parigi and Vikarabad fertile," he said.

■ Page 12: Krishna waters to irrigate 1.5 l acres: CM

Records burnt in major fire at FSL

SYED OMAR FAROOQ | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

A devastating fire broke out at the Telangana Forensic Science Laboratories (FSL) building in the Red Hills area here on Saturday, for the first time in 52 years since its establishment in 1974, and in its wake, left the destroyed what is said to be crucial evidence related to a large number of cases.

The incident triggered allegations from political parties that evidence relating to crucial cases had been destroyed.

The fire was reported at



The charred remains of goods at the Forensic Science Laboratories (FSL) building in Red Hills on Saturday.

10.08 and was doused by 1.30 pm, officials said.

There were no casualties. Five fire tenders and a fire-fighting robot were pressed

into service to douse the fire. The blaze was restricted to a part of the first floor, and some computer systems were damaged in the

incident. Based on preliminary investigation, a fire department official said they suspected an electrical short-circuit caused the fire.

DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy, late in the evening, said every file at the FSL had a data back-up. "Accusations are natural," he said, referring to allegations of damage to key pieces of evidence. "This is just a fire accident...that's it... there is no truth in key files being burnt. Don't believe rumours."

■ Page 4: Most property is intact after fire: Shikha

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Cong. sows seeds of division: Fadnavis

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC ADILABAD, FEB. 7

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday said the BJP's performance in the recent municipal elections in Maharashtra would have a positive impact on the party's prospects in the Telangana municipal polls.

Addressing a BJP Vijay Sankalp Sabha at Kazanagar, he said Maharashtra's electoral outcome would influence the political atmosphere in neighbouring Telangana. He appealed to voters to support BJP candidates in Asifabad and Kazanagar municipalities and the Mancheril Municipal Corporation.

Referring to inter-state cooperation, Fadnavis said the Maharashtra government was willing to extend support for the Pranahita-Chevella project, even though about two lakh acres were expected to be submerged in Maharashtra. He said his government was prepared to hold discussions with the Telangana government and emphasised maintaining cordial relations with neighbouring states under the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative led by Narendra Modi.

Fadnavis said development of municipalities was possible through Central government schemes.

■ Pg 3: Municipal growth because of Centre: Fadnavis

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EVENTS TODAY

- Sharada Cultural Trust; Vocal performance by Vidwan D. Raghavachary of the Hyderabad Brothers**
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Kowtha Kamakoti Kalyana Nilayam, Padmaranagar
- Dr K.V. Ramanachary birthday celebrations by Sathkala Bharathi**
Time: 9 am
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi
- Annual Day celebrations of Sri Venkateswara Kuchipudi Nruthya Kala Kshetram**
Time: 10 am
Venue: Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha
- Shilpa Kala Nidhi Handloom Expo**
Time: 5.30 pm
Venue: Our Sacred Space
- Sangeeta vibhavari by SRB Musical Events**
Time: 1 pm
Venue: Sri Thyagaraj Gana Sabha
- Nirankari Sant Samagam: Annual spiritual gathering**
Time: 4 pm
Venue: NTR Stadium
- Harikatha Mahotsavam by Kinera Art Theatres**
Time: 4 pm
Venue: Sri Sringeri Shankar Mutt
- Bharath Rang Mahotsavam by National School Of Drama**
Time: 1.30 pm
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi

SHORT TAKES

NSD'S SILVER JUBILEE FETE TO SEE 4 PRODUCTIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The Hyderabad chapter of the 25th Bharat Rang Mahotsav, the silver jubilee edition of the National School of Drama's (NSD) annual theatre festival, began at Ravindra Bharathi on Friday, bringing four curated productions to the city over four evenings with free entry for audiences. "Bringing the 25th edition of Bharat Rang Mahotsav to Hyderabad is a momentous occasion for the city's vibrant theatre community," said K.L. Kaithwas, head coordinator of BRM 2026 Hyderabad. "We are celebrating the 'Samvad' between cultures. This is a rare opportunity for Hyderabadis to witness world class theatre right in their backyard."

PERSONAL LETTERS, OLD NOTES PUT IN MEDARAM HUNDIS

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
WARANGAL, FEB. 7

Officials counting cash and valuables from hundis at the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma maha jatara have found personal letters, including love notes and legal petitions, alongside money and ornaments.

Among the letters were notes written by young devotees seeking divine intervention in romantic relationships and marriage-related matters, including parental opposition. Officials said the letters reflected personal appeals rather than formal offerings. In addition, officials found petitions relating to land disputes, family conflicts and marital issues. Some letters were written in the format of legal representations, seeking a divine resolution to long-pending property and domestic disputes.

Along with gold and silver ornaments, officials recovered foreign currency and demonetised ₹1,000 and ₹500 notes. Officials said the obsolete notes appeared to have been offered symbolically.

Meanwhile, cash collections after three days of counting of the hundis touched ₹8.06 crore, including foreign currency. On Saturday, officials opened 140 hundis, which yielded ₹2,01,92,723.

The counting operation covered 828 hundis, comprising 780 iron boxes, 45 cloth bags, and three rice hundis. While the counting of currency notes, being carried out at the TTD Kalyana Mandapam in Hanamkonda, is progressing under official supervision, the counting of coins is yet to begin. All gold and silver ornaments recovered are being secured separately in locked iron hundis. The processed cash is being handed over to bank authorities on a daily basis. Over 500 staff and volunteers are engaged in the exercise under CCTV surveillance to count the contents of more than 800 hundis.

Neta's natter

A SACRIFICE: REVANTH DRAWS THE LINE FOR JATIPITA



Telangana politics has found a new obsession, a father of all battles, if you will. And it is not welfare schemes, but a high-stakes question of "who is the Telangana Jatipita?"—the symbolic father of the state. The BRS insists the crown belongs to K. Chandrashekar Rao, arguing that his relentless agitation culminated in the

birth of Telangana in 2014, but the Congress rubbishes the claim, with moral qualifiers. According to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, history anoints a Jatipita with the status reserved for those who sacrifice everything for a cause, with the benchmark being Mahatma Gandhi. By that yardstick, Prof. K. Jayashankar fits

the role of giving up personal comforts for Telangana, while Sonia Gandhi could be hailed as 'Telangana Talli' for sacrificing the Congress' political interests to create the state. KCR, as per Revanth Reddy, failed the test following his decade-long rule marked by wealth accumulation. And there the matter stands.

IPS TARGETING GETS NASTY, BRS WRITES 'PINK BOOK'

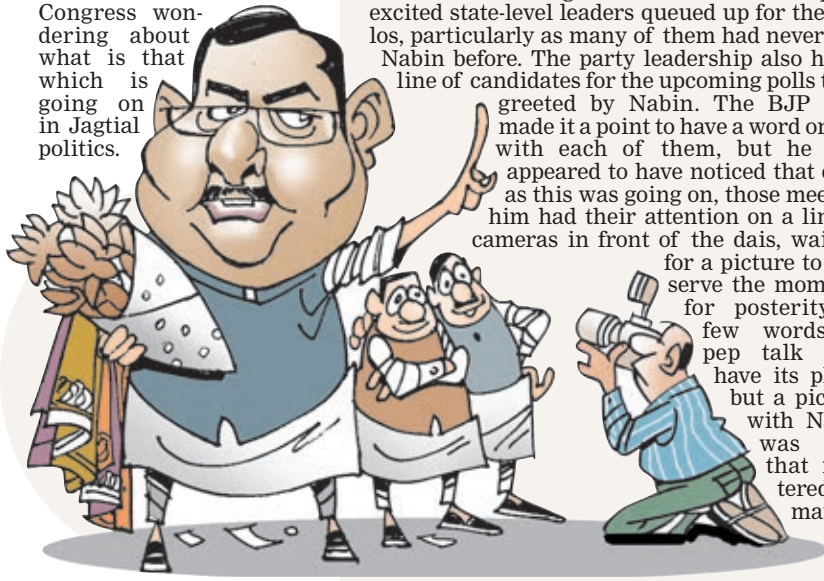
BRS leaders have added a new chapter to their theatre of threats, with senior IPS officers finding themselves unwilling protagonists. Even as the controversy over BRS Huzurabad MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy's religion-linked remarks against the Karimnagar police commissioner Gautham Alam refuses to fade, another salvo has been fired—this time at Hyderabad city police commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, with cinematic flair: BRS former MLA from Armoor A. Jeevan Reddy openly warned Sajjanar of 'serious consequences' if the BRS returns to power in three years. Accusing the Sajjanar of functioning like a Congress activist, Jeevan Reddy's grouse was that Sajjanar was selectively targeting BRS leaders while handling the SIT probe into the phone-tapping case. In a remark that raised eyebrows across political and bureaucratic circles, A. Jeevan Reddy said he had entered Sajjanar's name as "No. 1" in his so-called 'pink book,' a list of those to be dealt with later. He went a step further, declaring that he would not erase the name even if KCR or KTR personally ask him to, vowing instead to 'chase' the officer. As rhetoric heats up, the thin line between political bravado and intimidation appears increasingly blurred.

AN UNEXPECTED PROMOTION FOR 2 CIVIC BABUS

The sign of things to come, well, can come in different forms. In the GHMC, the signals apparently have to do with how two of its several additional commissioners are "high-powered". The reason? While each important wing of GHMC has an additional commissioner heading it, such as sanitation, advertisements etc., for the first time, two IAS officers are heading three zones each. While one heads Serilingampally, Kukatapally and Quthbullahpur zones, another is in-charge of Malkajgiri, Uppal and LB Nagar. The buzz is that these two super ACs are all set to become commissioners of Cyberabad/Serilingampally Corporation and for Malkajgiri Corporation when the time comes to split the GHMC into three corporations. This being the state of affairs, junior IAS officers, also in the GHMC, are treading carefully with these two 'super ACs' as they could just end up as their bosses.

NABIN CLICKS, BUT PHOTOS HAVE A BIGGER SAY

A picture may say a thousand words. But, in the process, real words could well become the casualty. That appeared to be the case when BJP's newly minted national president Nitin Nabin on his first visit to Telangana took part in a public meeting designed to be a feel-good event for all those contesting the municipal polls in the district. Soon after he zipped to the meeting venue after landing at the Shamshabad airport, excited state-level leaders queued up for the hellos, particularly as many of them had never met Nabin before. The party leadership also had a line of candidates for the upcoming polls to be greeted by Nabin. The BJP prez made it a point to have a word or two with each of them, but he also appeared to have noticed that even as this was going on, those meeting him had their attention on a line of cameras in front of the dais, waiting for a picture to preserve the moments for posterity. A few words of pep talk may have its place, but a picture with Nabin was all that mattered for many.



MEDAK AGAIN SET FOR A BATTLE ROYALE

As battlegrounds go, Medak, Sangareddy and Siddipet districts never fail to find a place in the list especially in the run-up to any election. This time too it is no different with municipal polls looming. The BRS with its chief K. Chandrashekar Rao, and senior leader T. Harish Rao from Siddipet, in a manner of speaking, has hit the ground running. The Congress is not far behind with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy scheduled to visit Medak for a campaign meeting. Both sides have much to gain, and much to lose, not just in real terms but metaphorically too. Watching from the sidelines and hoping to make inroads is the BJP slowly staking a claim to bragging rights.

● THE CONGRESS is not far behind with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy scheduled to visit Medak for a campaign meeting.

TURFED OUT. CONGRESS VS CONGRESS IN NALGONDA

Whose turf is it anyway? And who gets a say on who runs the show when an election comes around? Is it the party, or the designated leader? These questions, that vex any political party, with local leaders unwilling to give up control, have

apparently been answered in Nalgonda. Notwithstanding the task assigned to the 'screening committee' to decide the candidates for the municipal polls, apparently the local legislators sort of ran the show, more so when a

heavyweight leader happened to be from that area. For instance, Adhuri Laxman was the incharge minister for Nalgonda, considered a stronghold of another minister, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, who was reportedly busy conducting meetings

for picking aspirants in the district. The confusion was good enough for several aspirants who were denied tickets to blame local public representatives at several places and for causing disruptions on the last day of withdrawals.

Contributions from L. Venkat Ram Reddy, P. Srinivas, Neeraj Kumar, Md Nizamuddin, Nabinder Bommala, Narendar Pulloor, Balu Pulipaka, Puli Sharat Kumar

DIASPORA | DREAMS Community to revive memories of early settlers who walked for 5 years to reach Sec'bad

Chinese to mark Lunar New Year with lion dance

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The Chinese community here will mark the Lunar New Year on February 17 with traditional lion dance performances, with professional artistes invited from Kolkata to take part in the celebrations.

Community members said the Chinese presence in the city dates back to well before Independence. Local Chinese historians recalled that some early settlers undertook arduous journeys from northern China, trekking across mountain ranges over

nearly five years to reach Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Many of those who arrived in the early 1940s were young adults. As part of this year's New Year celebrations, the Chinese Association is set to release a book documenting the history of the Chinese community here. The clans that settled in the region include Yu, Lee, Liu, Chen, Chu, Wu, Yi, Chin and Teng. The Hyderabad Overseas Chinese Friendship Association, which is organising the celebrations, was formed in 1995 and represents around 100



families. Members said the community continues to follow traditional customs and uses such occasions to reconnect, given its small presence in the twin cities. A community member noted that while Kolkata has two Chinatowns, Secunderabad does not, largely because only a limited number of Chinese

families settled here. Liu Ku Phun, a fourth-generation member of the community who runs the popular Chinese restaurant Nanking and Blue Diamond, spoke about the occupational roots of the early settlers. He said many of them took up cooking, initially catering to British officials. Over time, the cuisine evolved

to suit Indian tastes. "My grandfather was the one who came up with Ginger Chicken, which later became popular all over," he said. Yukiing Yu, a senior member of the community with extensive knowledge of its history, said Secunderabad appealed to early Chinese settlers due to favourable conditions under British administration and reports of the wealth of the Nizam's Hyderabad State. "They arrived around Oxford Street, now Sarojini Devi Road, between 1920 and 1940," he said. He said the settlers were

skilled in shoemaking, dentistry, cooking and laundry services, finding steady work among British officers. Many gradually settled in areas such as Park Lane, SD Road, Marredpally, Mudford and Mettuguda. He added that during the 1970s, several Chinese families moved from Kolkata to Secunderabad after tanneries were affected by a ban on polluting industries in West Bengal. Tony Yu Shao Lee said his father, John Yu Famao, arrived in Hyderabad with the first batch of settlers. "Now the fourth generation is here. We are five

brothers and two sisters, married into different communities, but we still follow our Chinese roots," he said. Jennifer Irene Yu said the community places strong emphasis on collective participation during celebrations and rituals. "For festivals or even funerals, we come together. We have a Chinese cemetery at Shamirpet village and follow most traditional rituals. During New Year celebrations, children now eagerly wait for the gatherings, as every year the organisers plan something special," she said.



Members of Iskcon and a young band, Band Aadhya during Hyderabad's first Kirtan clubbing.

Gen-Z embrace bhajan nights, supper clubs

MRIITKA BANERJEE | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Across the city, young people are turning away from bars, malls and loud club nights in favour of curated experiences that slow things down and place greater emphasis on conversation, participation and presence. From devotional music evenings to dinners where strangers leave as friends, these gatherings are becoming the way Hyderabad wants to meet itself.

"Our Gen-Z is taking to Bhajan Clubbing... it is spirituality and modernity merging beautifully, particularly keeping in mind the sanctity of the bhajans," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on his radio programme in January, commenting on a trend that has also entered Hyderabad.

On a January evening in Khajaguda, a banquet hall filled with young voices singing bhajans set to dholak beats and guitar chords. Incense hung in the air. Chai and butter-milk replaced cocktails. The event, billed as Hyderabad's first bhajan jamming night, presented devotion as participatory rather than performative.

A month later came Hyderabad's first Kirtan Clubbing. This involved ISKCON and a young band, Band Aadhya. Guitarist Kalki Aravind, 23, explained: "There is a clear difference between bhajan and kirtan. Bhajans are largely repetitive chants like 'Hare Rama' or 'Hare Krishna', while kirtans are spiritual compositions such as 'Aigiri Nandini' that allow musical exploration." The group chose a live band format rather than electronic sets common in Goa. "We wanted to stay closer to tradition while still sounding contemporary," he added. The appeal lies partly in



Bhajan clubbing is also gaining popularity and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had mentioned about it in his radio programme in January.



Activities during a supper club in the city.

what these spaces leave out—alcohol, drugs and loud music. Some older participants say they feel relief watching younger people take part, even if the setting looks unfamiliar. Others read the trend as ideological.

"This is a soft shift towards conservatism dressed up as cool spirituality," wrote one user on Reddit, while another argued that such formats make "religion easier to consume and therefore easier to normalise politically."

Beyond devotional music, offbeat meet-ups have also taken root, with Supper Clubs proving less controversial. These bring small groups together around a shared table, often at home, with a set menu. Sacred Spoon is one such pop-up kitchen founded by Deepannita and Abhijeet Bose, who believe eating together lowers social barriers.

The duo has run two public pop-ups so far: a Marathi Mahaprasad, a temple-food-style sit-down lunch, and Breads and Beyond, pairing English bread-and-butter formats with flavours from Assam and Mangalore. "Sacred Spoon is about more than food. It is about meeting strangers, sharing stories, and leaving with new friends after every table," said Deepannita.

Another curated experience is the after-hours programme at Chowmahalla Palace, where select evenings open the gates for private tours and royal dining. Visitors walk through courtyards with classical or Sufi music playing in the background before dinner in durbar halls. Curators call it a "royal-dining experience". Guests described the ambience as unforgettable, eclipsing the food itself.

Baithaks have also made a comeback as intimate musical evenings rooted in South Asian salon culture. Hyderabad has seen these gatherings appear in restaurants such as Gaurang's Kitchen, lounges like Aish at The Park, and creative spaces. Audience sizes remain small, with performers seated at the same level as listeners. Poetry, dastangoi, qawwali and experimental fusion are part of the sets.



Members of a supper club that brings small groups together around a shared table, often at home, with a set menu.

SHORT TAKE



AIMIM president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi addressing a Jalsa-e-Aam public meeting at the Circus Ground in Mukarampura, Karimnagar, on Saturday.

OWAISI: AIMIM TO BE GAME CHANGER IN KARIMNAGAR

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, FEB. 7

AIMIM president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday said his party would emerge as a gamechanger in the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation elections, while launching a sharp attack on both the BJP and the BRS.

Addressing a Jalsa-e-Aam public meeting at the Circus Ground in Mukarampura here, Owaisi said the AIMIM had the strength to alter the political landscape of Karimnagar. Targeting BJP MP and Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Owaisi questioned the BJP's stand on national issues. Referring to remarks by US President Donald Trump on trade and tariffs, he asked why the BJP leadership remained silent. "Is Donald Trump India's petroleum minister, or is it Hardeep Singh Puri?" he asked, criticising what he termed the Centre's approach to international pressure.

He further challenged Sanjay Kumar to use his ministerial position to act against terrorists rather than, as he alleged, targeting innocent Muslims.

Turning his attention to local BRS MLA Gangula Kamalakar, Owaisi alleged a tacit understanding between the BJP and the BRS in Karimnagar.

He claimed that Kamalakar was preparing to join the BJP ahead of 2028 Assembly elections to avoid scrutiny by central agencies such as the ED and CBI.

Bhatti: Elect Cong. nominees to support welfare schemes

Vows to develop Madhira a model town on par with Hyd in medical, edu sectors

P. SRINIVAS | DC NALGONDA, FEB. 7

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Saturday appealed to voters to elect Congress candidates in the municipal elections for comprehensive development of urban areas.

He said the Congress government was working with a clear commitment towards the welfare of all sections.

After leading a rally in Madhira Municipality, he addressed a public meeting as part of the election campaign, and urged urban voters to extend their support in the municipal polls to strengthen development initiatives.

Referring to women-centric policies, he said the government had announced that it would provide ₹20,000 crore annually as interest-free loans to self-help groups (SHGs). The Opposition doubted this, but the government had already disbursed ₹27,000 crore, far in excess of the announcement, demonstrating its commitment.

He said women's self-help groups in urban areas would be trained through MEPMA and supported to establish enterprises by facilitating bank loans.

He said many people had told him of their housing problems during his padyatra.

After the Congress assumed office, the government launched the first phase of construction of 4.5 lakh Indiramma houses at a cost of ₹5 lakh per unit, allocating ₹22,500 crore for the scheme.

He alleged that the previous BRS government had not issued new ration cards or permitted inclusion of new family members for 10 years, while the Co-



Left: Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka addresses an election campaign meeting at Madhira on Saturday. Right: Revenue minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, along with Palakurthi MLA Mamidala Yashashwini Reddy, takes part in the municipal election campaign at Thorrur on Saturday.



● BHATTI ALLEGED the previous BRS government had not issued new ration cards or permitted inclusion of new family members for 10 years, while the Congress government issued new ration cards soon after coming to power.

gress government issued new ration cards soon after coming to power. He also noted schemes such as free power up to 200 units for domestic consumers, supply of fine rice through ration cards, LPG cylinders at ₹500, and free bus travel for women in TGSRTC buses had helped families save money, enabling higher spending on education, healthcare and nutrition.

He said free medical treatment up to ₹10 lakh was being provided under Rajiv Aarogyasri in case of health emergencies.

He added that developing Madhira Municipality into a model town with improved medical and educational facilities on par with Hyderabad was his responsibility and long-term objective.

After losing power, BRS daydreaming: Ponguleti

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC WARANGAL, FEB. 7

Revenue minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Saturday alleged that BRS leaders after losing power were continuing "attention-seeking politics" ahead of the municipal elections. The minister dismissed assurances made by BRS leaders, stating that those who had failed to develop the region during their decade in power were now making claims about housing and community infrastructure.

Addressing election meetings in Thorrur and Mahbubabad municipalities, he said the political situation in the state had changed, with the Congress holding key positions at the state, district and constituency levels. He appealed to

● PONGULETI APPEALED to voters to support the Congress and its ally, the CPI in the municipal elections, stating that voters had earlier rejected the BRS and should do so again.

voters to support the Congress and its ally, the Communist Party of India, in the municipal elections, stating that voters had earlier rejected the BRS and should do so again.

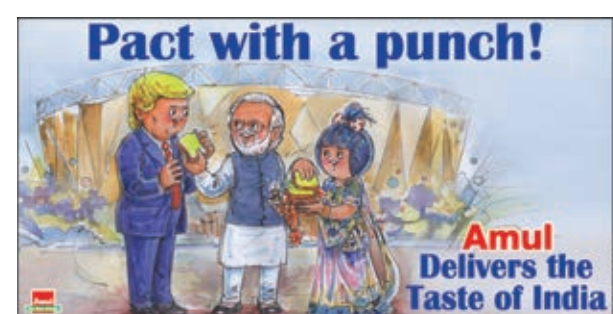
Referring to welfare measures, the minister said the Congress government was committed to providing houses to the poor under the Indiramma Housing scheme.

He stated that, as revenue minister, he would oversee identification and allotment of house sites to eligible families in Thorrur and ensure

completion of housing projects left pending by the previous BRS government.

During his campaign in Wardhannapet, Station Ghanpur and Jangaon, he announced a special grant of ₹10 crore for development works in Wardhannapet municipality. He also said the High Tension power lines in the area would be shifted by the first week of March and that certain Thandas would be separated from the municipality and restored as gram panchayats in line with public demand.

He warned contractors handling road and canal works in the Thorrur region to complete pending projects, stating that action would be taken after the elections. He said second phase of Indiramma housing sanctions would begin in April.



Uttam: Cong. will sweep civic polls

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, FEB. 7

Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Saturday expressed confidence that the Congress would sweep the civic polls against the backdrop of the state government's welfare schemes had reached the grassroots.

Addressing election meetings in Korutla and Metpally municipalities of Jagtial district, Uttam Kumar Reddy criticised the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre, alleging that Telangana had been subjected to injustice.

He claimed that the state had received only limited funds from the Centre over the past 12 years and said commitments made at the time of state bifurcation in 2014 remained unfulfilled.

Listing the welfare measures, Uttam Kumar Reddy said the response to the Congress government's two-

● LISTING THE welfare measures, Uttam Kumar Reddy said the response to the Congress government's two-year tenure reflected public approval and would translate into electoral success for party candidates in the municipal polls.

year tenure reflected public approval and would translate into electoral success for party candidates in the municipal polls.

Outlining the government's plans for urban development, the minister said proposals involving thousands of crores would be included in the State Budget to improve infrastructure in municipalities and municipal corporations.

He said the government aimed to strengthen roads, drainage, education and healthcare facilities in view of increasing urbanisation.



Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with welfare minister Adluri Laxman Kumar, speaks to the media after taking part in the election campaign in Korutla and Metpalli municipalities on Saturday.

Revanth has no moral right to question him on KLIS: Kishan

NEERAJ KUMAR | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Union minister G. Kishan Reddy hit back at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Saturday, alleging that the latter had no moral right to question him on the Kaleshwaram scam. "Revanth promised to jail KCR upon coming to power. He must explain if Congress high command or Rahul Gandhi is stopping him," he said, in response to the Chief Minister saying the Centre had not ordered a CBI probe into the scam.

Speaking to reporters at the state BJP office, charged that both BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao and Revanth Reddy lacked independent decision making authority, having become "slaves" to the Owaisi brothers. "AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi once said he holds the steering, no matter who governs. His brother Akbaruddin Owaisi claimed both parties must bow at his feet. This insults Telangana's self respect."

Even after the High Court struck down religion based reservations, the Congress was indulging in "cheap appeasement" by using a Supreme Court stay to extend 4 per cent quota to Muslims, depriving Backward Classes (BCs), he alleged.

Kishan Reddy said if action was needed on hate speech, the first case should be against Revanth



Union minister G. Kishan Reddy speaks to media at BJP office on Saturday.



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis being felicitated by state BJP chief N. Ramchander Rao and others at BJP Vijay Sankalp Sabha held as part of municipal election campaign at Kagaznagar on Saturday.

Fadnavis: Civic growth possible with Centre

FROM PAGE 1

Fadnavis said development of municipalities was possible through Central government schemes such as Smart City, AMRUT, Swachh Bharat and PMAY, and asserted that BJP-led municipalities would benefit when the party was in power at the Centre.

He criticised both the BRS and the Congress governments for not paying compensation for lands acquired in Gadchiroli in the Kaleshwaram project.

He said the Maharashtra government had paid compensation for submergence of lands and recalled extending assistance in 2015 when the then Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao sought support for the project on the Godavari river.

He alleged that both the BRS and Congress governments had failed to compensate Maharashtra farmers and accused them of mismanaging Telangana's finances, claiming the state had moved from a surplus budget position to heavy debt.

He also alleged corruption by both parties. Fadnavis said the national highway connecting Bellampalli in Telangana

with Gadchiroli in Maharashtra would be completed soon and claimed that development was progressing rapidly in states governed by the BJP. He alleged that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy was pursuing appeasement politics and made allegations regarding diversion of SC and ST reservations.

BJP state president N. Ramchander Rao alleged that the Telangana government was heading towards what he termed tax pressure due to financial constraints and called on voters to support the BJP. Adilabad MP Godam Nagesh appealed for votes in the municipal elections in Kagaznagar and Asifabad, stating that the BJP was committed to development and welfare.

Teachers' MLC Malka Komaraiah alleged that government employees and pensioners were facing difficulties due to delays in salaries and retirement benefits and said Telangana had earlier been a surplus budget state.

Sirpur (T) MLA Palvai Harish Babu described Kagaznagar as "Mini India" and appealed to voters to support the BJP, citing development works undertaken in the constituency over the past two years.

BJP WILL WIN KARIMNAGAR MAYOR SEAT IN CIVIC BODY POLLS: BANDI

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, FEB. 7

Union minister of state Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Saturday expressed confidence that the BJP would secure the mayor's post in the forthcoming elections to the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation. He stated that the BRS would be limited to four seats, and the Congress and the AIMIM would not cross 20 seats.

Addressing street corner meetings at Rajasthan Chowrasta, Loyola College and Butti Rajaram

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IN BRIEF
Rly receives threat to train

Hyderabad: Railway authorities have received a letter claiming to be from "ISIS Jihadists," threatening to blow up the Vande Bharat Express at Secunderabad if a ransom of ₹2 crore was not paid. The letter, dated February 2 and addressed to the Secunderabad division general manager, warned that failure to meet the demand would result in a blast killing at least 350 passengers. Special teams were formed to probe the threat. Investigators examined footage from over 450 CCTV cameras and found the letter had been posted from a Rangareddy post box.

MOST PROPERTY IS INTACT AFTER FIRE: SHIKHA

FROM PAGE 1

In a release, FSL Director Shikha Goel said the fire had resulted in some damage to the computer forensics lab, the training hall and certain other facilities located on the first floor of the building. "The damage caused by this incident is being assessed. However, most of case property and TGFSL material is intact," Goel said. Prima facie it appears that the fire started in the electrical switch board of the room, the official said. The police have commenced an investigation. The fire was first noticed by an employee who saw smoke coming from one of the rooms located on the first floor. He alerted others in the building and an inspector of police working at TGFSL. He also used the fire extinguisher available in the room itself to douse the fire. Actual extent of damage would be known only after the smoke is completely cleared and a technical inspection of the servers is carried out, police said.

LUCKY ESCAPE FOR 39 AS BUS CATCHES FIRE

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 7

Thanks to the alertness of the cleaner, 39 passengers from Hyderabad bound for Guntur alighted safely after their private travels bus caught fire after it crossed the Keesara toll gate under the Kanchikacherla police limits early on Saturday. According to the Kanchikacherla police, the bus had left Hyderabad at midnight and halted briefly at Keesara for a break. After resuming the journey, the cleaner sensed a problem and alerted the driver, who asked him to check the vehicle. The cleaner noticed smoke billowing from the engine compartment, followed by flames. The driver immediately parked the bus beside the highway and asked the passengers to alight. Their luggage was also retrieved. The driver alerted the police who in turn called the fire service personnel who rushed to the site and extinguished the fire.

CAR PLUNGES INTO CANAL; COUPLE MISSING

DC CORRESPONDENT NALGONDA, FEB. 7

A couple was washed away while their driver escaped after their car plunged into the Nagarjuna Nagar left canal at Mukundapuram in Nidmanoor mandal on Saturday evening. Police identified the missing couple as Tallam Pullaiah and Padma, residents of Kampsagar in Tripuraram mandal. The incident occurred around 6.30 pm when the car lost control and veered into the canal while they were returning from Miryalaguda. Nidmanoor police rushed to the spot and launched a search operation with the help of expert swimmers. Sub inspector U. Suresh said the driver, who managed to escape, is being questioned as part of the investigation.

CORRIGENDUM NO. 02 AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO.: CON/2025/DEC/10; DATED: 23-12-2025
Corrigendum-02 for Tender No. CE-CON-SUR-FLS-2025-02 has been published. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in.
Chief Engineer/Con/Survey, Maligaon
Northeast Frontier Railway (Construction Organisation)
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

Goof-up by operator leads to 9 mins delay

Fire control room had GPS system that relays location

SYED OMAR FAROOQ I DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The fire control room is equipped with an active automated GPS system that gives the operator the location of the fire station nearest to the place from where a fire is reported. However, on Saturday, when the operator received a report about the fire in the FSL building, he directed a response from the fire outpost in Assembly which is 2 km away, resulting in a nine-minute delay in response time.

As per the fire department records, a fire call was received at Main Fire Control Room at 10.21 am, and the first fire tender was rushed from the Legislative Assembly fire station and reached FSL at 10.29 am.

The fire services said an internal inquiry has been launched on the reasons for why its control room staff directed the fire tender from Assembly instead of doing so with one stationed much closer to the FSL building. The nearest fire tender was located less than 100 metres at a fire outpost from the FSL building. This had two fire tenders loaded with 8,000 litres of water each and eight fire fighters. This was not activated and instead the one at Assembly was directed to take up the fire-fighting operation.

Five fire tenders and one fire-fighting robot with 33 firefighters battled the blaze for two hours and put it out by 12.30 pm. "With thick smoke emanating from the rooms where the fire burnt, our fighters split into two teams with one entering from the main entrance while the other went down from the second floor. We had to use heavy smoke exhausters to throw the thick smoke," Azeera Sreedas, district fire officer, Secunderabad, told *Deccan Chronicle*. K Shilpavalli, the Khairatabad zone deputy commissioner of police who visited the scene said, "Preliminary investigations revealed the fire started following a short circuit in the electricals in one of the rooms. Some computers were burnt and it will take some time to figure out which files were destroyed. Four FSL staffers were present.

Fire may have derailed many ongoing probes

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The fire in the Forensics Science Laboratory (FSL) in the Red Hills area here on Saturday may well affect, if not completely derailed, many ongoing investigations, with the gutting of a number of computers and hard drives in which crucial case-related data were stored.

The fire is said to have started in the room with the computers and storage devices on the first floor of the FSL building, and there was no immediate information on what data were stored in the equipment. Officials could not say if data could be retrieved from the destroyed equipment, or if there were back-ups stored elsewhere. Officials said several hundreds of pieces of evidence, including audio, video, hard disks and digital data seized as part of the phone-tapping investi-



Firefighters make efforts to control the blaze at TG-FSL building at Bazarghat in Nampally on Saturday. — P. SURENDRA

FSL fire hints at cover up: Kishan

DC CORRESPONDENTS HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Union minister G. Kishan Reddy on Saturday expressed grave concern over the major fire at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), which houses sensitive data on cases such as the cash for vote scam involving Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, then a Telugu Desam legislator, and the phone-tapping case of the BRS government.

He demanded that the state government confirm the safety of the data, insisting that back-ups of forensic and technical evidence for all high-profile cases must exist. The BRS demanded a comprehensive investigation into the incident, claiming that evidence in crucial cases could have been burnt and suspension of FSL officials.

Speaking to reporters at the state BJP office, Kishan Reddy alleged that Revanth Reddy was protecting BRS leaders K. Chandrashekar Rao and K.T. Rama Rao in corruption cases as quid pro quo for shielding him in the cash-for-vote case during the BRS government tenure. "The forensic lab fire hints at mutual cover-up," he alleged. He recalled that files were burnt during a fire in the Secretariat under BRS rule and similar evidence-wiping incidents now under Congress.

"One is a thief, the other a robber in corruption. If Revanth is Rahu, KCR and KTR are Ketu, plunging Telangana into darkness. If Revanth can't act against KCR, he should step down instead of shifting



G. Kishan Reddy

blame," Kishan Reddy demanded. He vowed stringent action against both parties' leaders for corruption after BJP assumes power. The BRS demanded a comprehensive investigation into the fire and, hinting that there could be much that meets the eye, demanded immediate suspension of FSL officials responsible for safety and security of the premises and its contents.

Party working president K.T. Rama Rao in a post on his X handle said he was "guessing" the voice recordings of the famous cash for vote case were damaged. He also alleged that the fire could also well be an attempt to "cover up for lack of evidence in cooked up political cases like phone tapping."

BRS MLC Dr Sravan Dasoji said: "no one will believe that a fire occurred in a section of the FSL where vital files of the Vote for Note case were stored. This was most certainly not an accident, but a deliberate plan to wipe out any evidence."

He said the BRS demanded an immediate investigation by a judge into the fire, that the government must release a White Paper on the files lost and on the files for which any back-ups were available, and suspend immediately officials responsible for laxity that resulted in the fire.

WHAT THE FSL DOES



- Specialised scientific divisions provide analysis and expert testimony for criminal probes.
- Stores data related to biology, serology, narcotics, and alcohol in biological and non-biological samples. physical/general evidence such as glass, paint, soil, and tool marks.
- Data pertaining to ballistics, explosives
- Cyber forensics data including digital evidence from mobile phones, computers, and storage devices to solve cyber-related crimes.

MAN DIES BY SUICIDE

Hyderabad: A 28 year old physiotherapist working at a private hospital in LB Nagar died by suicide at her residence in Krishi Colony under Suraram police station limits. According to SHO Sudhir Krishna, victim, M. Anitha, had recently been caring for her mother Ramadevi, who was admitted to a private hospital after fracturing her arm.

PAGDI

DAYAL CHIMNANI
18 JULY 1932 - 5 FEB 2026

A devoted family man, he lived with deep generosity and an unwavering commitment to his community. He will be deeply missed, but his spirit lives on as a lasting inspiration.

Kirtan & Prayers
Sunday, 8 February 2026 | 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Imperial Garden, Sikh Village, Secunderabad

Lovingly Remembered by:
Asha, Sanjay, Rita, Grandchildren & Great-Grandchildren

(CA No.4448)

11th DAY MEMORIAL
"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints" Psalms 116:15

Mrs. Esla David
DOB: 14/10/1938 DOD: 28/01/2026
Mass at Mount Carmel Church, New Bowenpally on 8th February, Sunday at 9:00 am.

Inserted by: DAVID'S FAMILY
Contact: 9963420402, 9440744899

REMEMBRANCE

DAYAL CHIMNANI
18 July 1932 - 5 Feb 2026

We deeply mourn the passing of Shri Dayal Chimnani, a man of strength and discipline, an entrepreneur who valued family above all. He will be remembered with great respect.

May his Soul Rest in Peace.

Inserted by:
Lions Club Secunderabad

(CA No.4449)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR BROTHER
The righteous one will be remembered forever Psalms 112:6

JEHOIACHIN SRIGIRI (JOKI)
Fondly remembered by
Brothers, Sisters & their families

(S/2526/D00949)

SHRADDHANJALI

Dada Dayal Chimnani
Founder Director

Your divine and graceful Soul will always be remembered

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Directors, Management & Staff.
SIND CO-OP URBAN BANK LTD. Hyderabad, Secunderabad.

1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Sri S.M.Sushil Kumar
DOB: 29.06.1953 DOD: 08.2.2025

We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.

Inserted by: Family Members

OM SHANTI

DAYAL CHIMNANI
18 July 1932 - 5 Feb 2026

With profound sorrow, we remember Shri Dayal Chimnani, a strong, family-oriented gentleman. His values and legacy will continue to inspire.

Om Shanti.

Inserted by:
Lions Club Secunderabad Charitable Trust

(CA No.4449)

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Dr. Joseph George (Joe)
(Ho Monica Joseph & Alumna of K.V.T.1978 batch)

Memorial Service
On 9-2-2026 at 6.30 AM, St. John's Church, RC Puram, BHIL, Hyderabad.

Prayers follow at the Cemetery.

Inserted by: Mrs. Theelamma George (Mother), Molly & Annie (Sisters) and Sebastian George (Brother), Phone: 99497 43075

3rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY
I am the dead in Christ will rise first 1st Thessalonians 4:16

Mrs. JELLA SWAROOPA RANI, M.A., M.Ed.
D/o. Late J. Sunder Raj
Jr. Lecturer in English, MJPTBCWREIS Wargal, Gajwel
Called to Glory on 8th February 2023

Inserted by:
Husband - Shashidharan

(S/2526/D00940)

IN MEMORY OF

A.V. RAMASWAMY
Who left us on this day in 2003 ALWAYS IN OUR THOUGHTS

Mrs. Vasanthi Ramaswamy & other family members

(S/2526/D00949)

11th DAY

PRUTHVI VALLABHDAS GOUD
DOB: 06-12-1957 DOD: 29-01-2026

Inserted By: FAMILY MEMBERS

RAMESHWARA FILLING STATION
PADMAVATI COLONY, MAHABUBNAGAR
CELL: 9502013434

3rd Death Anniversary

Dr. J. Bayu Reddy
Retd. I.A.S.

DOB: 21-07-1936 DOD: 08-02-2023

Selfless soul are always loving and kind, Such are memories you leave behind, You fall asleep without goodbye, But memories of you will never die.

Inserted by: Family Members

OBITUARY
"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7 KJV

With a heavy and saddened heart, we inform you that our beloved church senior member, **Mrs. K.S. Vijayamma** (W/o Late G. Franklin), LI (MNS) Retd Army officer Mrs K.S. Vijayamma Funeral Arrangements at Lutheran Church Ladditapool for last rites and tributes from 3:00 PM to 3:30 PM on Sunday 08-02-2026. Burial service will follow at 4:00 PM at Narayaguda Christian Cemetery.

Son: Golla Kenny Bob, Daughter in law: Swarupa
Daughter: Dr Golla Valentina, Son: Dominic
Grand Daughters: Aishwarya, Ashlesha, Cell: +91 94908 04553

SHRADDHANJALI

Dada Dayal Chimnani

May His Soul Rest in Peace

Sree Sindh Satsang Darbar Association Secunderbad

OBITUARY
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7

BOLLEDU HEMANTH (BENNU)
D.O.B: 17-04-1977 D.O.D: 7-2-2026
Funeral Service at 1 PM on 8th February, Garrison Cemetery, Trimulgherry.

Inserted by: Wife, Daughters, Mother, Brother & Sisters
Contact: 9059847033

(S/2526/D00940)

3rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY

ANIL KAK
D.O.B: 15-08-1968 D.O.D: 08-02-2023

Though you are not with us today but always lives in our hearts of remembered each day in our lives.

Inserted By: The Mech. Gang

(S/2526/D00941)

IN LOVING MEMORY

DAYAL CHIMNANI
18 July 1932 - 5 Feb 2026

With heartfelt sorrow, I remember my dearest friend Dayal Chimnani. May Waheguru Ji grant his noble soul eternal peace.

Inserted by:
Kuldeep Singh Saluja

(CA No.4448)

1st DEATH REMEMBERING

Smt. Bathula Anne Mary Garu
DOB: 24-10-1944 DOD: 09-02-2025

We miss you every moment in our life. Your presence continues to surround us. You are always there in our hearts. We will be gathering at our residence White House, 269/2R, Vijayanagar Colony, Hyd.

Followed by lunch on Sunday, 8th Feb' 2026 from 12:00 noon onwards

Inserted by:
FAMILY MEMBERS

In Loving Memory Of

DAYAL CHIMNANI
18 JULY 1932 - 05 FEB 2026

you will remain in our hearts forever

with love: Prakash (Pinky) Mulchandani Kalish P Mulchandani KP Multibrand Store - Trimulgherry

11th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Late Mamidi Yadireddy Garu
DOB: 7-5-1942 DOD: 8-2-2015
Kanajiguda, Ahal.

Your memories always in our hearts forever. May your soul rest in peace.

Son - Daughter-in-law
M. Rajender-in-law
Grandchildren - Sushma
M. Rudrasimha Reddy, M. Meghna Reddy



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DECCAN Chronicle

8 FEBRUARY 2026



Shashi Warriar

Off the beaten track

Just blame it all on the Chinese!

Murthy turned up on my doorstep one evening with a skinny young man in tow and a bottle in his hand. "My nephew Shanker," he said, pointing at the youngster. "He's a new engineer — graduated in September — and he's joining Microsoft in Hyderabad next month. I'm taking him around to show him how to drink responsibly."

Shanker seemed in his early twenties, with thick spectacles, wild hair, and a hunted look in his eyes with which I could sympathise. Prita came along then, and I could see that she, too, recognised that look in Shanker's eyes. We led them in, concentrating on making Shanker feel at home — Murthy could make himself at home anywhere. But Shanker, instead of responding, just sank into a sofa and into himself, busy twiddling his thumbs. I gave up, served him his drink and turned to the others.

Murthy brought up the topic of President Trump and his Gaza Peace Board and whether India should join. I didn't have an opinion, but Prita thought that India shouldn't get into it. "Why not?" asked Murthy.

"Going by the charter," replied Prita, not mincing her words, "you'd have to be really dumb to get into it. Paying Trump a billion dollars for the privilege of watching him spend all that money on making more out of Gaza than Palestinians ever did? No way."

"We've got a year in which to think of paying Trump," replied Murthy, "and it might be worthwhile having someone — a ministry of external affairs person — to take notes at meetings, just in case Trump blabs, as he's been doing all along."

"It's a complete waste of time," said Prita. "Not worth having even a clerk attend the meeting, because Trump will spread his opinions on Truth Social the morning after."

"Of course he'll scatter his views immediately after," said Murthy, "but he's going to downplay everyone else at the meetings. That's what we need to know: how do others respond to Trump's moves?"

"Trump'll get rid of anyone who differs with him," said Prita. "He withdrew the invitation to Canada after Carney's speech at Davos. Do you seriously think the Pakistanis or Israelis or Tony Blair will contradict Trump?"

"Let's wait to see how Russia and China respond," said Murthy. "There's no hurry to decide."

At this point I noticed a gleam in Shanker's eye that hadn't been there before. "What do you say?" I asked him.

He coughed nervously and straightened up and stopped twiddling his thumbs. "Like Uncle," he said, "I think we should send someone."

"Why?" asked Prita, somewhat gently, remembering his social ineptitude.

"Because we can learn a lot," he replied, "no matter what."

"What do you mean?" asked Prita.

"Send in someone with a laptop loaded with an AI bot to record what Trump says," replied Shanker, "and to put it together with everything else he's ever said, and analyze it."

"How will that help?" asked Prita.

"In many ways," replied Shanker, growing more confident with each word. "One, it can create clips that'll represent Trump in whatever way we like — as a dictator, an idiot, a far-sighted strategist, a madman, whatever. Two, an AI bot can edit clips that show him contradicting everything he puts out on Truth Social. Three, it can give us insights on what he really wants to do."

"Why do we need an AI bot to do that?" asked Prita.

"Speed," replied Shanker. "We can have all this stuff ready within minutes of his saying something, or putting it out on social media. And we won't even have to fake anything. AI will do the slicing and splicing, so there won't be a shred of evidence that we've faked anything. If the government puts its mind to it, we can reduce him to a laughing stock every time he says anything on social media. We can flood the media with material — edited, not faked — that'll put his constituency against him. We can block him."

"Why do we need to attend the Board's meetings for that?" asked Prita. "There's already lots of data on stupid or greedy or warlike things he's said."

"Yes," said Shanker, "but the Board is a place where he's going to make sure he's got only yes men, so the chances are he'll likely get even more outrageous there. More inflammatory material, cheap."

I sat up straight. Behind that bookish exterior lurked an online gladiator. "Why haven't we already done all this?" asked Prita. "I'm sure we've had the AI tools for some time now."

I noticed Murthy glaring. Shanker sank back into the sofa and polished off his drink. That burst of confidence when he'd spoken about AI was gone, thanks to "Uncle" Murthy.

"His glass is empty," Prita whispered, nudging me. "Give him a refill. He's earned it!"

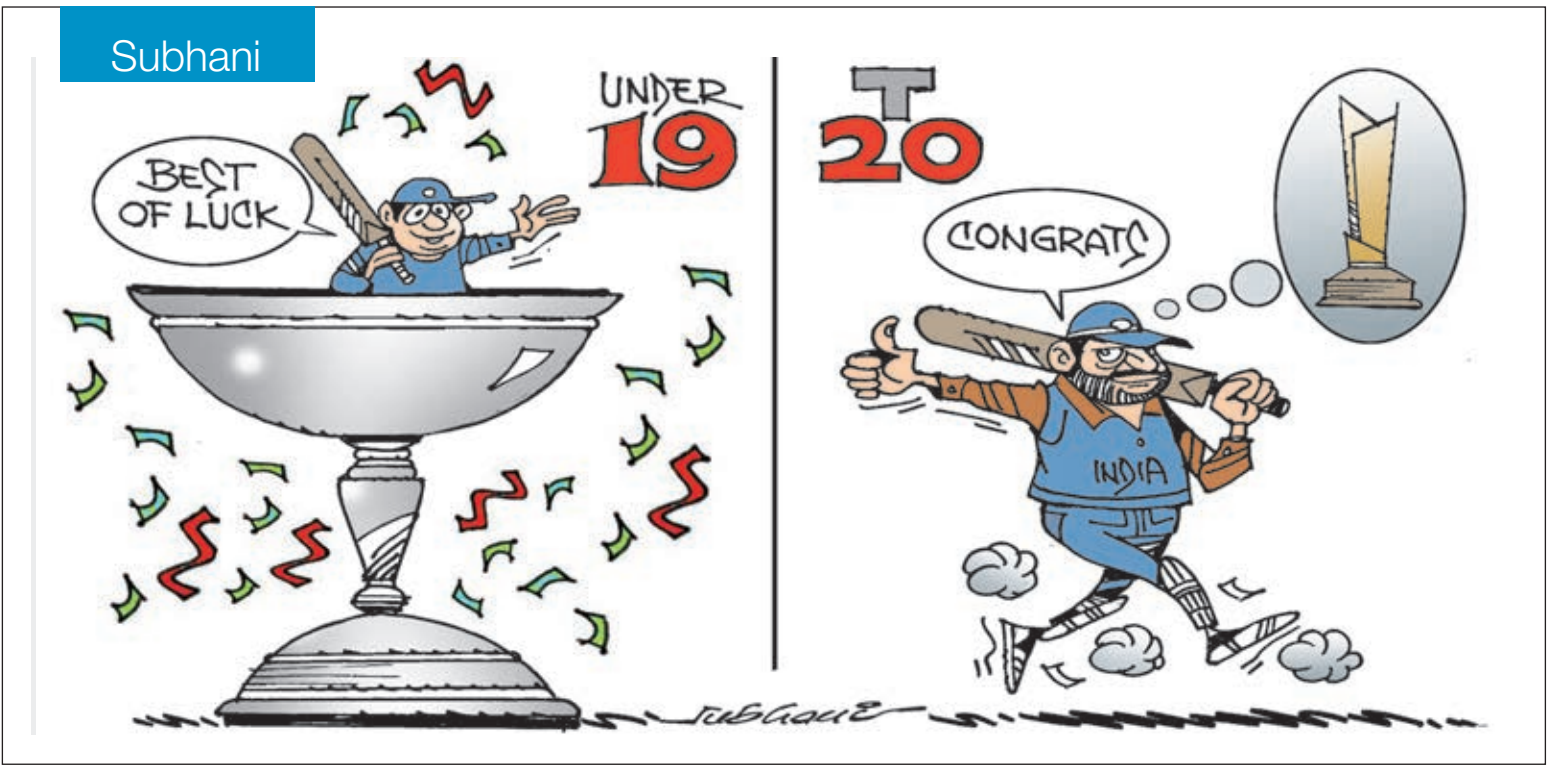
I agreed, and poured him a large one despite a glare from Murthy. We waited for Shanker to take a few sips before Prita stepped in again. "I'm sure you have some ideas on why we haven't already done it," she said. "Tell us!"

"The confidence seemed to return. 'If we do it to Trump,' he said, 'Trump's people will retaliate even harder. And it'll spread. Everyone will start doing it, and it'll get real ugly real soon.'"

"So, you're saying we can't do it!" said Prita.

"Oh, yes, we can!" said Shanker, polishing off his second and holding the glass out for more. "Xi Jinping and gang don't bother with their public image. Trump can't hit back at them because their Internet is so tightly controlled. So just fake it to look like the Chinese did it!"

Shashi Warriar is an author and a columnist



The profound challenges the Budget ignored fully



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

The Union Budget for 2026-27 arrives as a testament to an economy running on fumes. It is the budget of an era of diminished expectations, where the nominal GDP growth, the true lifeblood of government revenue and private sector pricing power, has reduced from 14 per cent and 20 per cent during 2004-05 and 2008-09, respectively, to a pedestrian eight per cent during 2026-27. This precipitous decline is not a cyclical trough but a structural plateau. The Budget's response to this is not a bold corrective but a weary accommodation to this slower, humbler reality.

Beneath the veneer of moderate fiscal consolidation, where the deficit is projected at 4.3 per cent of GDP, lies an alarming and unsustainable reality. The government's total liabilities, which stood at ₹56.51 lakh crore in 2013-14, are projected to balloon to ₹214.8 lakh crore by 2026-27. Servicing this mountain requires interest payments of ₹14.04 lakh crore (9.7 per cent increase from the last Budget), consuming 20 paise of every rupee spent. To contextualise this calamity, the fiscal deficit itself is projected at approximately ₹17 lakh crore. This means a colossal portion of our fresh borrowing is not financing development, but is merely being recycled to service past debts and crowd out private investments in search of capital from the market.

The government's celebrated pivot from revenue expenditure (down from 81 per cent of total outlay in 2020-21 to 72 pc) towards capital expenditure (up to 23 pc) is another positive narrative on paper that collapses under the weight of this interest burden. This capex push, reaching ₹12.2 lakh crore, was ostensibly

designed to crowd in private investment, a strategy that has failed.

Private corporate investment remains moribund despite generous corporate tax cuts, production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes, and GST reductions aimed at spurring consumption. The reason is that Private Final Consumption Expenditure has stagnated, actually falling from 57.1 per cent of GDP in 2013-14 to 56.3 per cent in 2025-26. With household budgets squeezed by high inflation and low wage growth, and unemployment curiously highest among the educated youth, the demand signal for private sector capex never materialised. The government's supply-side bet was placed on a demand base that simply did not exist.

This fundamental demand weakness is the toxin coursing through the budget's veins, manifesting in expenditure cuts dressed as fiscal prudence. The government met its current year's deficit target of 4.4 pc not through revenue outperformance but through a draconian suppression of spending. Tax buoyancy has plummeted to a worrying 0.6, against an assumption of 1.1, meaning revenue grows at only 60 per cent the rate of nominal GDP. Gross tax revenue growth assumed at 13 per cent came in at a mere three per cent; income tax growth projected at 17 pc limped in at six per cent.

This fiscal straitjacket directly manifests in the government's retreat from critical social and economic expenditures. The outlay for the Jal Jeevan Mission was revised down by over 70 per cent (from ₹67,000 crore to ₹17,000 crore); PM Awas Yojana (Urban) by nearly two-thirds; and the Urban Challenge Fund by 90 per cent. The budget for labour, employment and skill development was more than halved mid-year, plummet-

ing from ₹32,496 crore to ₹12,759 crore, a devastating statistic for a nation in the throes of jobless growth. The proposed restorations for next year are a cynical, confidence-eroding pantomime, creating a Potemkin village of allocations that bear no relation to actual expenditure. This cycle reveals a government skilled at announcement but bankrupt in execution.

Faced with the failure of its consumption-boosting gambits, the budget for 2026-27 retreats into a supply-side shell, its ambitions scaled down to pointed interventions.

Its central, silent gamble is an unprecedented, stealthy liberalisation of the Customs tariff regime. The government has proposed a series of duty reductions and exemptions on electronics components, semiconductors, medical devices, aviation parts and clean energy inputs. This is not random tinkering; it is a deliberate concession to long-standing US trade demands, as a pre-requisite to the trade agreement itself, designed to signal compliance and goodwill rather than safeguard domestic interests or negotiate compensatory access.

This sequencing has rendered the entire arrangement structurally skewed, anti-farmer, anti-MSME, and fiscally costly, that exposes domestic manufacturers to asymmetric competition without reciprocal benefits. Far from strengthening India's production base, the administration's strategy appears oriented towards managing optics in Washington at the expense of the Indian fisc, agriculture, industry, and livelihoods.

The Budget's microscopic interventions cannot mask

its macroscopic failures. The investment rate (Gross Capital Formation) remains stuck at a mere 33 per cent of GDP for 2026-27, down by more than five percentage points since 2012-13. Exports as a percentage of GDP have shrunk from 24.9 per cent in 2013-14 to an estimated 21.5 per cent now. Gross Domestic Savings have stagnated around 30 per cent, failing to breach past peaks. These are the core symptoms of an economy struggling to transition to a more productive, globally competitive, and investment-driven model.

The vision of a "Viksit Bharat" powered by cutting-edge technology is betrayed by the comparative paucity of commitment: While China dedicates \$40 billion to semiconductors and \$56 billion in state funding for AI, India's corresponding figures are a tentative \$4.5 billion and a paltry \$1.2 billion over five years, reliant on foreign capital.

The finance minister's speech, in a telling evasion, speaks around the problem-mentioning skills, startups, and manufacturing — but never directly confronts it. The data is devastating.

The Budget is a document of managed decline, where the nominal growth assumption of 10 per cent for next year is itself an admission of a slower new normal, likely fuelled more by inflation than real expansion. It is the Budget of a government that has, through a series of shocks such as demonetisation and a complex GST, broken the virtuous cycle of broad-based demand, job creation and private investment.

The Union Budget 2026-27 will be remembered not for what it achieved, but for the profound challenges it chose to ignore. It is a calculated murmur of an administration navigating the constraints of a weakened mandate and a weakened economy, its ambitions downsized to fit the diminished horizons it now accepts as India's fate.

Manish Tewari is a third-term Lok Sabha MP and former Union minister. Twitter handle @ManishTewari.

LETTERS

MODI'S ADVICE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's advice to students in *Pariksha Pe Charcha* highlights the point that students coming out of their comfort zone is very important rather than getting just marks (*Focus on life, not just marks: Modi, Feb. 7*). If parents understand this message they won't force their kids to obtain cent per cent marks and leave the career option to their own choice and passion.

Venkat Rudra
Hyderabad

PUT NATION ABOVE

The debates in Parliament give an impression that politicians have no patience to listen to the viewpoint of their rivals (*All leaders need to shun hate, put the nation first, Feb. 7*). This mindset is not a good augury for a democracy. Agreeing to disagree should guide our politicians to allow for discussions, debates and decisions.

M.V. Nagavender Rao
Hyderabad

BATTLEFIELD

Parliament has become a battlefield (*Budget debate stalled, LS adjourned abruptly, Feb. 7*). Are MPs are elected to fight among themselves? Why should we go for elections?

D. Krishna Mohan
Hyderabad

TIGER CAPTURED

The involvement of the NGO in this exemplary achievement speaks about the kindness of people to wild animals (*Tiger captured in AP with help of Pune-based NGO, Feb. 7*). All of us need to avoid encroaching into forests to allow wildlife to enjoy staying in their natural and legitimate dwellings with our stoppage of deforestation activities.

M.N. Saraswathi Devi
Secunderabad

UNDER-19 CHAMPS

India won the Under-19 world cricket championship by defeating England by 100 runs (*India are Under-19 champions, Feb. 7*). Vaibhav Sooryavanshi played extremely well and exploded with 175 runs against 80 balls (15 fours, 15 sixes). Congratulations to captain Ayush Mhatre and his team.

Maringanti Vijaya Sarathi
Hyderabad

Email your letters to info@deccanmail.com, editor@deccanmail.com.



Anita Anand

As billionaires are rising, govts busy defending wealth, eroding freedom

Money. We all want and need it. But how much do we need? How much is enough, and what does it mean when some have exorbitant wealth while others have practically nothing?

Let's look at the richest. They are called billionaires, or persons whose net worth is at least one billion units of a given currency, typically US dollars. As of March 2025, there are 3,028 billionaires worldwide, with a combined wealth of over \$16.1 trillion, up by nearly \$2 trillion from 2024. I can't even think or count that far.

The 2025 Oxfam America report, "Unequal: The Rise of a New American Oligarchy and the Agenda We Need", notes that the number of billionaires has surpassed 3,000 for the first time and that billionaire wealth is now higher than at any point in history. Meanwhile, one in four people globally faces hunger.

Oxfam is a British-founded confederation of 21 independent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that focuses on alleviating global poverty. Founded in 1942 and led by Oxfam International, it operates in 79 countries and has 21 members in the Oxfam Confederation across Australia, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North and Latin

America and the Caribbean.

The report says that over the decades, billionaire fortunes have grown at a rate three times faster than the average annual rate over the previous five years. Since Donald Trump's election as US President (for the second time) in November 2024, billionaire fortunes have grown at a rate three times faster than the average annual rate over the previous five years.

While US billionaires have seen the sharpest growth in their fortunes, billionaires elsewhere in the world have also seen double-digit increases. The actions of the Trump presidency, including championing deregulation and undermining agreements to raise corporate taxation, have benefited the world's richest.

What about Indian billionaires? As of 2025, Forbes reported that India had 284 billionaires, making it the third-largest country by billionaire count, after the United States and China. Mukesh Ambani, chairman and the largest shareholder of Reliance Industries, has been the richest Indian for 14 consecutive years and is currently the world's 10th-richest person.

Why do we need to worry about the growing number of billionaires? As the report says, while acquiring an enormous yacht or

luxury homes around the world is a personal choice, excessive consumption can be criticised for the carbon emissions associated with it, especially in a deeply unequal world, where the majority have very little. Many reject this criticism, describing it as the politics of envy.

Beyond envy, and more worrying, billionaires are using their wealth to buy politicians, influence governments, own newspapers or social media platforms or out-lawyer any opposition to ensure impunity from justice.

"Such power gives billionaires a grasp over all our futures, undermining political freedom and eroding the rights of the many," says the report. While these phenomena are not new globally, events in the United States in 2025 perhaps made this unreasonably clear: across countries, the super-rich have accumulated more wealth than could ever be spent and have also used it to secure political power to shape the rules that define our economies and govern nations.

At the same time, globally, there is erosion and rollback of the civil and political rights of the majority and minorities, suppression of protests, and silencing of dissent. A century ago, US Supreme Court Jus-

ice Louis Brandeis said: "We must make our choice. Either we can have extreme wealth in the hands of the few, or we can have democracy. We cannot have both."

The report points out that it's about choices. Governments are choosing to defend wealth over freedom. "In sharp contrast, those economically with the least wealth are becoming politically poor, with their voices silenced in the face of growing authoritarianism and the suppression of hard-won rights and freedoms."

Can reforms curb the growing power of billionaires and countries to radically reduce economic inequality? The report suggests they can, by curbing the political influence of the super-rich, effectively taxing them to reduce their economic power and, through this, their political power; regulating lobbying and revolving doors; banning campaign financing by the rich; legislating to ensure media independence; regulating media companies to increase algorithmic transparency; and protecting freedom of speech while preventing harmful content, especially hate speech.

But since the super-rich are in power, initiating and implementing these reforms might be a challenge. In the meantime, can citizens like you and me ask ourselves what

wealth means to us, how we generate it, and how we use it? Can we consider living and consuming a little lower down the consumption chain? How many houses do we need? How many vacations? Is our money used wisely? Can we share our incomes with the less fortunate?

Can we create opportunities to improve their lives? Before the age of the Internet, people could only dream of what wealth could buy. Now, it's in our face. Through entertainment streaming on our TV sets, smartphones, and watches, the lives of the rich and famous come right into our homes, our hands, and our eyes. The possibility of endless wealth, homes, and travel to distant places seems exotic but doable. Lavish spending on social functions, personal goods, and services is within reach.

The question to ask ourselves is: do I need it, can I live without it, and do I have a better use for the money? Am I avoiding paying taxes so my wealth can multiply legally or illegally? While we wait for reforms, are our personal choices and those of our governments defending wealth while eroding freedom?

The writer is a development and communications consultant

SHORT TAKE

10 GOVT MEDICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS HURT IN ACCIDENT

P. SRINIVAS | DC NALGONDA, FEB. 3

At least 10 students sustained minor injuries when a bus hired by the Kothagudem Government Medical College rammed into a tree near the college premises in the town in Bhadradi-Kothagudem district on Saturday evening. About 40 students were travelling in the bus at the time.

The incident occurred around 5 pm when the bus, carrying students from the college to the hostel at Palvancha, went out of control about 100 metres from the main gate of the college and hit a tree adjoining a house.

According to the police, the driver reported that he fell ill suddenly, leading to the loss of control. Window panes were damaged in the impact, resulting in minor injuries to several students. The injured students were shifted to the Government General Hospital, Kothagudem, for treatment. Police said none of the students was seriously injured.

The bus is operated by a private agency hired by the college to ferry students between the college and the hostel, which are about 4 km apart.

CSIR-CCMB experts find why fungi turns harmful

Explained love of fungi for sugar, role of nutrients in infection

DEEPIKA PASHAM | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Scientists at CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, have figured out how fungi become harmful inside the human body, according to a study. The finding comes against the backdrop of fungal infections are emerging as a serious but often ignored health threat across the world.

While bacteria and viruses get more attention, fungi are increasingly causing severe infections, leading to hospitalisation and deaths. They are also damaging crops, affecting food production. At the same time, treatment options are limited, as antifungal drugs are few, often toxic, and losing effectiveness due to resistance said scientists. A CCMB research team led by Dr Sriram Varahan found that fungi turn dangerous by changing their shape, and this change is



controlled not just by genes, but also by how fungi use sugar for energy. Dr Varahan explained to Deccan Chronicle, "Fungi loves sugar. The study we have done at this point is restricted to fungal infections although we talk about sugar metabolism. The need for antifungal is very high. So, this is a step closer to identifying effective antifungals."

He said the pathways his team had identified were conserved and this could be possible happening in fungal species. "The morphogenesis that we have worked on is also conserved in animal pathogens, plant pathogens. It is important because plant fungal pathogens are a huge problem," he added.

Fungi mainly exist in two forms — a small, round yeast form and a long, thread-like filament form. The yeast form helps fungi move and survive, but once inside the human body, fungi often change into the filament form. This filament form is harder for the immune system and medicines to remove and is linked to severe infections.

Dr Varahan's study shows that this shape change depends on the fungus's metabolism — especially how it breaks down sugar. When fungi break down sugar rapidly, it affects the production of certain sulphur-based amino acids, which act like a switch that allows fungi to become invasive.

During laboratory experiments, when scientists slowed down sugar breakdown, fungi stayed in the harmless yeast form. But when sulphur-containing amino acids were added, the fungi quickly regained their

ability to change shape. This confirmed that these nutrients play a key role in fungal infection.

The team also studied *Candida albicans*, a common fungus that causes infections in humans. When its sugar metabolism was disrupted, the fungus struggled to change shape, survive immune attacks, and cause disease. In mouse studies, this weakened strain led to much milder infections.

According to Dr Varahan, targeting fungal metabolism could open a new way to treat infections. Since these processes are essential for fungal survival, they may be harder for fungi to resist.

With drug-resistant fungal infections on the rise globally, the study suggests that cutting off fungi's energy supply could help prevent them from turning harmful — offering hope for safer and more effective antifungal treatments in the future.

Statue access restricted



Visitors can now see the Ambedkar statue near NTR Marg from afar as the entrance ceiling is still damaged, fountain nonfunctional, and museum remains closed.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

PJTSAU TO HOLD CONVOCATION FOR 3 BATCHES

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

After a wait of nearly three years, Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) will conduct a combined convocation for three batches on February 9 at its Sports Complex in Rajendranagar.

University vice chancellor Aldas Janaiah said the 56th, 57th and 58th convocations will be held together, clearing a long backlog.

Governor Jishnu Dev Varma will preside over the ceremony. A total of 2,744 students will receive degrees, including 2,135 undergraduates, 480 postgraduates and 129 PhD scholars. Gold medals will be awarded to 64 UG, 26 PG and six doctoral candidates. International agricultural economist Prabhu Pingali will attend as chief guest and deliver the convocation address.

Family suicide mystery deepens

PRIYA RATHNAM | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 6

The mystery surrounding the Charlapalli mother and children suicide case remains unresolved even after a week, with police yet to determine the motive behind the tragic deaths.

The deceased, identified as Vijaya Reddy, along with her son and daughter, were found dead near the railway tracks in Cherlapalli, Ghatkesar area. Police continue to describe the sequence of events as puzzling, with no clear explanation for why all three chose to take the extreme step together.

Vijaya's husband, who has been working in Dubai for nearly 20 years, was not present at the time. She had been staying with her mother and had enrolled her children in hostels, reportedly for better education and supervision. Police sources said the inquiry has not made significant

progress, as Vijaya's family has been uncooperative and has not provided useful information. "The only ones who could have revealed the motive were the mother and children themselves. With their deaths, the case remains a mystery," officials opined. Secunderabad GRP officials said they were leaving no stone unturned in the probe. Teams visited the family's Medipally residence and seized bank account details for examination. Mobile phones recovered from the scene were examined by officers and cybercrime teams, but attempts to unlock them failed. The devices have now been sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory for detailed analysis. Bank records and transactions are also being scrutinised for possible leads. Police have denied any links to an alleged affair and reiterated that credible information from the family could help resolve case.

TG set for 18,000 MW summer power demand

NEERAJ KUMAR | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Telangana's electricity demand is rising steadily with the end of winter, and officials expect the summer peak to cross 18,000 MW, surpassing last year's record of 17,162 MW set on March 20.

In late January, during the early Rabi season, consumption touched 16,048 MW, up from 15,205 MW in the same period last year. Within GHMC limits under the southern discom (TDSPL-CL), demand hit 3,489 MW compared to 3,034 MW last year. Across the discom's



Musharraf Faruqi

jurisdiction, usage rose to 10,389 MW, against 9,589 MW previously.

TGSPDCL chairman and managing director

Musharraf Faruqi said Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka had directed officials to strengthen infrastructure for uninterrupted supply. "We hold regular reviews with engineers to monitor high-load transformers and feeders. If loads exceed 80 per cent capacity, we augment them immediately," he said.

To meet rising needs, the government is upgrading the 33/11 kV distribution network, with over 90 per cent of works completed in southern discom limits.

In the rural zone spanning

10 circles including Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda, and Siddipet, 90 per cent of upgrades are done on 257 feeders (11 kV), 63 feeders (33 kV), 184 power transformers, and 3,064 distribution transformers. Seventy substations have been identified for expansion.

Rangareddy zone, covering Cyberabad, Rajendranagar, and Saroornagar, has seen 20-25 per cent annual demand growth, far above the statewide average of 10-12 per cent. Works are in final stages for 147 feeders (11 kV), 56 feeders (33 kV), 71 power transformers, and 965

distribution transformers.

In the Medchal zone, covering Hayathnagar, Medchal, and Sangareddy, upgrades are complete on 101 feeders (11 kV), 7 feeders (33 kV), 36 power transformers, and 297 distribution transformers. Overall, the southern discom has bolstered capacity with 495 feeders (11 kV), 60 feeders (33 kV), 336 power transformers, and 4,952 distribution transformers. These upgrades step down high-voltage power for local delivery, ensuring stable supply to consumers even at peak times.

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NRI'S/MNC'S looking for Purchase/Lease, Commercial/Residential properties in Banjara Hills/Jubilee Hills/Sec 10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100/101/102/103/104/105/106/107/108/109/110/111/112/113/114/115/116/117/118/119/120/121/122/123/124/125/126/127/128/129/130/131/132/133/134/135/136/137/138/139/140/141/142/143/144/145/146/147/148/149/150/151/152/153/154/155/156/157/158/159/160/161/162/163/164/165/166/167/168/169/170/171/172/173/174/175/176/177/178/179/180/181/182/183/184/185/186/187/188/189/190/191/192/193/194/195/196/197/198/199/200/201/202/203/204/205/206/207/208/209/210/211/212/213/214/215/216/217/218/219/220/221/222/223/224/225/226/227/228/229/230/231/232/233/234/235/236/237/238/239/240/241/242/243/244/245/246/247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/264/265/266/267/268/269/270/271/272/273/274/275/276/277/278/279/280/281/282/283/284/285/286/287/288/289/290/291/292/293/294/295/296/297/298/299/300/301/302/303/304/305/306/307/308/309/310/311/312/313/314/315/316/317/318/319/320/321/322/323/324/325/326/327/328/329/330/331/332/333/334/335/336/337/338/339/340/341/342/343/344/345/346/347/348/349/350/351/352/353/354/355/356/357/358/359/360/361/362/363/364/365/366/367/368/369/370/371/372/373/374/375/376/377/378/379/380/381/382/383/384/385/386/387/388/389/390/391/392/393/394/395/396/397/398/399/400/401/402/403/404/405/406/407/408/409/410/411/412/413/414/415/416/417/418/419/420/421/422/423/424/425/426/427/428/429/430/431/432/433/434/435/436/437/438/439/440/441/442/443/444/445/446/447/448/449/450/451/452/453/454/455/456/457/458/459/460/461/462/463/464/465/466/467/468/469/470/471/472/473/474/475/476/477/478/479/480/481/482/483/484/485/486/487/488/489/490/491/492/493/494/495/496/497/498/499/500/501/502/503/504/505/506/507/508/509/510/511/512/513/514/515/516/517/518/519/520/521/522/523/524/525/526/527/528/529/530/531/532/533/534/535/536/537/538/539/540/541/542/543/544/545/546/547/548/549/550/551/552/553/554/555/556/557/558/559/560/561/562/563/564/565/566/567/568/569/570/571/572/573/574/575/576/577/578/579/580/581/582/583/584/585/586/587/588/589/590/591/592/593/594/595/596/597/598/599/600/601/602/603/604/605/606/607/608/609/610/611/612/613/614/615/616/617/618/619/620/621/622/623/624/625/626/627/628/629/630/631/632/633/634/635/636/637/638/639/640/641/642/643/644/645/646/647/648/649/650/651/652/653/654/655/656/657/658/659/660/661/662/663/664/665/666/667/668/669/670/671/672/673/674/675/676/677/678/679/680/681/682/683/684/685/686/687/688/689/690/691/692/693/694/695/696/697/698/699/700/701/702/703/704/705/706/707/708/709/710/711/712/713/714/715/716/717/718/719/720/721/722/723/724/725/726/727/728/729/730/731/732/733/734/735/736/737/738/739/740/741/742/743/744/745/746/747/748/749/750/751/752/753/754/755/756/757/758/759/760/761/762/763/764/765/766/767/768/769/770/771/772/773/774/775/776/777/778/779/780/781/782/783/784/785/786/787/788/789/790/791/792/793/794/795/796/797/798/799/800/801/802/803/804/805/806/807/808/809/810/811/812/813/814/815/816/817/818/819/820/821/822/823/824/825/826/827/828/829/830/831/832/833/834/835/836/837/838/839/840/841/842/843/844/845/846/847/848/849/850/851/852/853/854/855/856/857/858/859/860/861/862/863/864/865/866/867/868/869/870/871/872/873/874/875/876/877/878/879/880/881/882/883/884/885/886/887/888/889/890/891/892/893/894/895/896/897/898/899/900/901/902/903/904/905/906/907/908/909/910/911/912/913/914/915/916/917/918/919/920/921/922/923/924/925/926/927/928/929/930/931/932/933/934/935/936/937/938/939/940/941/942/943/944/945/946/947/948/949/950/951/952/953/954/955/956/957/958/959/960/961/962/963/964/965/966/967/968/969/970/971/972/973/974/975/976/977/978/979/980/981/982/983/984/985/986/987/988/989/990/991/992/993/994/995/996/997/998/999/1000/1001/1002/1003/1004/1005/1006/1007/1008/1009/1010/1011/1012/1013/1014/1015/1016/1017/1018/1019/1020/1021/1022/1023/1024/1025/1026/1027/1028/1029/1030/1031/1032/1033/1034/1035/1036/1037/1038/1039/1040/1041/1042/1043/1044/1045/1046/1047/1048/1049/1050/1051/1052/1053/1054/1055/1056/1057/1058/1059/1060/1061/1062/1063/1064/1065/1066/1067/1068/1069/1070/1071/1072/1073/1074/1075/1076/1077/1078/1079/1080/1081/1082/1083/1084/1085/1086/1087/1088/1089/1090/1091/1092/1093/1094/1095/1096/1097/1098/1099/1100/1101/1102/1103/1104/1105/1106/1107/1108/1109/1110/1111/1112/1113/1114/1115/1116/1117/1118/1119/1120/1121/1122/1123/1124/1125/1126/1127/1128/1129/1130/1131/1132/1133/1134/1135/1136/1137/1138/1139/1140/1141/1142/1143/1144/1145/1146/1147/1148/1149/1150/1151/1152/1153/1154/1155/1156/1157/1158/1159/1160/1161/1162/1163/1164/1165/1166/1167/1168/1169/1170/1171/1172/1173/1174/1175/1176/1177/1178/1179/1180/1181/1182/1183/1184/1185/1186/1187/1188/1189/1190/1191/1192/1193/1194/1195/1196/1197/1198/1199/1200/1201/1202/1203/1204/1205/1206/1207/1208/1209/1210/1211/1212/1213/1214/1215/1216/1217/1218/1219/1220/1221/1222/1223/1224/1225/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CLASSIFIEDS

MATRIMONIAL BRIDE WANTED

DOCTORS

SEEKING BRIDE for MD Doctor, 31 yrs, 5'7", Pk, Kapsu, well-settled family, Hyderabad. Preference for Telugu mother tongue. Proposals welcome from across India. Contact: 7396273292, 8639232860 (HYMM/2526/C04585)

MUSLIM

SM SYED parents seeks a match for their 45-year-old son (divorced, no issues), 5'9", MBA, Working as Associate Vice President in an MNC. Looking for a fair, 5'3"+, PG/ Graduate, unmarried/ divorced (no issues), from a progressive Hyderabad family away from shirk & bidah. W/A Only: 855039286. (HYMM/2526/C04178)

GROOM WANTED

CASTE NO BAR

44 YRS/ 5'5"/ Swa/ Bengaluru, OC/ Caste no bar, seeks Engineer/ Doctor/ Professional groom. Direct: 9182734077 (HYMM/2526/C04609)

CHRISTIAN

BORN AGAIN believer PG Doctor/ IIT/ IIM working in Hyderabad for God fearing, fair, MS OBG Doctor who will join Sirship in Hyderabad. Contact: 9490166468 (A/2526/C00712)

MUSLIM

SHEERIN MATRIMONIAL 26 5'11" B.E filing station banquet owner property holder 2) 2000 born Ms 5'11 managing director group of companies 3) 1999 B.E 6 feet property holder of 40 acres land 4) 1998 MS data engineer 5) 1992 5'7 MS Canadian citizen. 9246201463, sheerinmatrimonial@gmail.com (A/2526/C00733)

ANDHRA SM Parents invite alliance for their daughter 26 5'3" very fair, B.Tech, M.Sc, working in MNC. Seeks BE/ M.Tech/ MBA Boy working in India/ Abroad from Andhra/ Rayalaseema Family Ph:9573464561, 8308651274. (S/2526/C00136)

RAYALASEEMA SUNNI Muslim parents invite alliance for beautiful daughter 1994 December Born, 5'7 B.Tech (Taken Qula/ No Issues) Seeks BE/ M.Tech/ MS (Divorce/ Qula without issues) Preferably from Rayalaseema/ Andhra Family Ph:959787587, 9030855437. (B/2526/C00058)

SM SYED parents KSA invites alliance for their daughter born 95/ 5'3, V.Pretty, Religious, seeks well settled, Professionally Qualified Boy Ht 5'10 from Educated family residing India/ Abroad Age 31- 35 yrs, No Fatshah, No 2nd Marriage. Send Biocdata/ Photos. W/A: 7207761661. (HYMM/2526/C04536)

ALLIANCE INVITED for Hyderabad origin, Beautiful, Sunni Muslim, US Citizen, 27 years, hijabi girl undergoing Doctor of Optometry profession. Parents are looking for US citizen, professional boy Doctor or Engineer residing ideally in Bay area, California, USA. Please contact with pics/ biocdata details at email: laynah702@gmail.com (HYMM/2526/C04612)

SYED SMP invites alliance for B-Pharmacy and Pharm-D PB daughter, 26 Years, 5'5", Fair, Gulf raised, Holds USA Multiple B1/ B2 Visa, Strictly religious family, No Shirk/ Bidah. Seeking professional groom settled abroad, Doctor or Engineer, 26-30 Years, 5'8", WhatsApp full biocdata/ photos: 8106062029. No Agents. (HYHA/2526/C00559)

HYDERABADI PARENTS in USA, seek alliance for unmarried daughter, 36, USA born, Master's Degree (USA), well-cultured, career-oriented, seeking a highly educated Sunni Muslim boy. Girl is willing to sponsor visa. Contact: ateeq.sidiki@gmail.com, WhatsApp: +1-949-697-9983 (HYHA/2526/C00675)

MARRIAGE BUREAU

CNB HINDU 2nd age 56 Height 5.5 business and life partner NRI Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, no broker free marriages. 9550982269, 8076799867 (HYMM/2526/C04544)

ALHAMDUILLAH SINCE-1993 Hyderabad's Most Trusted Muslim Matrimony. Ghar Sansar-TM Connect you with Verified Unmarried and Remarriage Profiles of Engineers, M.S., Graduates, Businessman, P.R Holders, Alim/ Hafiz, Other Professionals from Islamic and well Settled Families. Provide Personalized Confidential Matching service to Families across Hyderabad and their Global Diaspora 9391159208. (HYMM/2526/C04534)

AGENTS WANTED

WANTED DEALERS Titan Watches Distributor for the state of Telangana wish to expand Dealers Network in twin Cities of Hyderabad/ Secunderabad and surrounding Districts & Towns. Interested Party having infrastructure for retail counter and able to invest may mail full details to jakholaenterprises2009@gmail.com (HYMM/2526/C04472)

BUSINESS OFFER

START WITH small investment, choose a business you love, build steady daily income, and unlock high return potential for your future. Call: 95927706, 839988347, 9391880999. (HYMM/2526/C04271)

CATERING

HYDERABAD CATERERS: Veg, Non-Veg All Types of Delicious Dishes We Undertake. Minimum 5 to 5,000 Members Orders we take. Very Hygienic, Specialist for Veg, Non-Veg Birthday Parties, Get Together, Corporate Events, Weddings and Functions, packed and Delivery at your door steps. For Order Booking Call: 9133203020 (HYMM/2526/C04422)

CHANGE OF NAME

MOHAMMED SAIFULLAH S/o Mohammad Zikria, R/o 24-6-1175 RTC Colony Hindupur 515201 A.P. Changed my name as Mohammed Saifula S/o Mohammed Zikria (HYMM/2526/C04551)

I, PRAHLADA Goud S/o Ayyanna Goud, Ex No: 15309599L, Rank: ACP NAIK, Madras Engineers, R/o H-No: 42 100/5A, Sai Nagar Colony, Wanaparthy Town & Dist.Telangana., my wife M KALPANA date of Birth was recorded in my service records as 25-05-1977. Her actual & correct Date of Birth is 05-08-1975. (HYMM/2526/C04540)

I MOODA Kashivisvendar Raju S/o Mooda Saityanarayana R/O 1-13-104/105, Rasoolpur, near Indira Gandhi Statue, Secunderabad. Have changed my name from Muda Kashi Vishvender Raju to Mooda Kashivisvendar Raju, for all record purpose. (S/2526/C01990)

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KNOCK, KNOCK. HYD GATES SEEK ATTENTION

From the granite threshold of Banjara Darwaza near Golconda to the ceremonial Fateh Darwaza of the fort, Hyderabad's gateways once announced power, protection, and artistry. Built by the Qutb Shahis and refined under the Asaf Jahis, these darwazas, Puranapul, Dabeerpura, Mir Alam Kaman, Chhatta Bazar, Deewan Devdi, Jahanuma, Iqbal-ud-Daula Devdi, and Pathergatti Kaman, blended military strength with elegance. Cupped arches, stucco floral panels, iron-studded teak doors, and massive bastions reflected Persian aesthetics adapted to the Deccan. Distinctive khidkis (windows), especially at Chowmahalla Palace and Fateh Darwaza, featured arched stone frames with fine latticework and deep recesses, allowing light and surveillance while enhancing symmetry. Today, many gateways stand scarred by traffic, encroachment, and pollution, their carvings dulled and proportions choked. Chowmahalla Darwaza remains well preserved but closed, while Golconda's darwazas, maintained by the ASI, are cared for. These structures deserve renewed attention as living witnesses to Hyderabad's layered past.



CARDINAL ANTHONY IS FIRST TELUGU TO HEAD BISHOPS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD FEB. 7

Cardinal Poola Anthony, the Archbishop of Hyderabad, has been elected president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), becoming the first Telugu to head the national body.

The election was held on Friday during the CBCI general assembly at St John's Medical College, Bengaluru, the CBCI said in a communication issued on Saturday. Cardinal Anthony succeeds Archbishop Andrews Thazhath. The development has been described as a significant moment for the Telugu Catholic Bishops' Council, with members of the Archdiocese of Hyderabad expressing jubilation on receiving the news.

As president, Cardinal Anthony will lead the CBCI in coordinating pastoral, social and evangelising initiatives of the Catholic Church in India, including its work in education, healthcare and social outreach. Rev Msgr Y. Balashowry, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Hyderabad, along with clergy, religious and the faithful, expressed joy over the election and extended congratulations to the Cardinal, assuring him of prayers and best wishes.

Rev Fr Raju Alex, deputy secretary of the Telugu Catholic Bishops' Council, said, "a proud moment for the Telugu clergy and faithful, as their own man had been ascended in a top leadership."

AS PRESIDENT, Cardinal Anthony will lead CBCI, coordinating Catholic Church initiatives in India, including education.

Retd engr loses ₹1.2cr to scam

75-yr-old had invested life savings on promise of big stock market returns

SYED OMAR FAROOQ I DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

4 techies gypped of ₹1.2 cr

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

A 75-year-old retired employee lost ₹1.18 crore that he believed he had invested in the stock market but had been filched by cybercriminals. The victim, who had earned the amount while working, has approached the Cyberabad cybercrime police.

Police said the victim was a retired electrical engineer from Kondapur. On December 16 last, his mobile number was added to a WhatsApp group wherein the members started sending messages related to stock trading and huge profits. He was asked by one Sneha Sharma to invest money and provided a link.

He transferred various sums of money to the individual bank accounts provided to him. The transferred amount was shown as credited in his trading account on the application. He tried to withdraw his funds on January 28 but was unable to withdraw do so. The scammers started asking him for various sums under different heads. When he was finally unable to withdraw the money, he approached the police.

Four IT employees in separate cases were cheated of ₹1.2 crore by scammers who falsely assured them that the money was being invested in the stock markets, according to a complaint lodged with the Cyberabad police.

In one case, a software employee invested ₹12 lakh following claims made in an advertisement on social media. When he wanted to withdraw the sum, the gang asked for 20 per cent commission. Separately, a 32-year-old techie invested ₹46 lakh in a fake share market trading company, after being persuaded by a woman claiming to be Krithika Reddy who called him from a UK mobile number. A 37-year-old IT employee told the police that he was asked to invest in the stock markets via an app

11 held, victims get back ₹43L

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The Malkajgiri cybercrime police said that they had detected seven cases over the week with the arrest of 11 persons, many of them from the city, and oversaw the return of ₹43.21,017 to their victims. Among the arrested were Koppala Sampath Kumar and Gundaboina Varun from the city who had placed a senior citizen and his wife under fake 'digital arrest' by impersonating police officials, accusing them of human trafficking, and operating unauthorised accounts. They forced the couple to pay out ₹2.8 lakh before the victims were rescued by well-wishers.

HC clarifies on delayed I-T notice

L. RAVICHANDER HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

A two-judge panel of the Telangana High Court ruled that delayed service of statutory notice under Section 143(2) of the Income-Tax Act goes to the root of matter and renders the assessment proceedings void. The panel comprising Justice P. Sam Koshy and Justice Suddala Chalapaty Rao was dealing with appeals filed by Anupama Chand and other assessee. The matter arose out of a search conducted by the I-T department on August 4, 2000, in Urvasi Enterprises, Sheeshmahal Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., and The Commercial and Industrial Finance (P) Ltd. It was contended that though no search was carried out in

the names of the assessee, proceedings were initiated against them on the basis of material seized during the search and the assessee were required to file block returns for the period from 1991-92 up to the date of search. It was contended that block returns were filed in January 2001 declaring nil undisclosed income. The assessing officer thereafter issued notices under Section 143(2) on January 29, 2002, and completed block assessments determining undisclosed income and raising tax demands. It was the case of the petitioners that though the notices under Section 143(2) were issued within the prescribed period, they were served on the assessee beyond the statutory limitation,



LEGAL STORIES

thereby vitiating the assumption of jurisdiction and the assessment proceedings. The panel set aside the assessment orders as well as the orders of the commissioner of income-tax (appeals) and the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal and allowed the appeals.

MBBS STUDENTS CHALLENGE RESULTS

Justice Renuka Yara admitted a plea of two first-year MBBS students

challenging the announced results of their first year exams. The petitioners alleged that the authorities declared them failed in human anatomy, despite securing more than 50 per cent aggregate marks in theory and practical examinations. The judge was dealing with a writ petition filed by students of Surabhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Siddipet. Counsel for the petitioner argued that despite securing an aggregate of 150 out of 300 marks and crossing the prescribed 50 per cent threshold, the petitioners were declared as failed.

BHEL CHALLENGES LAKE BEAUTIFICATION

Justice N.V. Shrivani Kumar heard inconclusively a writ petition con-

cerning development works in Rayasamudram lake at Ramachandrapuram. The writ petition was filed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited questioning the action of the municipal authorities in undertaking beautification, development and alteration activities in the lake and its full tank level and buffer zone, contending that the lake formed part of its holdings. The judge observed that the Rayasamudram lake of about 120 acres constituted a material resource of the community and questioned whether a water body acquired could be treated as private property. The judge also inquired whether the fact that the employees working in the area have access to the lake and their consequent enjoyment.

SHORT TAKES

CREDAI HYDERABAD PROPERTY SHOW SEES SUCCESS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The second day of the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (Credai) Hyderabad property show at Hitex, HiTec City, emerged as a resounding success, sending a strong signal about the city's real estate growth, according to the association.

The three day show will conclude on Sunday. "This unprecedented surge in interest clearly reflects the unwavering confidence of Hyderabad's residents in the local property market," Credai said in a press release.

Credai Hyderabad president N. Jaideep Reddy said the city was at the cusp of its next phase of growth. "The first phase delivered a five to six times appreciation in property values, and the current momentum is only accelerating," he noted.

President elect B. Jagannath Rao said Hyderabad was emerging as a global city because it had managed to grow rapidly without losing its "cultural soul," making it an ideal destination for families to settle. The atmosphere remained electric as builders and buyers engaged in detailed negotiations.

SARPANCH SUSPENDED OVER SON'S VANDALISM

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Rangareddy district collector C. Narayana Reddy has suspended V. Shanthamma, sarpanch of Mokila thanda in Shankarpally mandal, for six months, after her son allegedly destroyed the local panchayat property just three days after she took over last year. This is the first such suspension after the gram panchayat elections last year.

The action followed a police case that Shanthamma's son Vartha Babu Naik had allegedly destroyed public toilets, a portion of compound wall and the gate of the gram panchayat office and greenery. He was reportedly accompanied by his associates. The incident occurred on December 25 last, three days after Shanthamma took over as sarpanch on December 22. The collectorate served notice to Shanthamma on December 29. Based on the reply the suspension order was released on January 5.

According to a source in the Rangareddy collectorate, Babu had a land-related issue with the former sarpanch. "In case of a title dispute or any other matter, there is a procedure. Enforcement activity can not be done by sarpanch or her family," said an official from the collectorate.

The suspension order mentioned that the collectorate had served Shanthamma a showcause notice seeking details regarding the incident but the reply was not satisfactory.

The Telangana Panchayat Raj Act, 2018 contains a provision empowering district collectors to suspend a sarpanch and the action was taken under two provisions: Sections 37(5) for abusing power, refusing to carry out government orders, or acting against the interests of the gram panchayat; and 96(2) which prohibits any person damaging trees belonging to a gram panchayat or located on public property.

FEWER MISHAPS NEAR LOYOLA ACADEMY ROAD

N. SHRI RAM HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Road accidents on Loyola Academy road in Alwal, once a hotspot with over 10 incidents six months ago, have now come down to zero following collaborative efforts by the college and Alwal Traffic Police.

Although no student deaths were reported, police said violations such as driving without licences and speeding remain common among youngsters. Preventive measures were introduced, including enforcement drives, road barriers, signboards and awareness programmes involving students.

Alwal police reported that of the 70 accidents in the area, there were 16 deaths, 12 serious injuries, two drunk and drive cases and the rest categorised as non fatal. On the college road alone, 10 accidents were recorded, including one death, one serious injury and eight non fatal cases, largely due to rash driving.



While most of autorickshaws and two-wheelers associated with online apps stayed off the roads on Saturday in protest against the policies, some operated and made a killing. — S. SURENDER REDDY

App-based drivers bandh affects daily commuters

Impact largely confined morning, riders report long waits

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC AND ADITYA KUMAR SINGH HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Commuters faced inconvenience on Saturday following a bandh by drivers associated with app-based platforms such as Ola, Uber, Rapido, Porter and other gig transport services. The impact was largely confined to the morning, when commuters reporting long waiting times and surge pricing.

Passengers said it took nearly an hour to secure a ride, leading to increased fares due to heightened demand. The impact was relatively muted in the IT corridor as most offices observed a weekend holiday. In the absence of special services, many commuters opted for public transport.

TGRTC officials said footfall on Saturday remained on par with regular weekends. The Hyderabad Metro Rail



authorities said, "There was no significant change in passenger numbers on Saturday; traffic remained as usual." The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport had advised passengers in advance about the bandh. Several local passengers opted to be picked up by family members. The airport prepaid taxi service reported higher usage. One of its drivers, Mohd Lateef, said,

"About 250 prepaid cabs operate at the airport, and many of them made additional trips, earning extra income." Moses Paul, a bank employee, said, "It took over an hour in the morning to get an auto, forcing me to use my own transport to reach my office in Koti from Mettuguda."

The nationwide bandh was called by gig transport workers to protest

alleged government inaction and fare practices by app-based aggregators. The protest was backed by recognised driver unions.

Several affected commuters took to social media to voice their grievances over increased fares and prolonged waiting times. Posting on X, one user said, "Despite booking an intercity ride in advance and waiting nearly two hours, drivers kept cancelling, with no accountability or support from the service providers." Satvik Kumar, a college student from Trimulgherry, waited for nearly an hour after booking a ride but received no response. He said nearby taxi and auto drivers declined the trip.

Another user, Anuj, posted on X, "The prices were high, from the Airport around 7.30 pm, the fare which was usually ₹700 to ₹800 for a cab, mounted to between ₹2,000 and ₹2,500."

CHARMINAR WALLS SIGNAL BOUNDARY MAPPING

V. SHIVANI REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Experts at the History Literature Festival on Saturday highlighted the importance of spatial technology, remote sensing and aerial surveys in documenting monuments and their boundaries, saying such tools are vital for conservation.

The discussion, titled "Invisible Archaeology: Discovering the Past from Space", featured Kullu Suganya, heritage conservation practitioner and academic, and M.B. Rajani, professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies.

Rajani explained that archaeological sites in India often overlap with agricultural fields, rural and urban settlements, a phenomenon she termed "landscape morphology." "Generally, people start walking around fort walls and over centuries it becomes a well trodden path that develops into modern roads," she said.

Citing a survey of Charminar, the experts noted that while the monument today stood amid bustling markets, in the 1700s it was central to the imperial city of Hyderabad.

They found remnants such as old khidkis and doorways, and said boundary walls had disintegrated or been repurposed for civilian construction.

"Boundaries are necessary," Rajani and Suganya stressed. "Surveying them through aerial means and documenting them becomes necessary to protect whatever remaining monuments have survived, and more importantly their sub parts scattered around the main site."

They pointed to the Mahabodhi site in Bodh Gaya, designated a World Heritage Site in 2002, where rampant development damaged surrounding structures despite the designation.

Experts welcome WHO focus on smart wearables

DEEPIKA PASHAM | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Doctors and public health experts have welcomed the World Health Organisation's (WHO) growing focus on wearable technology, saying smartwatches and activity trackers could play a key role in accurately measuring physical activity and addressing sedentary lifestyles.

Reacting to discussions at the WHO's Montreal meeting, physicians said wrist worn devices offered a more reliable alternative to traditional self reported surveys, which often underestimate physical inactivity. Continuous monitoring through wearables could generate objective, real time data, helping governments design targeted and evidence based health interventions. Dr B. Venkat Nani Kumar, consultant in internal medicine, said wearable technology bridged the gap between lifestyle advice and measurable behaviour. "Metrics such as step count, moderate to vigorous physical activity and sedentary time directly correlate with cardiovascular disease, diabetes and mental health outcomes. Having population level

ACCORDING TO WHO data, over 75% of Indian children and adolescents aged 11-17 do not meet minimum physical activity levels.

- **AMONG** women aged above 18 years, around 44% are physically inactive.
- **INACTIVITY** level rises to nearly 70% among those above 70 years.
- **INDIA RANKS** 12th globally among 195 countries for inadequate physical activity, says Dr Kiran Madhala, professor at Gandhi Medical College, Secunderabad.
- **Physicians** said wrist worn devices offer a more reliable alternative to self reported surveys, which often underestimate inactivity.
- **Continuous monitoring** through wearables could generate objective, real time data, enabling targeted and evidence based health interventions.

data allows early and preventive strategies," he said. Doctors pointed out that India and other low and middle income countries are facing a rising burden of lifestyle related diseases linked to inactivity. Affordable smartwatches, if standardised under WHO guidance, could support national health surveillance systems and community level screening programmes.

City based doctors also stressed the need for inclusive validation of devices. "Wearables must recognise

varied movement patterns and step equivalents, especially in ageing populations," a doctor said, while highlighting the importance of data privacy and ethical use of health information. Welcoming WHO's roadmap for open source algorithms and independent evaluation, doctors cautioned that strong regulatory frameworks are essential. Dr Kiran Madhala of Gandhi Medical College said WHO's AI shift aids digital health, improving activity monitoring.

Passport renewal not automatic, says HC

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

The Telangana High Court made it clear that passport renewal was not automatic and that the authorities were empowered to revoke a passport on the basis of intelligence inputs that the holder may, or was likely, to engage, outside India, in activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.

Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka of the High Court held that issuance or renewal of a passport was governed by statutory provisions under the Passports Act, 1967, and could not be claimed as a matter of right when national security concerns were involved.

Saying so, the judge dismissed a petition filed by Akram Ali Mohammed, who challenged the action of the Regional Passport Authority (RPA) in revoking his passport in 2019, though it was valid up to July 3, 2028.

The petitioner said he was working as a journalist since 2005 and was now running his own Urdu news website. He alleged that the RPA had revoked his passport without prior notice or opportunity of hearing.

The RPA justified the revocation on the basis of intelligence inputs received from the state intelligence department.

PASSPORT CHECK

- Court dismisses petition against revocation.
- Revocation based on intelligence risk abroad.
- ALLEGED ISI links, arms, broadcasts. Surveillance and security concerns weigh heavily.
- Passport not a right when security is at stake: Justice Bheemapaka ruled that issuance or renewal is governed by the Passports Act, not personal entitlement.
- Activities under watch affect national integrity.

According to the authorities, the petitioner was likely to engage in activities outside India prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.

The city police commissioner filed a counter-affidavit, referring to the petitioner's alleged involvement in a criminal case, connections with alleged anti-national elements, possession of arms and explosives, and activities said to have caused communal disharmony through media broadcasts. It was also stated that a personal surveillance file had been opened against the petitioner.

It was stated that the petitioner had connection with ISI activists Mohammad Saleem Junaid and had concealed a pistol of 30 rounds and 1 kg of potassium chloride mixer at his cycle shop godown. The police submitted to the court that in 2018, an issue was raised between Sunni and Shia sects about a hate speech

in Abubakar Masjid situated at Mirchowk, Hyderabad, and petitioner had broadcast his views in favour of one community through his news channel. It was also stated that in 2019, an issue was raised in the Amberpet police limits with regard to Ek-Khana Mosque between GHMC and the Muslim community and petitioner had shot a video and made it viral "in order to corrupt the minds of a particular sect of people".

After considering the facts and technical lapses on the side of the petitioner in filing the petition against revocation of the passport, the court stated when the activities of a person were under surveillance by the police, the courts should be careful while considering the case, that too when it was seriously alleged that the petitioner's activities would affect the sovereignty and integrity of India.

Wandering tiger makes its way from Jangaon

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Apparently having had enough of wandering in fields and open areas without cover where it can find shelter and settle down to establish its territory, the tiger which made its way to Jangaon district from Yadadri-Bhongir two days ago has decided to move on.

In the process, it walked into the Siddipet district and is now learnt to be moving in a northerly direction at a fairly fast clip, and likely heading back the way it first came from.

On Saturday, the tiger killed a calf in Jangaon district, not very far from the border with Siddipet into which it crossed, only to kill another calf. "Typically, one would expect the tiger to return to its kill after a few hours, or maybe a day later but in this case, it left both the cattle kills and kept going north. Our expectations are that it is retracing its route and may be returning to where it came from," a forest department official said.

On Saturday, after its first cattle kill in Jangaon, the tiger is reported to have walked some 10 km into Siddipet, and then after the second kill, walked another 10 km. "So far, it has studiously avoided coming close to humans, and kept away from habitations. It most likely had a proper feeding around a week ago, and we thought it might take shelter in the vicinity and return to the kill but it seems to have something else in its mind," the official said.

DEALING WITH A TIGER ON THE PROWL

Public safety advisory

- **RESTRICT MOVEMENT:** Avoid venturing outdoors unless necessary, especially at night. If travel is unavoidable, do so in large groups.
- **LIVESTOCK:** Ensure cattle are secured in safe shelters.
- **SAFETY:** Do not set live electric wires or traps, these pose a danger to public and the tiger.

Operational Response

- **EXPERT ASSISTANCE** A wildlife rescue team from RES-Q, Pune, a private outfit, assisting in real-time monitoring and assessment.
- **CROWD CONTROL:** Police, revenue departments help sought, especially to manage crowds near cattle kill sites to ensure tiger remains undisturbed if it returns to feed
- **CAPTURE OPTION:** If the "situation warrants," capture will be considered under strict NTCA standard operating procedures.

Forest staff with support from the Pune-based NGO 'RES-Q', captured the elusive tiger after tranquillising it at Kurmapuram village of Rayavaram on Friday.

That "something else" could be a return to the Kawal tiger reserve in erstwhile unified Adilabad district, where the tiger spent a couple of weeks after it entered Telangana from the Pandharkawada area north of Tipeswar wildlife sanctuary in Maharashtra late last November. If the tiger continues on its last reported direction of the path it has taken, it could make its way to Rajanna-Sircilla district, from where it first made its way into Siddipet around a month ago. If the tiger is indeed retracing its steps,

then it could next find itself in Jagtial, then Nirmal in which part of the Kawal tiger reserve lies, or may go from Siddipet to Karimnagar, then on to Peddapalli, and from there to Mancherial and enter Kawal. For now, forest department officials in Siddipet, and the neighbouring Jangaon, Yadadri-Bhongir, Rajanna Sircilla, and Karimnagar, are on the alert. "Its movements are being monitored continuously and if left alone, it poses no threat to anyone," a forest department official said.

BIRD | SAVED Hundreds of birds were rescued from deadly, banned Chinese manja in Hyderabad

Cops, firemen rescue birds stuck in manja

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Traffic police and fire personnel rescued two birds that were entangled in strands of the deadly Chinese manja on Saturday, nearly three weeks after the kite festival.

Traffic police personnel rescue a pariah kite that was struggling after being entangled in Chinese manja at the Traffic Training Institute, Begumpet, on Saturday. "The kite was striving hard and flapping her wings to get free but in

vain," a senior police officer disclosed.

The struggling bird was noticed by A. Laxmi, additional DCP Malkajgiri, and G. Shankar Raju, ACP traffic, who were there on duty. Both officers stopped their vehicle and, with the assistance of traffic police staff, safely brought the kite down without the bird suffering further injury.

Traffic Home Guards Rama Rao and Kutumba Rao climbed the boundary and gained access to the tree with the support of a traffic police vehicle. "As it was too high, we used a 17-foot construction bamboo

and broken branches to remove the deadly Chinese manja that was not allowing the bird to fly."

The banned manja, tightly wrapped around the bird's legs, was patiently removed. "Necessary care was extended on the spot," said additional DCP Laxmi. The kite was rushed to a government veterinary hospital where it is being treated and is now out of danger.

ACP Shankar Raju emphasised: "The use of banned manja poses a serious threat not only to birds and animals but also

to human lives, often resulting in grievous injuries and fatalities. The public must strictly adhere to the law and refrain from using banned manja."

In another rescue operation, firefighters and the Disaster Response Force personnel saved a pigeon entangled in manja on a 20-foot tree at RTC Colony, Karmanghat.

Malkajgiri station fire officer Mohammed Shoukath said: "It took 40 minutes to rescue the pigeon and take it safely to a vet. The DRF-Hyderabad team assisted us."



Traffic police personnel rescue a pariah kite trapped in Chinese manja at Begumpet on Saturday. — DC

SHORT TAKE

UNREST OVER BHARAT FUTURE CITY SURVEYS

FROM PAGE 1

Farmers were urged to voluntarily part with land for road construction.

Farmers allege that the government was proceeding with surveys, boundary marking and acquisition without clarity on compensation, leading to unrest.

Villagers and farmers obstructed revenue staff who attempted to dig pits and erect TGIC boards on government and assigned lands, questioning how boards could be installed without compensation. Officials halted work and shifted TGIC boards and equipment to the panchayat office.

Yacharam tahsildar P. Ayyappa said, "We have completed the survey as per the directions of higher authorities."

The survey process will be completed once boundary stones are laid. The amount of compensation will be decided under the supervision of higher authorities.

The state government has decided to offer developed plots along with monetary compensation to farmers who give up land for Bharat Future City.

The project, envisioned by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, will span 30,000 acres on the outskirts of Hyderabad, with 16,000 acres proposed to be acquired through land pooling.

Of the total, 13,973 acres were acquired earlier for Hyderabad Pharma City and have now been repurposed for Bharat Future City project.

Official sources said the Chief Minister has directed officials to expedite land acquisition through persuasion rather than coercion, stressing fair and transparent compensation.

The government has approved the offer of 121-square-yard developed plots to each farmer, in addition to monetary compensation, on the lines of the earlier Pharma City model.

TG ancestors had Astronomy skills

Constellation depicted at Warangal temple

V. SHIVANI REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Ancient communities living in Telangana and nearby regions as far back as about 3,000 years ago had strong knowledge of astronomy and were skilled in identifying directions, said Prof. K.P. Rao, honorary professor in the department of history at Hyderabad Central University, citing a recent study. Besides, some sculptures found here represented the earliest sculpturing tradition of India and challenged the belief that it ended after the Indus Valley Civilisation and resumed only during the Mauryan period.

He said this knowledge may date back to about 1000 BCE, evidence of which has been found at Mudumal Menhirs, Narayanpet. Studies were underway near the Saraswati temple at Wargal, where a depiction of a constellation has been discovered.

Prof. Rao also said that Dr Ch. Praveen Raju, during his explorations, found Mesolithic paintings, known as X-ray paintings, at Aksharaladoddi in Mulugu district. These paintings show human figures with visible skeletal structures. The site was discovered by historian Dr Dyavanapalli Satyanarayana, he added. Prof. Rao said many rock paintings had been discovered in recent years. Findings in Jangaon provided important evidence of botanical history from the Megalithic period, including the discovery of coffee beans going back to about 2,800 years ago. Another important site, he said, was Gachibowli, where an iron tool dating back about 4,500 years was found. The tip of the tool was made using carboni-



A burial site with a skeleton and pottery kept as offerings from Gajagirigutta. Right: A female anthropomorphic statue from Padugonivudem. — DC

sation, showing that the region had early knowledge of steel grade carbon iron. Prof. Rao said in northern Telangana, a female anthropomorphic statue was found at Padugonivudem, among Megalithic burials. Such statues found in the Khammam and Warangal regions were dated to around 1000 BCE.

"This challenges the belief that sculpting traditions ended after the Indus Valley Civilisation and resumed only during the Mauryan period, suggesting instead that sculpting continued much earlier in Telangana region," Dr Rao said. These findings highlight the background of pre and proto-history of Telangana, he said.

Samudrala Sunil, a freelance paleo-archaeologist who carries out research at existing sites to gather more information, said most of these were located along riverbeds and canals. According to him, there was a common belief, especially in Telangana, that human evolution is seen only from the Upper Paleolithic period. However, based on his findings, Sunil said evidence of human evolution could be traced to the Lower and Middle Paleolithic periods, existing at the same time as the Indus Valley Civilisation. He added that much more research was needed, as only about 10 per cent of the work



Upper Paleolithic rock tools. — DC

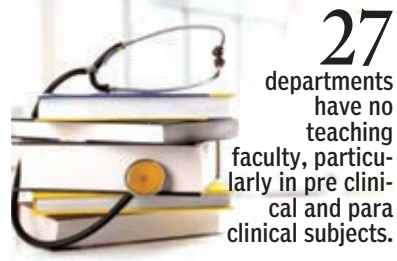
has been carried. Historian Dr Satyanarayana said the heritage department had excavated a Megalithic site at Pulurubanda in Medak district, which provided valuable insights into the culture of cairns and dolmens from that period in the state. He added that many other rock art sites have been discovered, but they are yet to be approved by the Heritage Department or taken up for further work.

Meanwhile, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has begun excavations at a Megalithic site in Janampeta of Khammam district. The site, which has been under protection since the 1950s, is now being excavated to understand the cultural sequence, exact period, burial practices, and cultural material, said Nikhil Das, superintendent archaeologist, ASI Hyderabad Circle. He said the findings include stone coffins, bone fragments, and terracotta beads, and discussions are ongoing to find the exact dating of the site.

Shortage of faculty affects quality of medical education

DEEPIKA PASHAM | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

TRDA DATA HIGHLIGHTS



27 departments have no teaching faculty, particularly in pre-clinical and para-clinical subjects.

COLLEGES in Jogulamba Gadwal, Asifabad, Kodangal, Bhupalpally and Narayanpet suffer more.



departments are being run by just one assistant professor, responsible for undergraduate teaching, internal assessments, university examinations and departmental administration. Medical education experts warn that such arrangements are unsustainable and compromise academic standards.

The data further show that well over 70 per cent of departments do not have a single professor. Professors, who provide academic leadership and mentorship, remain concentrated in a handful of older institutions such as Osmania, Gandhi and Kakatiya. In contrast, newer district medical colleges frequently have no professors across several departments including anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, social and preventive medicine, forensic medicine and microbiology, Dr Srinath said.

At least 27 government medical colleges, including those in the city, are facing a severe shortage of teaching faculty, according to an analysis of faculty data by the Telangana Resident Doctors Association (TRDA). The review showed several departments are functioning with either no faculty or without senior academic leadership, raising concerns over National Medical Commission (NMC) compliance and the quality of training.

The data revealed 27 departments have no teaching faculty, particularly in pre-clinical and para-clinical subjects, especially at colleges in Jogulamba Gadwal, Asifabad, Kodangal, Bhupalpally and Narayanpet. Several institutions are running clusters of departments staffed only by assistant professors or

senior residents. In newer colleges — notably Mulugu, Medak, Nirmal and Nagarkurnool — the professor column is consistently empty.

The shortage is not confined to newly-established colleges. While Osmania Medical College, Gandhi Medical College and Kakatiya Medical College have relatively better staffing, these institutions lack adequate professors and associate professors, said TRDA president Dr D. Srinath. He added across

the state, more than 150 departments are functioning without a single senior faculty member, leaving junior doctors or temporary staff to manage teaching, examinations and administration. Senior faculty are mandatory for postgraduate training, curriculum oversight and NMC inspections, and their absence places colleges at risk of losing accreditation or PG permissions.

Another major concern is the rise of single faculty departments. Over 120

CM TO REOPEN KOTANCHA TEMPLE TODAY

Warangal: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will reopen (Punah-Pratishthapana) the historic Kotancha Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple and participate in a public meeting on the occasion of municipal elections at Chelpur on Sunday in Ghanpur mandal of Jayashankar Bhupalpally district.

The CM is expected to be joined by spiritual leader Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swamy, who will oversee the religious rituals. The reopening marks the fulfillment of a promise made by Revanth Reddy in 2023 during his 'Hath Se Hath Jodo' yatra.

Nirankari devotees come together



Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj and Nirankari Rajpita Rami Ji at the Nirankari Sant Samagam of southern states at NTR Stadium on Saturday. Over 20,000 devotees attended the event. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

NATION

SHORT TAKES

BOEING: TRADE PACT WILL OPEN OPPORTUNITIES

New Delhi, Feb. 7: Aircraft maker Boeing on Saturday said the India-US interim trade agreement will open multifold opportunities and emphasised that the company has always advocated for zero-for-zero tariff approach for the aerospace and defence sector.

India and the US on Saturday announced they have reached a framework for an interim trade agreement under which both sides will reduce import duties on a number of goods to boost two-way trade.

Under the framework, tariffs will go down to zero on various goods, including generic pharmaceuticals and aircraft parts.

Boeing India and South Asia President Sallil Gupta said the agreement opens multifold opportunities.

KRISHNA WATERS TO IRRIGATE 1.5 L ACRES: REVANTH

FROM PAGE 1

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said that Krishna waters would be diverted to Makthal, Narayanpet and Kodangal constituencies to irrigate 1.5 lakh acres.

The Chief Minister said road works from Appa Junction to Manneguda had stalled during BRS rule, leading to accidents, but it was the Congress government that had resolved court cases and expedited the works. He promised completion of the Tundur road, development of the RRR and radial roads, and said Vikarabad would be developed as a world-class tourist destination. He also alleged the BJP and the BRS had entered into a "secret poll pact" to defeat Congress in the municipal elections and claimed that BJP candidates had obtained B-Forms from the BRS office. The CM mocked the BJP for seeking votes in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said Chandrashekar Rao had ruled Telangana for 10 years and Modi had been PM since 2014, but both had "done nothing for Telangana."

Trump cuts addl 25% tariff on Indian goods

FROM PAGE 1

"Agricultural output from India will now be able to go to the US on zero duties," said commerce minister Piyush Goyal at a media briefing Saturday. "We have not given any concessions or done anything that will hurt the farmers," he said, referring to the joint statement.

Indian agriculture space was estimated to be worth \$580 billion to \$650 billion, according to a June report by McKinsey & Co., which said that the sector could grow to \$1.4 trillion by 2035. The joint statement said India intends to purchase \$500 billion of US energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, precious metals, technology products, and coking coal over the next five years. The deal has no mention of purchase of Russian oil and the Indian government has made it clear in the past that all its actions will be taken keeping in mind the need of its people, and energy sourcing will be diversified in keeping with objective market conditions and evolving international dynamics.

Separately, US President Donald Trump in an executive order removed the additional 25 per cent tariff imposed on Indian goods for Russian oil purchases as New Delhi "com-



Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal, centre, with MoS Jitin Prasada, left, and commerce secretary Rajesh Agarwal during a press conference on the recently announced India-US trade deal in New Delhi on Saturday. — PTI

mitted to stop directly or indirectly importing" Russian oil. However, US officials will monitor and recommend reinstating the tariff if India resumes oil procurement from Russia, the order said, as Washington maintains pressure on India to restrict energy ties with Moscow.

On Russian oil, Goyal declined to comment, saying the foreign ministry would respond. The deal supports India's national security interests as the US will remove tariffs on certain aircraft, aircraft parts and receive a preferential tariff rate quota for automotive parts to eliminate threats to national security. "The US and India are pleased to announce that they have reached a framework for an Interim Agreement

regarding reciprocal and mutually beneficial trade (Interim Agreement). Today's framework reaffirms the countries' commitment to the broader US-India Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) negotiations, launched by President Donald J. Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 13, 2025, which will include additional market access commitments and support more resilient supply chains. The Interim Agreement between the US and India will represent a historic milestone in our countries' partnership, demonstrating a common commitment to reciprocal and balanced trade based on mutual interests and concrete outcomes," read the joint statement.

INDIA GLOBAL SOURCING HUB FOR BOEING: MIN.

FROM PAGE 1

Under the pact, India has imposed a minimum import price of ₹80 per kg and an import duty of 25 per cent on apples from the US. This would restrict imports of apples priced below ₹100 per kg. Currently, imported apples attract a 50 per cent duty with an MIP of ₹50 per kg, effectively barring imports priced below ₹75 per kg. "...The agreement reflects India's commitment to safeguarding farmers' interests and sustaining rural livelihoods by completely protecting sensitive agricultural and dairy products, including maize, wheat, rice, soya, poultry, milk, cheese, ethanol (fuel), tobacco, certain vegetables, meat, etc.," Goyal said. With the US agreeing to remove tariffs on certain aircraft and aircraft parts from India, the minister said companies such as Boeing and Airbus were viewing India as a major global sourcing hub. He said Boeing currently has over 265 commercial and military aircraft operating in India.



Supporters of the Communist Party of India and All India Trade Union Congress hold a demonstration rally in support of the nationwide Bharat Bandh scheduled for February 12. — PTI

Farm groups to protest US trade deal on Feb.12

New Delhi, Feb. 7: Several farmer organisations, including SKM, its non-political breakaway faction and AIKS, criticised the India-US trade deal on Saturday and said protests against it will be held across the country.

In a statement issued on Saturday, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) alleged that the proposed interim trade agreement framework between India and the United States amounted to a "total surrender" of Indian agriculture to American multinational corporations and demanded the immediate resignation of Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

Addressing an online press conference, SKM leaders said protests would be held across the country in villages, and they would burn effigies of US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The SKM also extended its support to the February 12 general strike.

All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) leader Krishna Prasad said the trade deal will have a deep impact on the agriculture sector by opening market for items like dried distillers' grains, red sorghum for animal feed and soybean oil.

The trade deal will have a deep impact on the agriculture sector by opening market for items like dried distillers' grains, red sorghum for animal feed and soybean oil, and also claimed it would impact the dairy sector.

He said the deals with the US, as well as the European Union (EU), were being done to benefit their "stagnant" economies and are not beneficial for India.

Activist Sunilam said the issue should be debated in Parliament. Krantikari Kisan Union (Punjab) leader Darshan Pal said members of the outfit would burn effigies of Trump and Modi in protest. He said the deal will further impact farmers who are already facing issues of low income and are unable to pay loans. Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait said people in the villages are questioning

how the deals will impact them. He called upon farmers to join the protest against the deals.

In a statement, the SKM said, "The framework is an abject rejection of the claim of the Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal that the agriculture and dairy sectors are out of the Free Trade Agreements and the Government of India will not make any compromise on the interests of agriculture."

"The commerce minister is consciously propagating falsehood and betraying the farmers and the entire people. SKM considers the role of the commerce minister as a traitor and demands his immediate resignation," the SKM said. "Also, SKM demands that the prime minister desist from signing the India-US Free Trade Agreement or face massive pan-India united mass struggles," it said. "The SKM appealed to all the political parties, farmers and agricultural workers' organisations, trade unions and all the mass and class organisations to join the protest demonstrations on the February 12 general strike."

Not a deal, but surrender: Congress

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB 7

The Congress on Saturday alleged that the Indo-US trade pact is "not a deal but a surrender" of the country's self-esteem and interests, and that it is a betrayal of India and its people. Addressing a press conference, Congress media and publicity department head Pawan Khera also claimed that India will soon become a dumping ground for American products and it will hurt the interests of

the farmers and small and medium industries here. "This deal is a betrayal to all that India stands for and all that India stood for over the last 75 years. This is not a deal which is in our interest. This is a total

surrender by none other than Narendra," Khera said, taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Congress leader added that he has proved that "Narendra is surrender". "India has been made into a dumping ground by this deal. I do not want to call it a deal, as a deal is amongst equals and you sit across the table and negotiate. A deal cannot be with a gun held on your head.... It is blackmail, it is a surrender," he said.

Khera also alleged that US is dubbing India as a

SHORT TAKES

DELHI TIGHTENS EXCAVATION REGULATIONS

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC NEW DELHI, FEB 7

In the wake of the Janakpuri road tragedy that killed a 25-year-old motorcyclist, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday announced an eight-point mandatory safety framework for all digging and excavation works across the Capital, warning that any negligence resulting in loss of life would invite strict action.

The move comes even as Delhi Police arrested a subcontractor for allegedly concealing information about the biker's fall into an unbaricaded pit dug by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), while official probes flagged serious safety lapses at the site and the victim's family alleged delays in the investigation. Taking a "strong view" of the incident, the Chief Minister directed all departments.

CHURACHANDPUR LIMPS BACK TO NORMALCY

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI/IMPHAL FEB. 7

Normalcy has been returning to parts of Manipur's Churachandpur district on Saturday morning after two days of protests.

The demonstrations were largely confined to the stretch between Tuibong and Kangvai in Churachandpur town, unlike earlier instances when disturbances had spread across the district headquarters, police said. While most areas of Churachandpur town witnessed a resumption of business activities, several shops in the Tuibong area remained closed, they said. Additional security forces have been deployed to prevent any untoward incidents, the police officials added. The violent protests began on Thursday after three BJP legislators from the Kuki-Zo and Hmar communities joined Meitei MLAs.

S.I.T. FORMED TO TRACE 10 TRIBAL CHILDREN

Ranchi, Feb 7: A special investigation team (SIT) has been constituted to trace 10 tribal children, who went missing from a hamlet in Jharkhand's Koderma district, a senior police officer said on Saturday.

A reward of Rs 1 lakh has also been announced by the Koderma Police for anyone providing information about the whereabouts of the children. SP Anudeep Singh told PTI. The children, who belong to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) and residents of Gadiyai Birhor Tola (hamlet) in Khariyodih panchayat, have been missing since February 1, after they did not return home from Parsabad, police said. DSP Rati Bhan Singh is leading the SIT. Pictures of the children with their names, age and other details are being circulated in multiple locations, including various police stations, and CCTV footage from Parsabad and nearby areas are being analysed, as part of the investigation, the officer said.

3 KILLED AFTER SPEEDING CAR FALLS INTO CANAL

Narmadapuram (MP), Feb 7: Three persons were killed after a speeding car crashed through the railing on a bridge and plunged into a canal in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram district, police said on Saturday.

The accident occurred on Friday midnight at the Pathrota canal on the Itarsi-Pathrota Road, an official said.

Lucky Patel (30), the driver, Shivam Tiwari (26) and Abhay alias Abhi Chauhan (19) drowned in the canal, and their bodies have been retrieved along with the vehicle, Itarsi sub-divisional officer of police Virendra Kumar Mishra told PTI.

According to eyewitnesses, the car coming from the Itarsi side crashed through the railing on the bridge and fell straight into the canal. The victims tried to open the windows to escape and shouted for help, but the vehicle got locked and sank, they said. The official said that the bodies were sent for post-mortem, and a probe is underway to ascertain the sequence of events.

Indian diaspora is a valuable partner: PM

India upgrades ties with Malaysia to strategic partnership

FROM PAGE 1

"...The Indian diaspora is a valuable partner. Whether you were born in Kuala Lumpur or Kolkata, India lives in your hearts. You are an active part of Malaysia's and India's progress. You will help realise the vision of prosperous Malaysia and Viksit Bharat," he said.

In his address, the Prime Minister said India's relationship with Malaysia is scaling new heights. He also referred to Ibrahim's 2024 New Delhi visit, during which the India-Malaysia ties were elevated to the comprehensive strategic partnership level.

"Today, we walk hand in hand as partners towards progress and prosperity. We celebrate each other's success just as our own. I was touched by Ibrahim's good wishes on the historic success of Chandrayaan-3. I agree with you, my dear friend. India's success is Malaysia's success... it is Asia's success. That is why I say the guiding word of our relationship is IMPACT. IMPACT means India Malaysia Partnership for Advancing Collective Transformation," Modi said.

The Prime Minister further said the Indian companies have always been keen to work with Malaysia and it is a privilege that India played a part in creating Malaysia's first and Asia's largest insulin manufacturing facility. He went on to add that over 100 Indian IT companies operate in Malaysia, generating thousands of jobs and



Prime Minister Narendra Modi shares car ride with his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim upon arrival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. — PTI

● UPI to be introduced in Malaysia; digital collaboration expanded via council. India now viewed as trusted partner for investment and global trade deals.

● OCI card eligibility extended to Malaysian citizens of Indian origin up to 6th generation. New Indian consulate to be opened in Malaysia soon. Visit strengthens India-Malaysia ties under Act East Policy.

announced India's UPI will come to Malaysia soon, as the Malaysia-India Digital Council is paving new pathways for digital collaboration.

The Prime Minister also talked about India's progress in the last few years. "Earlier, India was seen just as a huge mar-

ket; now it is a hub for investment and trade and is seen as a trusted partner for growth," he said, adding, "Whether it is the UK, the UAE, Australia, New Zealand, Oman, the EU or the USA, countries have trade deals with India. Trust has become India's strongest currency." At the event, the Prime Minister announced that India has decided to extend the OCI card eligibility to Malaysian citizens of Indian origin up to the 6th generation. "We have been supporting the Indian Scholarships Trust Fund. Now, we are also going to give Thiruvalluvar Scholarships for students to study in India. And we look forward to seeing you in the Know India Program," he said.

He also announced that India will soon be opening a new consulate in Malaysia.

The Prime Minister hailed the historic ties and the steadfast progress between India and Malaysia in recent years. "I look forward to discussions with Ibrahim and further enhancing our comprehensive strategic partnership... We will aim to deepen our defence and security ties, enhance our economic and innovation partnership and expand our collaboration into new domains," he said.

This is Modi's third visit to Malaysia since 2015. The ministry of external affairs said the visit seeks to further strengthen the India-Malaysia comprehensive strategic partnership established in 2024. "It reflects India's strong commitment to strengthening India-Malaysia ties, which is a key pillar of our Act East Policy, Indo-Pacific vision and Vision MAHASAGAR," the foreign ministry said.

Ritu Tawade to be BJP's BMC mayor candidate

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, FEB. 7

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday announced Ritu Tawade as its candidate for the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) mayor's post, while the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena named Sanjay Ghadi as its candidate for deputy mayor. The elections for mayor and deputy mayor will be held on February 11, which is also the last date for withdrawal of nominations. Mumbai is set to get a BJP mayor after a gap of 44 years, said BJP leader Amit Satam. The announcement came 21 days after the declaration of the BMC election results. The



BJP leader Ritu Tawade, Mumbai mayoral candidate, and Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Ghadi, deputy mayoral candidate, at the BMC headquarters. — PTI

BJP emerged as the single largest party in the keenly contested civic polls, defeating the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena

(UBT) and the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), both of which had fought the election on the "Marathi Manos" plank. The Shiv Sena (UBT) finished second with 65 seats.

Mumbai BJP chief Amit Satam announced Tawade's candidature, while Shiv Sena leader Rahul Shewale declared Ghadi's name at the BMC headquarters. Tawade and Ghadi filed their nominations in the presence of Satam, Cabinet Minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha and Shewale, among other leaders. With the mayor's post reserved for a woman from the general category, the BJP has fielded a seasoned woman leader.

Tanker seized via digital surveillance

FROM PAGE 1

The operation was initiated after Coast Guard technology-enabled systems detected a motor tanker carrying out suspicious activity within the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone, triggering a digital investigation. Subsequent data pattern analysis identified two additional vessels closing in on the tanker, suspected of involvement in illicit oil transfers at sea.



One of the vessels intercepted by ICG ships, about 100 nautical miles west of Mumbai. — DC

Specialist boarding teams later boarded the vessels and confirmed the digital evidence, leading to their apprehension. Officials

based overseas, as per preliminary findings. The vessels are expected to be escorted to Mumbai and handed over to Indian Customs and other law enforcement agencies for further investigation. The operation, initiated through digital surveillance and enforced through the ever-expanding maritime presence of the Indian Coast Guard, once again establishes India as a net provider of maritime safety.

said the vessels had frequently changed identities to evade detection by coastal State authorities and that the owners were

Swing collapses at fair in Faridabad, 1 killed, 13 hurt

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, FEB. 7

An on-duty police inspector was killed, and 13 others were injured when a giant Tsunami swing snapped mid-air and collapsed at the Surajkund Fair in Haryana's Faridabad on Saturday evening, police said.

According to the police, approximately 15 people were riding the swing when it tilted and came crashing onto the ground at around 6:15 pm.

A senior official said the dead officer was identified as Inspector Jagdish Prasad of Palwal Police, who was on fair duty and was posted in the police lines, Palwal. He was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Prasad was set to retire in March.

He tried to save people and showed great bravery, but in the process he received severe injuries to his face and head, the official said.

Soon after the swing collapsed, the entire Mela ground was evacuated and District Magistrate Ayush Sinha led the res-



A ride collapsed while descending at Surajkund Mela. The entire incident was recorded on one person's mobile phone there. — BY ARRANGEMENT

cue operations with other agencies and oversaw the shifting of the injured to hospital. A probe has been ordered into the incident, an official said. Chief Minister Nayab Saini condoled the loss of life.

"I am deeply saddened by the accident that occurred during the Surajkund Mela organised in Faridabad. I express my heartfelt condolences to the family of the person who lost their life in this incident. At the same time, necessary directions have been issued to the concerned

authorities for the appropriate and immediate treatment of the injured individuals," the Chief Minister posted on X.

The Haryana government has assured its full commitment to supporting those affected by the recent incident, emphasising utmost promptness and sensitivity in providing all possible assistance to the injured and their families. Meanwhile, the annual Mela, which was inaugurated on January 31, continues to run smoothly and will remain open for visitors.

PATRIOTIC FERVOUR: VIJAY SHAH APOLOGISES OVER REMARKS

DC CORRESPONDENT INDORE, FEB. 7

With a Supreme Court-mandated deadline for his prosecution looming large, Madhya Pradesh Minister Vijay Shah on Saturday apologised again for his objectionable remarks about Colonel Sofia Qureshi, saying he had uttered the words in a moment of "patriotic excitement".

Speaking to reporters here, Shah said he never intended to insult a woman officer, the armed forces or any section of society. The Supreme Court had on January 19 directed the state government to decide within two weeks whether to grant sanction to prosecute Shah for his controversial remarks about Colonel Qureshi.

Following the apex court's directive, the Congress has been demanding Shah's resignation or his removal from the cabinet. The minister came under fire in May last year after a video of his remarks about Colonel Qureshi during a speech at a public event in Raikunda village in Indore district went viral on social media. Colonel Qureshi was in the limelight for briefing the media on 'Operation Sindoor'.

Meghalaya mine blast death toll rises to 27

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs SHILLONG, FEB. 7

Two more bodies were found at the illegal coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district on Saturday, taking the toll in the blast to 27, police said.

The bodies were found as a multiple-agency search was continuing in the Thangsku area of Umsngak village, where the blast happened on Thursday, they said.

Several people are still missing, and the search operation will continue, they added.

Work is also underway to verify the identities of the deceased, Superintendent of Police Vikash Kumar said. A suo motu FIR has been registered at Khliehriat police station under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sannhita, the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act and the Explosive Substances Act, police said.



Search and rescue operations continue at the coal mine site in East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya. — PTI

So far, two accused, Forme Chyrmang (36) of Jalaphet Pordung village and Shamehi War (42) of Sutnga Pohwailong village, have been arrested in connection with the incident, they said.

The explosion occurred on Thursday at the mine in the Thangsku area of Umsngak village, prompting authorities to begin large-scale search and rescue operations involving multiple agencies, they said.



People wait in a queue during hearings under the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, at a centre in Kolkata. — PTI

WB poll: EC tightens voter slip distribution

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs KOLKATA, FEB. 7

With the West Bengal assembly polls drawing closer, the Election Commission has directed Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in the state to distribute door-to-door voter slips strictly as per guidelines, with the document containing all relevant information of electors, a senior official said.

The directive comes amid the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal, where assembly polls are due in less than three months. BLOs have been directed to distribute voter slips bearing the official logo.

"Clear instructions have been issued to ensure that voter slips are distributed strictly as per the Election Commission guidelines," the official told PTI.

BLOs have been directed to distribute voter slips bearing the official logo of the Commission.

"The voter slips must contain all relevant details, including the elector's name, age, address, EPIC number,

part number, booth number and the name of the polling station," an EC source said. While guidelines issued by the Commission in 2018 had already placed the responsibility of door-to-door voter slip distribution on BLOs, these instructions were not strictly followed during past elections, the source said. "In most cases, it was noticed that representatives of political parties were distributing voter slips during elections," another official said. "If any voter does not receive the slip at home from the designated BLO of the booth concerned, the elector can call the EC helpline number and lodge a complaint," he said.

WILDLIFE | BOOST

5 new cheetah cubs born in Kuno

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, FEB. 7

Namibian female cheetah Aasha in Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday became a mother for the second time by giving birth to five cubs. With this, the number of India-born cheetah cubs in Kuno rises to 24.

A video shared by the forest officers of the park showed Aasha, famously known as the 'Wanderer' for daring to explore the length and breadth of the Kuno soon after arriving

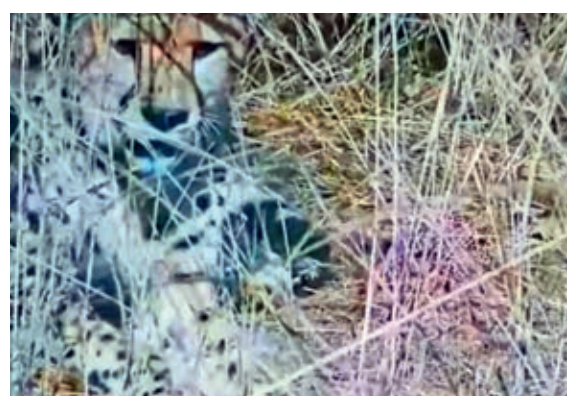
there from Namibia along with seven other cheetahs on September 17, 2022, caressing her cute cubs after giving them birth.

"Both the mother and her cubs are in good health", field director of the Kuno National Park Uttam Kumar Sharma told this newspaper. Aasha's partner in her second litter was a South African male cheetah, Agni, according to Mr. Sharma.

Aasha in her first litter, fathered by male cheetah Pawan, had given birth to three male cubs on January three, 2024.

Namibian cheetah Pawan died due to drowning in a wild stream in Kuno on August 27, 2024.

Union forest minister Bhupendra Singh, in fact, broke the news by sharing information on X, saying, "A moment of immense pride and joy for Project Cheetah as Aasha, the Namibian cheetah and a proud second-time mother, gave birth to five cubs on February 7, 2026, at Kuno National Park. With this, the tally of India-born surviving cubs rises to 24, marking the eighth successful cheetah litter."



Namibian cheetah Aasha gave birth to five cubs at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. — BY ARRANGEMENT

YOUTHFUL HIT

DEVI 70MM
Enjoy 4k laser projection & Dolby atmos
11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.15PM

BRAMARAMBA 70MM
2.45, 9.45PM (2 SHOWS)

RAJADHANI DELUXE-DSNR
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15PM

ASIAN TARAKARAMA 70-11.15, 6.00

ASIAN SUPER 70 11.00, 6.00PM	ASIAN MUKUND 70 11.00, 9.00PM
SAIRANGA 70MM 11.00, 6.00PM	INDRA/NAGENDRA 11.15, 6.00PM
TALLURI 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00	SENSATION CINEMA 11.00, 6.00, 9.15PM
MAHALAXMI 70MM 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.45	SRISAIRAM 70MM 11.15, 2.30PM
SHRIKRISHNA UPPAL 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30	GOKUL 70MM 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30
VYJAYANTHI 70MM 11.00, 2.00PM	VLS SRIDEVI 70MM 11.00, 6.00PM
BR HITECH 70MM 2.30, 9.30PM	ASIAN JYOTHI 70 2.00, 9.00PM
SVC SRILAXMI 2.45, 9.30PM	SENSATION CINEMA 11.45, 2.45PM

SKY MALL-11.00, 1.45, 7.30PM
GACHIBOWLI-11.30, 2.15, 8.00, 10.30
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SHANKAR KATKAMSETTY | DEVA NAGESWARA RAO

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WRITTEN BY NEELIMA GUNA | YOUNTH GUNA
DIRECTED BY GUNASEKHAR

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SUPER HIT

MILK LOVE

ASIAN CINEMAS
SHA/SHAHENSHA-11.30, 6.30PM
RADHIKA-10.20, 4.15, 10.20PM
LAXMIKALA-11.15, 6.30PM

CINEPLANET-10.50, 1.15, 4.15, 10.20PM
JP CINEMAS-10.15, 4.30, 7.10, 10.30PM
MJR SQUARE-10.50, 4.15, 7.15, 10.20PM
CINEMART-10.15, 4.30, 7.10, 10.30PM
MCUBE MALL-10.50, 4.15, 10.20PM

GPR MALL 1.15, 7.30, 10.30
APARNA MALL 11.00, 1.55, 7.45

TIVOLI 10.40, 4.40, 10.50PM
VIJAYALAXMI 11.00, 6.00

AMR MALL MOULALI
NACHARAM CINEPLEX 1.15, 10.15

RK PLEX-11.00, 7.50PM
CENTRAL MALL-2.00, 7.45PM
L&T ICON-11.00, 8.00PM
MOOSARAMBAGH-2.30, 10.40PM
IRRUMMANZIL-11.00, 10.30PM

FORUM MALL-11.00, 1.30, 7.40, 10.40PM
INORBIT MALL-11.00, 5.00, 8.15, 10.50PM
L&T NEXT GALLERIA-11.00, 1.50, 8.00PM
PRESTONE-11.00, 7.00, 10.30PM
ATRIUM MALL-11.00, 8.15PM
PRISM MALL-11.00, 8.00PM
SMR MALL-11.00, 7.50PM
INOX LAKESHORE-11.10, 5.00PM
PVR ODEAN MALL-11.00, 7.45, 10.50PM

CCPL-11.30, 5.00PM
SUDHA-11.00, 2.00, 8.10PM
LULU-11.00, 4.50PM
MANTRA MALL-10.30, 2.45, 11.05PM
DLS MALL-11.30, 2.45, 8.00PM
TNR NORTH-11.30, 4.50, 7.50PM

GVK-11.00, 5.00, 10.30PM
MP MALL-10.50, 8.00PM
GSM MALL-11.00, 5.00, 10.50PM
NECKLACE-11.00, 5.00, 10.40PM
ASHOKA ONE-1.50, 7.30PM

SUPER HIT SEE TODAY

euphoria

A GUNASEKHAR FILM

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WRITTEN BY NEELIMA GUNA | YOUNTH GUNA
DIRECTED BY GUNASEKHAR

SANDHYA 70MM
Enjoy 4k laser projection & Dolby atmos

VIMAL 70MM
64 Channel Dolby Atmos 4k laser projection centrally Air conditioned

RAJADHANI 70MM
NARTHAKI 70MM
JAGADAMBA 70MM
SAMPOORNA 70MM
SAIPOOJA 70MM
GANESH 70MM

RAMAKRISHNA 70MM-ABIDS

BRAMARAMBA 70	PRASANTH 70MM
ASIAN JYOTHI 70MM	VYJAYANTHI 70MM
SRIRAMANA 70MM	VLS SRIDEVI 70MM
SUPER 70MM	SAIRANGA 70MM
BR HITECH 70MM	VIJETHA 70MM
SIVAGANGA 70MM	VENKATESWARA 70

FORUM MALL | INORBIT MALL | RK MALL
IRRUMMANZIL | MUSARAMBAGH | PRISM
GALLERIA | ICON HITECH | ATRIUM MALL
PRESTONE | SMR MALL | CENTRAL MALL

GVK MALL | GSM MALL | MP MALL |
NECKLACE MALL | ASHOKA ONE

BALANAGAR | CHANDANAGAR | SHALINI
MIYAPUR | NARSINGI | MALKAJGIRI

LULU MALL | SUDHA | DLS MALL
CCPL | TNR NORTH | MANTRA MALL

AAA CINEMAS | OAMB | AMB CINEMAS

PRASAD'S-NTR GARDENS

ART CINEMAS-VANASTALIPURAM

RADHIKA | CINESQUARE | MCUBE
JP MALL | MJR SQUARE | SHA |
CINEPANET | CINEMART | LAXMIKALA

SKY MALL-SANATH NAGAR
PLATINUM-GACHIBOWLI

MP MALL
BANJARA HILLS

ROONGTA CINEMAS

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APRIL RANI IN

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ROMANTIC THRILLER

INOX ODEON-7.30PM
SRIKRISHNA 70-ALIYABAD
6.00 & 9.00PM

METRO 70-11.30, 2.30PM

INOX ASHOKA-1.45PM
INOX GSM MALL-10.30AM

PVR CENTRAL-4.40PM
PVR IRRUMMANZIL-1.50PM

INOX SMR MALL-10.05AM
MG MOVIES-9989522999

SUPER HIT

HONEY

INOX ODEON MALL
10.30PM

ANJALI 70MM-2.15, 9.00PM
SRIPREMA 70-11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

AAA-4.25PM | ART-1.30PM

GPR-10.45PM | APARNA-8.40PM

LAKESHORE MALL-8.05PM
RK PLEX-11.00AM
CENTRAL MALL-10.50PM
IRRUMMANZIL-11.00PM | ATRIUM-5.30PM

INOX GSM MALL-5.15PM
TNR NORTH-8.20PM
CCPL-10.40AM

Grand 4th WEEK

SANDHYA 35MM
Enjoy 4k laser projection & Dolby atmos surround

11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM

SVC SANGEETH 70MM
11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30PM
SVC EESHWAR 70MM
11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30PM
SVC SRILAXMI-KARMANGHAT
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.30PM
SVC YADAGIRI 70MM
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.30PM

AAA CINEMAS-AMEERPET
1.35, 7.15PM

ASH MALL-GACHIBOWLI
1.30, 4.30, 7.00, 10.40PM

ART MALL-VANASTALIPURAM
10.40, 1.25, 7.30, 10.15PM

SREERAMULU 70-11.30, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45
ASIAN KONARK 70-11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30
MALLIKARJUNA 70-11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30
VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI-2.15PM

TALLURI 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM	SRISAIRAM 70MM 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.45PM
SUSHMA 70MM 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM	ASIAN SUPER 70 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM
ALANKAR 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM	BHUJANGA 70MM 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15
ASIAN RAJYALAXMI 70 11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM	LAXMIKALAMANDIR 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.45PM
MAHALAXMI COMPLEX 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.45PM	ASIAN SENSATION 70 11.15, 2.45, 9.15PM

TIVOLI 1.30, 7.40PM | COOMPLEX 7.15PM

9.00, 12.00, 3.00, 6.15, 9.30PM | 1.00, 4.30, 7.15PM
GPR MALL

NALLAGANDLA 1.35, 4.50PM | LB NAGAR 7.00PM

MCUBE-4.20, 10.35PM
CINEMART-1.20, 4.20, 7.20, 10.25PM
CINEPLANET-1.20, 7.20, 10.25PM
JP CINEMAS-1.20, 4.20, 7.20, 10.25PM
RADHIKA-1.20, 10.35PM | SHA-11.00, 6.00PM
MJR SQUARE-1.20, 7.20, 10.25PM

SKY MALL-12.30, 7.20, 10.30PM
GACHIBOWLI-7.45, 10.50PM

10.45, 2.00, 7.50PM | PRASAD MULTIPLEX 12.15, 7.00PM

LULU-1.05, 7.30PM | CCPL-1.05, 7.30PM
MANTRA-4.15, 10.40PM

CENTRAL-1.20, 7.45PM | PRESTONE-1.30, 7.50PM
IRRUMMANZIL-10.20, 1.45, 7.50, 11.10PM
ICON HITECH-10.20, 4.20, 7.40, 11.00PM
MUSARAMBAGH-10.20, 1.00, 7.20, 10.40PM
L&T Galleria-10.15, 1.35, 7.40, 11.00PM
LAKESHORE MALL-10.15, 1.35, 7.30, 10.50PM

GVK-1.20, 7.20PM
MP MALL-12.30, 3.50, 7.10PM
NECKLACE-10.35, 4.20, 7.10, 10.30PM
GSM-1.15, 7.15, 10.40PM
ASHOKA-10.15, 7.50, 11.10PM

MALKAJGIRI-1.00, 11.00PM
CHANDANAGAR-4.00, 10.15PM
SHALINI-12.45, 10.00PM
BALANAGAR-12.45, 10.00PM | MIYAPUR-12.45, 10.00PM
NARSINGI-12.45, 10.00PM

MAHA SHIVARATRI SPECIAL ATTRACTION

FEB 13th RELEASE

FUNKY

DEVI 70MM
Enjoy 4k laser projection & Dolby atmos

MALLIKARJUNA 70MM
RAJADHANI DELUXE-DSNR
MYTHRI VIMAL 70MM

ANNAPURNA STUDIOS RELEASE

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hyderabad CHRONICLE

NOW SHOWING SEESH MAHAL 70MM-AMEERPET
11.00, 1.15, 3.15, 6.00, 9.00

RAJA SANAM AAGOSH!
RAJA SANAM AAGOSH HAIN

METRO 70MM
BAHADURPURA

DARR 2nd run super hit collection in Sharuk Khan movie!

DARR
NOW SHOWING
11.30, 2.30, 6.00, 9.00PM

9 booked over shifting of cat

M.B. GIRISH | DC BENGALURU, FEB. 7

An animal lover Harish and a resident of Vanashree Solitaire Apartment in HAL area filed a complaint with HAL police of Bengaluru city alleging illegal capture of a pregnant cat and later shifting it into an unknown location. The pregnant cat stayed at the apartment complex before it was caught illegally and Harish alleged that the cat was forcibly removed from the apartment premises.

Based on his complaint, HAL Police registered a First Information Report under Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

In the FIR, apartment association president Sriram,

HAL POLICE file FIR after residents allege illegal removal of pregnant cat from apartment.

security manager and 7 others have been named. Investigations are underway.

It is alleged the apartment management illegally caught the pregnant cat in an auto rickshaw.

Some residents who fed and cared for the pregnant cat said the cat roamed in the apartment premises but never troubled anyone.

But, the pregnant cat has been caught and shifted with for no reason.

The residents fear the safety of the pregnant cat.

Time will tell about CM's post, says DKS

Dy CM says state not consulted on Metro price hike

DC CORRESPONDENT MANGALURU, FEB. 7

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday gave a guarded reply when asked whether he would become Chief Minister after the State Budget, saying that "time will answer."

Speaking to reporters in Mangaluru, Shivakumar also responded to questions about public aspirations that he should become Chief Minister. "People have expectations, and so do the MLAs and you (media). But we must go by what the party says," he said.

Asked about Dalit organisations expressing their desire that Home Minister G. Parameshwara should become Chief Minister, Shivakumar said such sentiments were natural. "What is wrong with that?"



PEOPLE HAVE expectations, and so do the MLAs and you (media). But we must go by what the party says, Supporters of every leader have their own aspirations. I cannot say they should not have such hopes

— D.K. SHIVAKUMAR, Dy CM Karnataka

Supporters of every leader have their own aspirations. I cannot say they should not have such hopes," he remarked.

On the recent hike in metro fares, the Deputy Chief Minister said the decision was taken by a separate committee headed by a Secretary to the Union Government and that the State government had not been consulted.

"There is an independent committee to decide metro fares, and our opinion was not sought. I will discuss this after returning to Bengaluru. We do not want to cause inconvenience to the public and will review the financial situation," he said. He added The government ensure transparency, accountability, and computer-friendly decisions going forward.

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SCHEDULE FOR TODAY

EUPHORIA TEL 3D (UA)	10:00 AM, 1:45 PM, 3:55 PM, 7:00 PM, 10:30 PM	250/350
MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU TEL 3D (UA)	10:10 AM, 4:25 PM, 7:10 PM, 10:15 PM	295/350
BORDER 2 TEL 3D (UA)	6:50 PM, 10:15 PM	295/350
ANAGANAGA OKA RAJU 3 (2012) TEL 3D (UA)	1:10 PM, 10:25 PM	250/350
NARI NARI NADUMA MURARI TEL 3D (UA)	2:05 PM, 10:30 PM	295/350
MARDAANI 3 TEL 3D (UA)	10:25 AM, 4:00 PM, 10:45 PM	295/350
ORANGE (2010) TEL 3D (UA)	1:20 PM	250/350
WITH LOVE TEL 3D (UA)	10:50 AM, 1:00 PM, 7:35 PM, 10:25 PM	250/350
SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU TEL 3D (UA)	1:10 PM, 5:00 PM	295/350
OPERATION PADMA TEL 3D (UA)	10:05 AM	295/350
DHURANDHAR TEL 3D (UA)	06:40 PM	295/350
BHABHI GHAR PAR HAI TEL 3D (UA)	4:40 PM	295/350
VADH 2 TEL 3D (UA)	4:55 PM, 7:45 PM	295/350
STRAY KIDS THE DOMAIN TEL 3D (UA)	1:10 PM, 7:15 PM	295/350
THE STRANGERS - CHAPTER 3 TEL 3D (UA)	10:40 PM	295/350
MARTY SUPREME TEL 3D (UA)	10:00 PM, 7:45 PM	295/350
SCARLET TEL 3D (UA)	05:05 PM	295/350

UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS

13th FEB (FRIDAY) 14th FEB (SATURDAY) 14th FEB (SATURDAY)

Book your tickets at ambcinemas.in

NOW IN CINEMAS SUPER HIT

INOX ODEON MALL-4.40PM

LAKESHORE MALL-4.50PM

FORUM MALL-2.30PM

INORBIT MALL-3.50PM

CENTRAL MALL-5.00PM

ICON HITECH-1.45PM | PRISM-4.50PM

L&T METRO-4.50PM | SMR MALL-1.40PM

GSM MALL-2.10PM

SATTVA NECKLACE-11.40AM

AMB CINEMAS-10.30AM

AAA CINEMAS-4.20PM

ART CINEMAS-1.10PM

DSL MALL-11.00AM

MANTRA MALL-1.45PM

TNR NORTH-4.30PM

SKY MALL-1.00PM

RADHIKA-10.20PM

CINEPLANET-4.15PM

MJR SQUARE-10.40PM

JP CINEMAS-10.30PM

ASIAN CINEMAS-4.15PM

ASIAN CINEMAS

SCHEDULE FOR TODAY

ASIAN RADHIKA - AS RAO NAGAR

ORANGE RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BARABAR PREMISTHA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

ASIAN CINEPLANET - KOMPALLY

ORANGE RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BARABAR PREMISTHA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

3 RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

ASIAN M CUBE MALL - ATTAPUR

ORANGE RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BARABAR PREMISTHA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BORDER 2 (TEL 3D) Rs. 295/350

ASIAN LAKSHMIKALA CINEPRIDE - MOOSAPET

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 100/150

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 50/105/150

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 50/105/150

3 RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 50/105/150

ANAGANAGA OKA RAJU (TEL 3D) Rs. 50/105/150

NARI NARI NADUMA MURARI (TEL 3D) Rs. 50/105/150

ASIAN CINEMART - RC PURAM

ORANGE RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BARABAR PREMISTHA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

3 RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

HONEE (TEL 3D) Rs. 150/200

ASIAN SHA & SHAHENSHA - CHINTAL

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 100/150

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 100/150

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 100/150

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 100/150

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ASIAN MUKTA A2 MJR SQUARE MALL - NARAPALLY

ORANGE RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

WITH LOVE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

BARABAR PREMISTHA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

EUPHORIA (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

3 RE-RELEASE (TEL 3D) Rs. 200/250

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13th JANUARY VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL

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RTC X ROADS

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RADHIKA | M CUBE | SHA | CINEPLANET | CINEMART | LAXMIKALA

FORUM MALL | INORBIT MALL | RK MALL | IRRUMMANZIL | MUSARAMBAGH | PRISM GALLERIA | ICON HITECH | ATRIUM MALL | PRESTON | SMR MALL | CENTRAL MALL

GVK MALL | GSM MALL | MP MALL | NECKLACE MALL | ASHOKA ONE

BALANAGAR | CHANDANAGAR | SHALINI MIYAPUR | NARSINGI | MALKAJGIRI

Light house cine magic - 9246547212

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EUPHORIA TEL 3D (UA)

10:25 AM, 1:20 PM, 4:10 PM, 10:45 PM

200/300

WITH LOVE TEL 3D (UA)

10:35 AM, 1:00 PM, 4:55 PM, 7:20 PM, 10:20 PM

200/250

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU TEL 3D (UA)

1:35 PM, 7:40 PM, 10:15 PM

200/250

ANAGANAGA OKA RAJU TEL 3D (UA)

7:05 PM, 10:40 PM

200/250

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU TEL 3D (UA)

10:25 AM, 10:35 PM

200/250

NARI NARI NADUMA MURARI TEL 3D (UA)

4:05 PM

200/250

SUMATHI SATHAKAM TEL 3D (UA)

1:55 PM, 7:40 PM

200/250

ORANGE TEL 3D (UA)

10:30 AM, 1:00 PM, 4:30 PM, 7:40 PM, 10:50 PM

200/250

3 (2012) TEL 3D (UA)

11:00 AM, 4:45 PM

200/250

HONEE TEL 3D (UA)

1:35 PM, 4:25 PM, 7:45 PM

200/250

BORDER-2 TEL 3D (UA)

3:50 PM

200/250

UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS

13th FEBRUARY (FRIDAY) 14th FEBRUARY (SATURDAY)

BOOK YOUR TICKETS ON **district**

ASIAN CINEMAS

VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL

BOOKINGS OPEN NOW

TELUGU - 2D

BOOK YOUR TICKETS ONLY ON **bookmyshow**

ASIAN LAKSHMIKALA MOOSAPET TEL 3D (UA) ₹50/100/150

ASIAN CINEMART RC PURAM TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN M CUBE MALL ATTAPUR TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN CINEPLANET KOMPALLY TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN CINESQUARE UPPAL TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN RADHIKA ECL TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN SRIDEVI MALL HANAMKONDA TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/200

ASIAN USHA PRASAD NIZAMABAD TEL 3D (UA) ₹150/250

ASIAN SHA SHAHENSHA CHINTAL TEL 3D (UA) ₹100/150

ASIAN JP CINEMAS CHANDANAGAR TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

ASIAN MUKTA MJR SQUARE NARAPALLY TEL 3D (UA) ₹200/250

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ASIAN CINEMAS

REVOLUTIONISING THE ART OF ENTERTAINMENT!

SCHEDULE FOR TODAY

EUPHORIA TEL 3D (UA)

4:35 PM, 10:30 PM

200/300

MANA SHANKARA VARA PRASAD GARU TEL 3D (UA)

1:00 PM, 7:05 PM, 4:10 PM, 10:50 PM

250/200

ANAGANAGA OKA RAJU TEL 3D (UA)

4:10 PM, 10:50 PM

250/200

NARI NARI NADUMA MURARI TEL 3D (UA)

12:00 PM

250/200

SRI CHIDAMBARAM GARU TEL 3D (UA)

10:50 AM

250/200

BARABAR PREMISTHA TEL 3D (UA)

10:30 AM

250/200

WITH LOVE TEL 3D (UA)

7:45 PM, 10:40 PM, 10:20 AM, 1:00 PM, 4:20 PM, 7:20 PM, 10:30 PM

250/200

OPERATION PADMA TEL 3D (UA)

4:05 PM

250/200

SUMATHI SATHAKAM TEL 3D (UA)

1:25 PM, 1:25 PM

200/200

3 (2012) TEL 3D (UA)

10:00 AM, 4:15 PM

250/200

HONEE TEL 3D (UA)

10:40 AM, 7:50 PM

250/200

BORDER 2 TEL 3D (UA)

10:10 PM

250/200

UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS

13th FEBRUARY (FRIDAY) 14th FEBRUARY (SATURDAY)

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SABARIMALA: SIT QUESTIONS UDF CONVENOR

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 7: The SIT probing the Sabarimala gold loss cases interrogated UDF convenor and Congress MP Adoor Prakash here on Saturday, police said.

Prakash arrived at the crime branch headquarters in the morning after being issued a notice in this regard, they added.

Apart from Prakash, the prime accused, Potty, who was released on statutory bail, was also interrogated by the Special Investigation Team. The interrogation of Prakash lasted about two-and-a-half hours, and he left the office at around 1 pm. Prakash said he had returned from Kasaragod on Friday when the SIT contacted him.

22 PEOPLE WERE INJURED DUE TO DOG BITES

GURURAJ A. PANIYADI | DC HAVERI, FEB. 7

About 22 persons, including a child, were injured in stray dog attacks reported from different parts of Ranebennur city on Friday evening.

The incidents were reported from places like Umashankar Nagar and Halageri Cross areas. In one of the incidents, a stray dog suddenly attacked a boy who was playing in front of his house, biting him and causing serious injuries. According to sources, one dog was responsible for several of the attacks, while a few other incidents involved different dogs. Haveri District Health Officer told *Deccan Chronicle* that eight persons were admitted to the taluk government hospital for treatment, while the others were given first aid.



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Union Minister Jitendra Singh, Union Minister for State Pemasani Chandrasekhar at the foundation stone for Amaravati Quantum Computing Center at Uddandarayuni Palem in Guntur District.

— BY ARRANGEMENT.

India's first Quantum valley takes shape in AP

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 7

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Union minister for state Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh laid on Saturday the foundation for India's first integrated quantum ecosystem in Amaravati, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh.

Dedicating what he termed Amaravati Quantum Valley to India at a large gathering of students, the AP CM vowed to make the first quantum computer operational in Amaravati by December 2026.

He said, "Today is a historic day not only for AP but for India. We are laying the foundation for India's Quantum technology leadership in the world." He lauded Education, IT and Electronics minister N. Lokesh, terming him the most suitable minister to lead the IT sector in AP.

Referring to his recent visit to Davos for participating in the World Economic Forum, Naidu disclosed that the global community is discussing only two issues - AI and green energy. To harness these two, he wished to develop the Quantum Valley and Green Hydrogen Valley in AP, which will be game changers in development of Andhra Pradesh.

"Amaravati Quantum Valley will not only export talent and services. It will develop quantum products, designs, and intellectual property

rights in AP. Quantum is not just another technology. It is the mother of all frontier technologies, like power, defence, space energy, finance, secure communications, and climate modelling. Quantum will shape national security, economic security, and global power in the 21st century," Chandrababu Naidu underlined. In this context, he pointed to the past when everybody talked about Silicon Valley. "We are now taking up the Quantum Valley, which is the future," the AP Chief Minister stated, recalling making Hyderabad the Silicon Valley. He appreciated farmers of Amaravati for their extraordinary contribution by parting with their lands for building the capital city for AP. Naidu vowed to make Amaravati as one of the world's best capitals, pointing out that while Hyderabad had been a brown-field capital, Amaravati is a greenfield capital. He went on to say that anyone living in Amaravati will benefit with his or her lifespan increasing by 30-40 years. "That is the kind of beautiful city we are building for tomorrow," he emphasised. The CM appreciated PM Narendra Modi for understanding technology. "We are fortunate to have the right man at the right place. It is PM who initiated the Quantum Mission. I have adopted it and intend to bring in the quantum computer," he maintained.

Parvathipuram Savaras build temple dedicated to letters

ARUNA | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB. 7

Parvathipuram Manyam district's Savara tribe has a unique cultural practice with these Adivasi constructed a temple at Nukalamma Guda village in Sativada panchayat, which is dedicated not to gods or idols, but to alphabets.

Savaras call this remarkable shrine Akshara Brahma Temple, symbolising their devotion to language and script, reflecting the tribe's deep spiritual connection to words and communication.

The Savara tribe is known for its distinctive traditions, attire, and lively songs and dances, with a significant emphasis on language. Initially, the Savara language had been purely oral. It later developed a 24-letter script.

According to the community's elders, the practice of revering letters began at



Akshara Brahma Temple in Nukalamma Guda, Parvathipuram Manyam district, a rare shrine built by the Savara tribe, where devotion is offered not to idols but to alphabets.

Savara Karuvayya building the temple at Nukalamma Guda during 1995-1996. Right since its inception, the temple has evolved into both a spiritual centre and a cultural landmark. Special prayers are held every Thursday, attracting devotees from Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring Odisha. Local residents remember

SHORT TAKES

THOUSANDS TAKE PART IN BLAST VICTIMS' FUNERAL

Islamabad, Feb. 7: Thousands gathered on Saturday for the funerals of victims of a suicide bombing at a Shiite mosque that killed 31 people and wounded 169 others in Pakistan's capital. Friday's attack, which was claimed by the Islamic State group, was the deadliest in Islamabad since the 2008 Marriott hotel bombing. City officials said 31 people were killed and another 169 were wounded in the explosion at the Imam Bargah Qasr-e-Khadijatul Kubra mosque on the city's outskirts.

BRAZIL SUSPENDS DREDGING OPS IN AMAZON RIVER

Sao Paulo, Feb. 7: Brazil announced on Friday the suspension of dredging operations on a major Amazon tributary, after Indigenous communities protested the work on rivers they see as vital to their way of life. Hundreds of Indigenous people have been protesting for two weeks outside the port terminal of US agribusiness giant Cargill in northern Brazil to draw the attention of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's government. They have been angered over the dredging and development of Amazon's rivers for grain exports.

4 ASTRONAUTS TO REPLACE ISS PREVIOUS CREW

Washington, Feb. 7: Four astronauts will blast off to re-staff the International Space Station (ISS) next week, NASA said Friday, after an emergency medical evacuation of the previous crew. Crew-12 will lift off on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket early Wednesday, the US space agency said, with launch time "targeted for no earlier than 6:01 am" local time (1101 GMT). The confirmation provides a sliver of certainty for the Crew-12 mission, which had faced last-minute rocket problems and staffing changes.

IRAN ARMY REPORTS FIRE WITHIN BARRACKS

Tehran, Feb. 7: A fire erupted at a wood workshop located within the grounds of a military barracks in the Iranian capital on Friday, the army said in a statement. The blaze was contained and no injuries have been reported, the army added, as it blamed an electrical fault for the fire. "The fire was brought under control when firefighting teams arrived on time," said the statement, which was carried by official media. Earlier this week, a fire broke out at a bazaar west of Tehran, with rescuers bringing it under control.

CHINA LAUNCHES REUSABLE SPACECRAFT

Beijing, Feb. 7: China successfully launched into orbit a reusable experimental spacecraft aboard a Long March-2F carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the country's northwest on Saturday, state news agency Xinhua reported. The mission will carry out technological verification for reusable spacecraft, providing technical support for the peaceful use of space. It is the fourth time the country has launched a reusable spacecraft since 2020.

Trump praises US-Iran talks, says more ahead

Iran FM says missile programme 'non-negotiable' in talks

Aboard, Air Force One, Feb. 7: US President Donald Trump said that Washington had "very good talks" on Iran after the two sides held an indirect dialogue in Oman, pledging another round of negotiations next week.

Iran for its part said it expected to hold more negotiations with the United States, hailing a "positive atmosphere" during a day of talks in the Gulf sultanate.

With an American naval group led by an aircraft carrier in Middle Eastern waters, US and Iranian delegations held talks in Muscat on Friday mediated by Oman without publicly meeting face-to-face.

"We likewise had very good talks on Iran," Trump told reporters on board Air Force One en route to his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

"We're going to meet again early next week," he added. Shortly after the talks concluded, the US announced new sanctions against shipping entities and vessels, aimed at curbing Iran's oil exports.



Men look at Iranian daily newspapers reporting on the first round of talks between Iran and the United States at a kiosk in Tehran on Saturday. — AFP

Trump also signed an executive order Friday enabling his administration to impose tariffs on goods from countries doing business with Iran, with any potential levies threatening trade with countries including China, Germany and the United Arab Emirates.

It was not clear if the

moves were linked to the talks, which were the first between the two foes since the United States joined Israel's war with Iran in June with strikes on its nuclear sites.

While Iran warned against further threats after Washington raised the spectre of new military action, Trump said: "If they don't make a

deal, the consequences are very steep."

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who led Iran's delegation in Muscat, said talks "focused exclusively" on the Iranian nuclear program, which the West believes is aimed at making an atomic bomb but Tehran insists is peaceful. — AFP



Donald Trump

TRUMP APPROVES DICAMBA USE ON COTTON, SOYBEAN

Washington, Feb. 7: US President Donald Trump's administration re-approved the use of pesticide dicamba for spraying on top of genetically modified cotton and soybean crops, drawing swift backlash from environmental groups and the Make America Healthy Again movement. The move comes despite federal courts in 2020 and 2024 striking down the Environmental Protection Agency's previous approvals of the contentious weedkiller. "This decision responds directly to the strong advocacy of America's cotton and soybean farmers, particularly growers across the Cotton Belt, who have been clear and consistent about the critical challenges they face without access to this tool for controlling resistant weeds in their growing crop," the EPA said in a statement. — AFP

Clintons seek public testimony on Epstein

Washington, Feb. 7: Former US president Bill Clinton and former secretary of state Hillary Clinton are calling for their congressional testimony on ties to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein to be held publicly to prevent Republicans from politicizing the issue.

The couple had been ordered to give closed-door depositions before the House Oversight Committee, which is probing the deceased financier's connections to powerful figures and how information about his crimes was handled.

Hillary Clinton will appear for her deposition on February 26, while Bill Clinton will appear on February 27, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform said in a statement.

Democrats say the probe is being weaponized to attack political opponents of President Donald Trump — himself a longtime Epstein associate who has not been called to testify — rather than to conduct legitimate oversight.

Zelensky: US aims to end war by June

Kyiv, Ukraine, Feb. 7: The US wants Ukraine and Russia to end their nearly four-year war by June, and has offered to host talks between the two sides in Florida next week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

US-led efforts to end Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II have stepped up a gear in recent weeks, but Moscow and Kyiv remain at odds over the key issue of territory. Russia, which occupies around 20 percent of its neighbour, is pushing for full control of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region as part of any deal and has threatened to take it by force if talks fail.



A police officer leaves the residence of Former UK ambassador to the United States, Peter Mandelson, carrying a box in central London. — AFP

JUSTICE DEPT OPENS EPSTEIN CASE

Washington, Feb. 7: The Department of Justice will allow members of Congress to review unredacted files on the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein starting on Monday, according to a letter that was sent to lawmakers. The letter obtained by The Associated Press

says that lawmakers will be able to review unredacted versions of the more than 3 million files that the Justice Department has released to comply with a law passed by Congress last year. To access the files, lawmakers will need to give 24 hours' notice.

In a familiar political yo-yo, Republican Trump reopened the monument to commercial fishing during his first term, only for the decision to be reversed by Democratic successor Joe Biden. — AFP

TRUMP REOPENS ATLANTIC WATERS FOR FISHING

Washington, Feb. 7: US President Donald Trump on Friday issued a proclamation reopening commercial fishing in protected waters off the Atlantic coast, in a region renowned for its rich biodiversity.

The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument spans nearly 5,000 square miles — larger than Yellowstone National Park. Long a focus of scientific interest, the monument lies about 130 miles southeast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and was established in 2016 by former Democratic president Barack Obama, who warned it was threatened by over-fishing and climate change.

In a familiar political yo-yo, Republican Trump reopened the monument to commercial fishing during his first term, only for the decision to be reversed by Democratic successor Joe Biden. — AFP

Transfers | MISTAKE Bithumb planned 2K won to each customer Exchange wrongly sends 620K bitcoins

Seoul, Feb. 7: A South Korean cryptocurrency exchange apologised on Saturday after mistakenly transferring more than \$40 billion worth of bitcoin to users, which briefly prompted a selloff on the platform. Bithumb said it accidentally sent 620,000 bitcoins, currently worth more than \$40 billion, and blocked trading and withdrawals for the 695 affected users within 35 minutes after the error on Friday. According to local reports, Bithumb was

meant to send about 2,000 won (\$1.37) to each customer as part of a promotion, but mistakenly transferred roughly 2,000 bitcoins per user. "We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience caused to our customers due to the confusion that occurred during the distribution process of this (promotional) event," Bithumb said in a statement released Saturday. The platform said it had recovered 99.7 percent of the mistakenly sent bitcoins, and that it would use

its own assets to fully cover the amount that was lost in the incident. It admitted the error briefly caused "sharp volatility" in bitcoin prices on the platform as some recipients sold the tokens, adding that it brought the

situation under control within five minutes. Its charts showed the token's prices briefly went down 17 percent to 81.1 million won on the platform late Friday. The platform stressed that the incident was "unrelated to external hacking" or security breaches. Bitcoin, the world's biggest cryptocurrency, sank this week, wiping out gains sparked by US President Donald Trump's presidential election victory in November 2024. — AFP

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. : JHS-N-W-08-26 Date : 05.02.2026
E-Tendering Tender Notice
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/Jhansi, DRMs office, Jhansi, for and on behalf of President of India invite open Tender through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following works.
E-Tender No. : JHS-N-W-08-26 Approx Cost : Rs. 27796798.73
Description of work : Provision of S&T work in connection with Rebuilding of existing overaged steel girder bridges of clear span 12.2M by PSC Slab of Bridges in BINA-DHO Section of Jhansi Division.
Earnest Money : Rs. 299000/- Cost of Tender Form : Nil.
Opening of tender : 06.03.2026 Time 15:00
Completion period from issue of letter of acceptance : 12 Months
Tender on line can be submitted upto 15.00 hrs on 06.03.2026. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.iraps.gov.in. (NORTH CENTRAL RLY/JHANSI DIVISION-S&T) 275/26 (AS)
@CPONCR North central railways @cpnrcr www.nctrailways.gov.in

Office of the Executive Engineer
Road Construction Department,
Road Division, Garhwa
e-Procurement Notice
For National Competitive Bidding
(Short Term Tender)
e-Tender Reference No. : RCD/GARHWA/121/2025-26 (3rd Call)
Date:- 06.02.2026
1. Name of the work Improvement of Riding Quality work of Kharsota More to Kasnap More road (Total Length - 23.30 km.) under Road Division, Garhwa
2a. Approximate Value of Work Rs. 15,06,38,769.00 (Rupees Fifteen crore Six Lakh Thirty Eight thousand Seven hundred Sixty Nine) only.
b. Bid Security* Rs. 15,07,000.00 (Rupees Fifteen Lac Seven Thousand) only.
3. Time of Completion 05 (Five) Months.
4. Date of Publication of Tender on website 13-02-2026, 10.30 A.M.
5. Last date/Time for receipt of bids 20-02-2026, 12.00 Noon
6. Name & address of office Inviting tender Executive Engineer, RCD, Road Division, Garhwa Pin Code - 822114
7. Contact no. of Procurement officer 06561-295161
8. Helpline number of e-Procurement cell 0651-2401010
Note :- The Bid Amount & Bid security will be decrease or increase. Further details can be seen on website http://jarkhandtenders.gov.in
Executive Engineer
Road Construction Department
Road Division, Garhwa
PR 372529 Road (25-26)_D

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
e-Procurement NIT No. 27/SE/Dy.EE/Tenders/2025-26 Dated: 04.02.2026
The Online tenders are invited under e-Procurement platform for the following works:
No. NIT No. Name of the work Amount of Estimate, Rs. in Lakhs
1 NIT No.27/SE/Dy.EE/Tenders/2025-26/ Dated:04.02.2026. Construction of side drain and pipe culvert and Approach Road & Roof repairs at Inspection and Certification Centre at Malkapur Village, Choutuppal Mandal, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District. 106.00
The last date of receipt of tender is on 21.02.2026 up to 4.00 P.M.
Further details can be seen at "e-Procurement market place i.e. https://eprocure.gov.in E Mail ID:seydtrmb@gmail.com Sd/- Superintending Engineer (R&B) DIPR RO No. : 15078-PP/CLADVT/1/2025-26 Circle: Yadadri Bhuvanagiri

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
East Wing, 7th FLOOR, Swarna Jayanthi Commercial Complex, Ameerpet, HYDERABAD-500038
e-Procurement Tender Notice
NIT No.HMDA/DEV/CE/48/2025-26 Date: 06-02-2026
Tenders are invited on e-Procurement from valid Registered Contractors for the following work:
S. No. Name of work Tender inviting authority Last date of submission of bids online
1 Construction of Sports Complex Hall at Uppal Bhagayath (V), Uppal (M), Medchal-Malkajgiri Dist. (Approximate value of work Rs. 8.50 Cr.) HMDA upto 03:00 PM
For further details visit https://tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/-Chief Engineer, HMDA
DIPR.C.No.1143-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt:07.02.2026

Ministry of Rural Development
Department of Rural Development
Request for Proposal
Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India invites Request for Proposal from reputed and experienced agencies to engage a Consultancy Firm for providing support services for the National Level Monitoring System and compiling and analyzing the reports of National Level Monitors (NLMs). The tender can be downloaded from https://www.dord.gov.in/offeringstenders and https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.
Applications will be received from online mode through CPP Portal only. The last date for submission of Bid is 05.03.2026 by 5.00 PM.
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
CBC 35101/11/0093/2526

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice Number : CM-1/TTE Rest House/03STN/PRY/J/2026 Date: 05.02.2026
E-Tender Notice
Following e-tenders invites by the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, North Central Railway, Prayagraj on behalf of President of India in the prescribed form, from the reputed contractors having sufficient experience and financial capacity:-
GeM Tender Notice Number : GEM/2026/B/7198757 Dated 27.02.2026
Name of work: Complete Housekeeping, Messing arrangement including Subsidiary Food, Maintenance of lawns/garden, Preparation of Bed and Washing & Ironing of linens and other Misc Works in TTE Rest House at CNB, ALJN & PCJ Station for the period on 03 years.
Tender Type : Two Packets System Contract Period: Three Years(1085 days)
Estimated Cost of Work (with GST): ₹ 56204255.04 Earnest Money: ₹ 431030.00
Tender Closing Date and Time : 27.02.2026 15:00
Tender Opening Date and Time : 27.02.2026 15:30
Note: 1. Details of the above e-tender (including tender form) are available on the website of www.geM.gov.in from the date of publication till the date of opening of the tender. 2. For the above mentioned tender, only online bid will be accepted. For this purpose the vendor should register themselves on GeM website. 3. All documents to be attached should be signed by the tenderer. 4. E-tender forms will be issued free of cost to all tenderers. 5. For any technical issue please contact the helpline of GeM website. 2702(2/06)
North central railways @CPONCR www.nctrailways.gov.in

HON'BLE JUSTICE S.P. TALUKDAR ONE MAN COMMITTEE
5 Council House Street, Kolkata - 700 001
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES RELATING TO ANNEX, WARIS, PINCON, PAILAN, RAMEL, KOLKATA WEIR, VIBGYOR, TOWER INFOTECH, GBC INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION, TOGO RETAIL, MARKETING, R N POLYMER, TEACHERS WELFARE, BASIL INTERNATIONAL, REAL TULIP INDUSTRIES, MPS GROUP OF COMPANIES
Justice S.P. Talukdar One Man Committee, High Court, Calcutta is going to hold public auction (e-auction) of some properties of Annex Infrastructure India Limited Group of Companies, Waris Group of Companies, Pincon Group of Companies, Pailan Group of Companies, Ramel Industries Limited, Kolkata Weir Industries Limited, Vibgyor Group of Companies, Tower Infotech Group of Companies, GBC Industrial Corporation Group of Companies, Togo Retail Marketing Limited Group of Companies, R N Polymer Industries Limited Group of Companies, Teachers Welfare Credit and Holding Group of Companies, Basil International Group of Companies, Real Tulip Industries Limited Group of Companies and MPS Group of Companies. Interested persons are requested to visit www.justicesptalukdarcommittee.com or Auction Notice under Recovery Proceedings in 'Enforcement' tab on www.sebi.gov.in, or www.adroitvaluations.com for details.
Place: Kolkata
Date: February 8, 2026
Securities and Exchange Board of India (on behalf of Justice S.P. Talukdar One Man Committee)
CBC-15204/11/0238/2526

कार्यालय कार्यपालनअभियंता लोकस्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग, खण्ड-बलरामपुर (छ.ग.)
E-mail: sebalram-ph-cg@nic.in
निविदा क्र./14/ले.शा./ज.जी.मि./का.अ./ले.स्वा.या.वि./2026
बलरामपुर, दिनांक 03.02.2026
ऑन लाईन प्रथम निविदा आमंत्रण
Risk & Cost
छ्तीसगढ़ के राज्यपाल की ओर से जल जीवन मिशन अंतर्गत नल जल प्रदाय योजना के विभिन्न कार्य के लिए प्रशिक्षित दर फार्म 'अ' में निम्नानुसार निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :-
सि. नि. क्र. ग्राम का नाम कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (रु. में)
183701 बरहीबांस, हरौगवाँ 316.99
184935 गौरजापुर 40.38
184936 बबौमा, चरगढ़ 204.08
184940 चंघापुर 177.85
184941 कुन्दी 61.81
184942 नटवरनगर, नवाडीह खुर्द 191.21
184945 दरौडीह 3.31
184947 पहरी 32.22
निविदा एवं कार्य का विस्तृत विवरण यथा चरोहर राशि, बिड वैधता की तिथि, कार्य की अवधि, निविदाकारकी श्रेणी, एवं कार्यों तथा स्थल संबंधी जानकारी ऑन लाईन ई-प्रोच्युरमेंट https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in पर दिनांक 06.02.2026 से देखी जा सकती है तथा निविदा दिनांक 27.02.2026 तक बिड शलनी जा सकती है। निविदा में आगामी संशोधन पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित नहीं किए जावेंगे। अतः निविदाकार ऑन लाईन निविदा प्रक्रिया में सतत् संपर्क में रहे। अन्य विवरण कार्यालयीन समय पर लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग, खण्ड बलरामपुर में देखे जा सकते हैं।
कार्यालय अभियंता लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी विभाग खण्ड-बलरामपुर (छ.ग.)
G-252606528/3

SHORT TAKES

CHINA OVERTURNS DEATH SENTENCE OF CANADIAN

Toronto, Feb. 7: China has overturned the death sentence of Canadian Robert Lloyd Schellenberg, a Canadian official said, in a possible sign of a diplomatic thaw as Prime Minister Mark Carney seeks to boost trade ties with Beijing. Schellenberg was detained on drug charges in 2014 before China-Canada ties nosedived following the 2018 arrest in Vancouver of Huawei chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou. That arrest infuriated Beijing, which detained two Canadians — Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig — on espionage charges that Ottawa condemned as retaliatory. Then, in January 2019, a court in northeast China retried Schellenberg, who was 36 at the time, sentencing him to death while declaring that his 15 year prison term for drug trafficking had been too lenient.

MALAYSIA DATA CENTRE BUILDOUT DRAWS BACKLASH

Kuala Lumpur, Feb. 7: The rapid increase in data centres in Malaysia came under the microscope on Saturday, with the AI-driven buildout drawing its first public protest in the Southeast Asian country. More than 50 people gathered in front of a data centre construction site close to a residential area in the southern state of Johor, demanding an end to dust pollution and compensation for any negative impact that the project might have on their health. The protesters also expressed concern the facility will impact their water supply. Those gathered say they represent nearly 1,000 residents strewn across four housing estates in the Gelang Patah district. Located less than a kilometer (about half a mile) from the closest homes, the project is being developed for China's Zdata Technologies Co. The developers didn't meet the protesters, who dispersed after 90 minutes under the watch of dozens of police personnel.

B'desh's Rahman says BNP can govern alone

Rules out unity government proposal from his rival

Dhaka, Feb. 7: Bangladesh's leading prime ministerial contender, Tarique Rahman, on Friday rejected a proposal from his main rival for a unity government after elections next week, saying his party was confident of winning on its own.

Rahman, 60, who heads the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), returned home in December after nearly two decades in exile in London following a youth-led uprising that toppled long-time leader Sheikh Hasina, a bitter rival of his mother, the country's first woman Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

The BNP's main rival in the February 12 election is the Islamist group Jamaat-e-Islami, once banned but now resurgent.

The two parties governed together between 2001 and 2006, and Jamaat has said it is open to renewing the partnership for a unity government to help stabilise the country, whose



Bangladeshis hold a protest against the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) during the ongoing World T20 cricket tournament and against India's alleged interference in Bangladesh's upcoming National Parliamentary Election, in Dhaka. — AP

giant garments industry was badly disrupted by months of turmoil in 2024.

Bangladesh has been run by an interim government since August 2024 when Hasina fled to long-time ally India, where she remains.

"How can I form a government with my political opponents, and then who would be in the opposition?" Rahman said in an interview at his party office, sitting

beneath portraits of his mother and his father, a former president.

"I don't know what will be their seat number, but if they are in the opposition, I hope to have them as a good opposition."

His aides said the BNP was confident of winning more than two thirds of the 300 parliamentary seats up for grabs. The party is contesting 292 of them, with allies vying for the rest. — Reuters

FEW WOMEN ON BALLOT IN ELECTION LIST

Dhaka, Feb. 7: For more than three decades, Bangladesh was one of the few countries in the world to be led by women, yet there are almost none on the February 12 ballots.

Despite helping to spearhead the uprising that led to this vote, women are poised to be largely excluded from the South Asian country's political arena.

Regardless of which parties win next week, the outcome will see Bangladesh governed almost exclusively by men.

"I used to be proud that even though my country is not the most liberal, we still had two women figureheads at the top," first-time voter Ariana Rahman, 20, said.

"Whoever won, the prime minister would be a woman." — AFP

Takaichi vows prosperity, security

Tokyo, Feb. 7: Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi pledged on Saturday to make Japan "more prosperous and safer", including through tougher immigration screening, in a final appeal to voters on the eve of snap elections.

Opinion polls suggest that Takaichi's ruling bloc, led by the Liberal Democratic Party, could romp home in Sunday's vote and secure a two-thirds majority in the powerful lower house.

"Pushing the button for growth is the Takaichi



Sanae Takaichi (right) Japan's prime minister and president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, waves to supporters. — AP

cabinet's job. Japan will become more and more prosperous and safer," Takaichi, 64, told a campaign rally attended by thousands in Tokyo.

"This is the year in

which we want to turn the anxieties people feel about their lives today and about the future into hope," she said.

The arch-conservative Takaichi, a heavy metal

drummer in her youth and an admirer of Margaret Thatcher, became Japan's fifth premier in as many years in October. This followed a string of calamitous elections for the once-mighty Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), leaving it short of a majority in both houses of parliament.

With ordinary Japanese, especially younger ones, Takaichi has enjoyed sky-high popularity ratings, becoming something of a fashion icon and a hit on social media. — AFP

Lunar fest



Dancers perform a traditional dragon dance to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Horse, on Saturday, in the Kobanya Chinatown district in Budapest. The weekend-long festival is free to attend and offers a wide range of cultural programmes and culinary experiences. — AFP

Busfield indicted on sex charges

New Mexico, Feb. 7: Actor Timothy Busfield, known for his U.S. prime-time roles on "The West Wing" and "Thirty-something," was indicted on child sex offense charges, accused of groping a young boy on the set of a television show he was directing and producing.



Timothy Busfield

The four-count indictment, returned by a grand jury in New Mexico, came a little more than two weeks after a state court judge found the evidence previously lodged against Busfield by prosecutors to be "neutral" and ordered him freed from pre-trial detention.

Busfield, 68, who surrendered to authorities last month in Albuquerque when he was first charged in a criminal complaint, has steadfastly professed his innocence, calling the allegations against him "lies."

Prosecutors alleged in an affidavit accompanying the original complaint that Busfield had improperly touched two

young cast members — twin boys — while directing the Fox TV drama "The Cleaning Lady." The show was filmed in Albuquerque, New Mexico's largest city.

The twins, now 11, reported that the alleged contact had occurred over a two-year period, when they were aged 7 and 8, during breaks in production, prosecutors said in the complaint.

According to the affidavit, one of the boys reported multiple instances of Busfield touching his "private areas" over his clothes. His brother also reported being touched by Busfield, but was less specific, the affidavit said. — Reuters

U.S. PLANS NEW TAIWAN ARMS SALES: FT REPORTS

Washington, Feb. 7: The US is preparing new arms sales to Taiwan, which has unsettled Chinese officials to the point that President Donald Trump's planned visit to China in April could be in jeopardy, according to the Financial Times.

The purchase would be in addition to an \$11 billion deal announced in December, the FT said, citing people familiar with the matter that it didn't identify. The arms would include Patriot and NASAMS missiles as well as two other systems, the paper said.

Some of the people told the FT that the price could be as high as \$20 billion, while others said a final decision on the amount hadn't been made, and it could be considerably less.

The Defense Department referred inquiries on the FT report to the State Department, which declined to comment. The White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Friday evening.

Trump, who has been trying to ease disagreements with China over trade, rare earths, Taiwan and other issues, spoke to the country's leader, Xi Jinping, earlier this week. — Bloomberg

GAMES

SHORT TAKES

Elavenil shoots Asian gold medal

New Delhi: Olympian Elavenil Valarivan held her nerve to fend off a strong challenge from Japan's Misaki Nobata and clinch the women's 10 metres air rifle gold, while Meghana Sajjanar also climbed the podium with a bronze medal at the Asian Championship here on Saturday. The trio of Elavenil, Arya Borse and Meghana Sajjanar stt of atop the podium in the team event, capping a memorable day for India's women's rifle shooters at the Karni Singh Range.

In the junior women's 10m air rifle event, Shambhavi Kshirsagar shattered the Asian Junior Finals Record en route to gold as India swept the podium, with Maniyata Singh and Aneesha Sharma claiming the other two medals in a superb display of marksmanship.

The trio of Shambhavi, Aneesha and Sandrata Roy also combined to clinch the team gold, finishing ahead of Kazakhstan. Elavenil was placed fifth after the first two five-shot series in the final but the young rifle ace steadily clawed her way back, surging into the lead by the 18th shot. She held her composure to the end to stay atop the pack, winning with a score of 252.0. — PTI

India U-17 outplay Bangladesh U-19

Pokhara, Nepal: Fielding an U-17 side, India thrashed Bangladesh 4-0 in the final to clinch the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) U-19 Women's Championship title here on Saturday. Captain Julian Nongmaithem (42nd minute) opened the scoring before Elizabeth Lakra (63rd), Pearl Fernandes (68th) and substitute Anwita Raghuram (83rd) completed a commanding triumph, as the Young Tigresses emphatically avenged their earlier round-robin defeat (0-2) against Bangladesh. India had sent their U-17 women's national team to Pokhara to participate in the SAFF U-19 Women's Championship, in order to prepare for the AFC U-17 Women's Asian Cup later this year. — PTI

Gunners make nine clear

London, Feb. 7: Arsenal moved ever closer to a first Premier League title for 22 years as a 3-0 win over Sunderland took the Gunners nine points clear at the top of the table.

Martin Zubimendi's long-range drive just before half-time settled the nerves of the home crowd at the Emirates Stadium before Viktor Gyokeres struck twice to quieten his critics.

Manchester City can reduce the gap at the top back to six points should they end a wait since 2003 to beat Liverpool at Anfield in front of a crowd on Sunday.

But after three consecutive second-placed finishes, it appears a matter of when, not if, Mikel Arteta's men will finally be crowned champions.

Defeat dented Sunderland's dream of European football on their first season back in the top flight.

Regis Le Bris' side



Sunderland's Nordi Mukiele (left) and Viktor Gyokeres of Arsenal fight for the ball during their English Premier League match in London, England, on Saturday. — AP

showed why they sit eighth with a dogged first-half showing that left the Arsenal crowd again bemoaning a lack of creativity from open play.

However, Zubimendi

picked the lock of the Black Cats' defence with a crisp strike from outside the box that clipped the inside of the post on its way in for the sixth goal of his impressive debut sea-

son in English football. Gyokeres has attracted plenty of criticism for failing to replicate his free-scoring form at Sporting Lisbon in the Premier League.

But the Sweden international is the club's top scorer and took his tally for the season to 13 in all competitions.

Gyokeres made the points safe when his powerful drive from Kai Havertz's pass had too much power for Robin Roefs 25 minutes from time.

He was then presented with an open goal by Gabriel Martinelli in stoppage time.

The shine was taken off Arsenal's day late on when Leandro Trossard was forced off through injury.

Arteta needs as many players available as possible with Arsenal still competing in four competitions.

Arsenal face City in the League Cup final next month, host Wigan in the fourth round of the FA Cup and cruised into the Champions League Last 16 with eight wins from eight games in the league phase. — AFP

Drithi and Malik bowl well for Hyd

Evergreen batters set up a dominant win, while Druvigna anchored Warangal's title triumph

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 7

Hyderabad rode on key contributions from Nitin Sai Yadav (51), P. Aman Rao (47) and Rahul Radesh (43) to post 293 in reply to Assam's 246 on the second day of the BCCI Col. C.K. Nayudu Trophy match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Saturday.

Bhargab Pratim starred with the ball for Assam, claiming 5 for 74. Assam reached 40 for 1 in their second innings by stumps.

Earlier, a five-wicket haul by Mohammed Abdul Malik put Hyderabad in firm control against Assam and were bowled out for 246 in 76.5 overs.

Meanwhile, Kesari Drithi led Hyderabad's bowling with figures of 5 for 25, as Hyderabad post-

ed 201 for 8 and then bowled out Tripura for 143 to seal a comfortable 58-run win in the BCCI Senior Women One Day Trophy at Taurian World School Ground in Ranchi.

Meanwhile, an unbeaten century by Varun Yadav helped Hyderabad secure a draw against Andhra in the South Zone Under-14 Inter-State Tournament at Vizianagaram. Hyderabad, replying to Andhra's massive 485 for 9, were bowled out for 303, with Varun anchoring the innings with a resolute 113 not out.

Evergreen sealed the HCA 'A' Division Two-Day League Championship title after outplaying EMCC in the final on the fourth day. Evergreen piled up 431 for 7 in their second innings before bowling out EMCC for 302. G. Aniketh Reddy (3/53) and Karthik



Drithi Kesari



Abdul Malik

Reddy (3/48) led the decisive bowling effort.

Earlier, Mayank Gupta was batting on 51 and went on to compile a commanding 183, putting Evergreen in a strong position against EMCC at the end of Day three.

Warangal clinched the HCA Senior Women's District T20 title with a narrow four-run win over Mahabubnagar in the final. Sai Druvigna's unbeaten 38 lifted Warangal to 98 for 8, while Y. Triveni returned impressive figures of 3 for 13. Mahabubnagar fell

short with J. Anusha also picking up three wickets in defeat.

At the HCA 'D' Division Institution One Day League Championship, M. Kiran (5/39) and Somanth Baral were top performers.

Brief Scores:

■ BCCI COL. C. K. NAYUDU TROPHY

■ Assam 246 in 76.5 overs (Parey Musraf 72, Pradyun Saikia 53, Ayushman Malakar 43, M. A. Malik 5/59 - 14-2-59-5) & 40/1 in 14 overs vs Hyderabad 293 in 85 overs (P. Aman Rao 47, Rahul Radesh 43, Nitin Sai Yadav 51, M. Ayushman 3/78, Bhargab Pratim 5/74 - 28-2-74-5)

■ SENIOR WOMEN ONE-DAY TROPHY

■ Hyderabad 201/8 in 50 overs (Sandhya Gora 72, K Nitesha 58, AB Das 4/33) bt Tripura 143 in 39.1 overs (J. R. Debnath 32, R. R. Saha 39, Indra Rani 31, Kesari Drithi 5/25 - 7-1-25-5)

■ SOUTH ZONE UNDER-14 INTER STATE TOURNAMENT

■ Hyderabad 303 in 69.5 overs (Varun Yadav 113 n.o. - 115b, 12x4, 4x6, Chetan Aditya 76, Prasanna Kumar 34, S. Satwik 3/48, Akshat Sinha

4/92) & 22 for no loss in 11 overs drew with Andhra 485/9 in 90 overs (Thonda Kinnu 103 - 109b, 13x4, PVSR Varma 106 - 137b, 14x4, K. P. Sriam 84, B. Sai Krishna 70, Mancham C. 36, Varun Yadav 3/87)

■ HCA 'A' DIVISION TWO-DAY LEAGUE

■ Day-4: Evergreen 247 in 57.2 overs & 431/7 in 90 overs (Mayank Gupta 183 - 270b, 16x4, 1x6, G. Aniketh Reddy 98, Chandan Sahani 87, M. Rithvik 3/74) vs EMCC 263 in 78.4 overs & 302 in 71.1 overs (C. P. Venkatesh 69, S. Rohith Reddy 75, Ram Repala 82, G. Aniketh Reddy 3/53, Karthik Reddy 3/48)

■ HCA SENIOR WOMEN'S DISTRICT T-20 TOURNAMENT

■ Final: Warangal 98/8 in 20 overs (Sai Druvigna 38 n.o., Y. Triveni 3/13) bt Mahabubnagar 94/9 in 20 overs (G. Aaryani 30, J. Anusha 3/13)

■ HCA 'D' DIVISION INSTITUTION ONE-DAY LEAGUE

■ NFC 154/7 in 25 overs (C. Sivaramakrishna 43) bt TGRTC 152 in 24.3 overs (V. Chandru 51, M. Kiran Kumar 5/39 - 5-0-39-5)

■ CCMB 214/6 in 30 overs (Abdul Raheem 58, Praveen Nayak 75) bt ICT 133 in 21.2 overs (K. S. Srinivas 54, V. Srinivas Karthik 30, Somanath Baral 5/22 - 4-2-0-22-5)

TENNIS | DAVIS CUP

Dhakshineswar rescues India

Bengaluru, Feb. 7: Fast emerging as a vital cog in India's Davis Cup plans, Dhakshineswar Suresh once again rose to the occasion, outgunning Dutch number one Jesper de Jong in a battle of big servers to level the Qualifiers Round One tie 1-1 against the Netherlands here on Saturday.

Ranked as low as 465, Dhakshineswar won the battle of big servers against the world No. 88 de Jong, ensuring India did not slip further after Sumit Nagal's defeat in the opening singles earlier in the day.

The victory reinforced Dhakshineswar's growing stature as a dependable Davis Cup player, following his match-winning effort against a higher-ranked opponent against Switzerland last year.

India had fallen behind after Nagal mounted a strong comeback from a disastrous start but could

not sustain the momentum, losing 0-6, 6-4, 3-6 to Netherlands' Guy de Ouden in a two-hour-and-28-minute battle.

Nagal was blown away in the opening set as De Ouden dropped just one point on his serve and wrapped it up in 38 minutes, repeatedly pinning the Indian behind the baseline with deep returns.

The Indian fought back strongly in the second set, improving his serve and converting a crucial break to draw parity, but De Ouden struck at key moments in the decider, breaking in the eighth game before serving out the match to give the Netherlands a 1-0 lead.

With the pressure firmly on him to keep India alive in the tie, Dhakshineswar responded with a composed display against de Jong, who had come into the contest without a win this season. — PTI

CITY CLIPS

Rakesh to lead Hyd Under-14 side

G. Rakesh Sekhar has been named captain of Hyderabad Under-14 cricket team for the next two matches of South Zone Inter-State Under-14 Boys Tournament to be played at Vizianagaram.

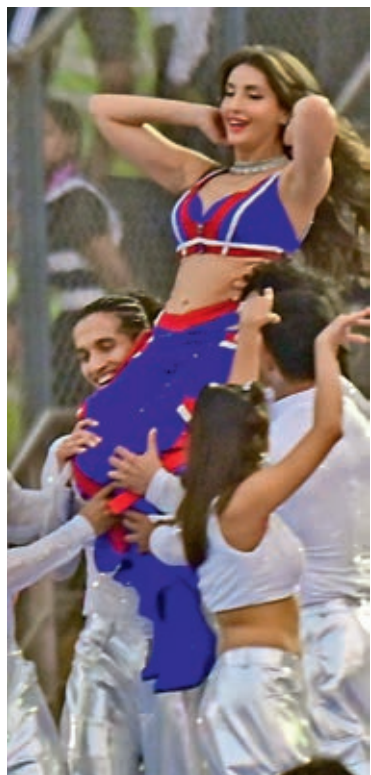
The squad: G. Rakesh Sekhar (captain, Boys Town CC), C. V. Chetan Aditya (Royal CC), B. Gowtham Reddy (Vijayapuri Willomen), V. Jagath Roshan (RJCC), G. Y. Srikanth Raj (Hyderabad Patriots CC), Mettu Dakshdeep (Lucky XI CC), Ch Ritesh Reddy (wicket-keeper, Hyderabad Patriots CC), Raghava Narayan (wicket-keeper, Hyderabad Patriots CC), Gopal Varun (Continental CC), P. Venkat Sagar (Cosmos CC), Manish Patel (Akshit CC), Utkarsh (Lords CC), G. Nikhil Sekhar (Boys Town CC), S. Harsha Vardhan Goud (RJCC), Umesh Thotakura (Open Selection Token No-564).

CCOB Sub-Jr beat Young Sporting

CCOB Sub Junior Football Club defeated Young Sporting 2-0 in the Telangana Football Association's 'C' Division Football League match played at Gymkhana Football Ground on Saturday. The goals came from Emmadi Chethan (2nd minute) and D. Nikesh (40th minute).

In the Sunday match, Bollaram Sporting will take on Young Dynamos at Gymkhana Football Ground from 3.30 pm.

Short takes



Bollywood actor Nora Fatehi performs before the start of the India and USA match at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Saturday. — DEBASISH DEY

Opening ceremony was glitz & glamour

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, FEB. 7

The iconic Wankhede Stadium was all glitz and glamour during the grand opening ceremony, which kicked off the much-awaited 10th ICC Men's World Cup 2026 on Saturday. To thousands of ardent spectators from Mumbai, the event offered a memorable evening filled with thrill, energy and entertainment.

All roads led to Wankhede Stadium, as Mumbaikars started to walk in from late afternoon, again showcasing their love and passion for cricket. The spectators were welcomed by the venue that was all decked up for the major event. As the sun was setting over the nearby Arabian Sea, Wankhede Stadium was gradually getting warmed up by bright lights and dazzling fireworks.

In the beginning, the ceremony began with a blend of music and live performances, starting with a powerful medley by a noted sitar player Rishab Rikhiram Sharma alongside renowned percussionist Sivamani setting an upbeat tone for the evening.

The spectators were in for a thrilling experience, as the gleaming ICC T20 World Cup trophy made a dramatic entry as it was carried into the stadium by a jetpack performer.

ICC Chairman Jay Shah and former India captain Rohit Sharma, who led India to the title in 2024, officially opened the tournament alongside children representing all 20 participating teams in the tournament.

After the toss was done, there was a concert-like atmosphere in the stadium.

PCB writes to ICC to invoke 'force majeure'

The ICC has sought an explanation from Pakistan on how the 'Force Majeure' clause can be invoked to justify the team's refusal to play the T20 World Cup match against India after the PCB tried to wriggle out of the situation by putting the onus on its government. The ICC has asked the Pakistan Cricket Board to justify pulling out of one match while playing the remaining tournament on government instructions.

A few days back, the PCB had officially written to the ICC about wanting to invoke the 'Force Majeure' clause and cited the government's tweet, banning the team from the February 15 clash in Colombo, as the reason. But there is a glimmer of hope now as PCB has approached the ICC for deliberations, as per an ICC Director. Having received the world body's formal communication, the PCB initiated further discussions.

The ICC is currently engaging with the board in a structured manner to explore possible resolutions, with a view that interest of the game must supersede unilateral action.

Force majeure is a contractual provision that excuses a party from fulfilling its obligations due to extraordinary events beyond its control such as war, natural disasters, government actions or public emergencies.

TRUMP CARD

Skipper Surya salvages game against USA

MOSES KONDETY | DC
MUMBAI, FEB. 7

Skipper Suryakumar Yadav's rescue act and disciplined bowling were the highlights as India got out of jail to beat USA in their T20 World Cup opener and lock two points from the topsy-turvy game at the Wankhede Stadium here on Saturday night.

After the team drifted into troubled waters, Surya steadied the rocking boat with a solid 84 that came off 49 balls and contained 10 fours and four hits that sailed over the boundary. The knock took India to a decent 161 for 9 and gave the bowlers enough to defend. USA put up a brief fight via a 58-run stand for the fourth wicket between Milind Kumar (34) and Sanjay Krishnamurthi (37) but that was about it. They eventually managed 132 for 8 to hand the hosts a 29-run win.

Fast bowler Mohammed Siraj, who was drafted into the playing XI in place of an ill Jasprit Bumrah, took 3 for 29. He was ably supported by Arshdeep Singh (2/18) and Axar Patel (2/24).

Earlier, overconfident India slipped to an embarrassing 77 for 6 in the 13th over when Surya stepped up to repair the damage. He first put on a 41-run stand for the seventh wicket with No. 8 Axar Patel (14), followed by 22 for the eighth with Arshdeep Singh (4) and a further 21 with Varun Chakravarty (0) to lend the Indian total some respectability.

Sky was innovative in the death overs as he unpacked unorthodox shots, often losing his balance and falling to the ground but achieving the desired results as the ball either raced to the boundary or sailed over it.

Surya made the most of a dropped chance when he



India captain Suryakumar Yadav celebrates after scoring a half-century against the USA during their T20 World Cup match at the Wankhede Stadium on in Mumbai on Saturday. India won by 29 runs. — DEBASISH DEY

was on 15 — medium pacer Ranjane could not hold on to a return catch in his follow-through with the Indian score reading 63 for 4 in the 10th over.

Compacency had crept into the star batting lineup with big names registering small scores, including two golden

ducks by destructive opener Abhishek Sharma and hard-hitter Shivam Dube.

It was Shadley van Shalkwyk who threw the spanner in India's works. The fast bowler sent down a stunning sixth over in which he claimed the wickets of Ishan Kishan, Tilak Varma and Dube

while conceding just two runs to leave the hosts aghast with a disappointing 46 for 4 at the end of Powerplay. Ishan hit one to Milind Kumar at mid-off after making 20; tucked up Tilak (25) ballooned a catch to Monank Patel at mid-wicket and Dube topped a catch to Saurabh

SCOREBOARD

India: Ishan Kishan c Milind Kumar b van Schalkwyk 20, Abhishek Sharma c Krishnamurthi b Ali Khan 0, Tilak Varma c Patel b van Schalkwyk 25, Suryakumar Yadav not out 84, Shivam Dube c Netravalkar b van Schalkwyk 0, Rinku Singh c Milind Kumar b Mohammad Mohsin 6, Hardik Pandya c Mulkamulla b Harmeet Singh 5, Axar Patel c Mohammad Mohsin b Harmeet Singh 14, Arshdeep Singh c Milind Kumar b van Schalkwyk 4, Varun Chakravarty run out 0, Extras (w-3, b-3) 3. Total (For 9 wickets in 20 overs) 161.

Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-45, 3-46, 4-46, 5-72, 6-77, 7-118, 8-140, 9-161.

Bowling: Saurabh Netravalkar 4-0-65-0, Ali Khan 2-0-13-1, Shadley van Schalkwyk 4-0-25-4, Mohammad Mohsin 4-0-16-1, Shubham Ranjane 2-0-16-0, Harmeet Singh 4-0-26-2.

USA: Andries Gous c Tilak b Siraj 6, M Saiteja c Chakravarty b Siraj 2, Monank Patel c Dube b Arshdeep 0, Milind Kumar c Kishan b Chakravarty 34, Sanjay Krishnamurthi c Arshdeep b Axar 37, Shubham Ranjane lbw Siraj 37, Harmeet Singh c Siraj b Axar 0, Mohammad Mohsin c Tilak b Arshdeep 8, Shadley van Schalkwyk (not out) 2, Extras (lb-3, w-3) 6. Total (for 8 wickets in 20 overs) 132.

Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-11, 3-13, 4-71, 5-98, 6-98, 7-110, 8-132.

Bowling: Arshdeep Singh 4-0-18-2, Mohammad Siraj 4-0-29-3, Varun Chakravarty 4-0-24-1, Axar Patel 4-0-24-2, Hardik Pandya 4-0-34-0.

Netravalkar at short fine-lee. USA began well after winning the toss and putting India in. They managed to keep the scoring rate in check as pacers Saurabh Netravalkar and Ali Khan proved a potent opening attack before Shalkwyk turned the screw with figures of 4 for 25. Coming in at the fall of Abhishek in the second over, Tilak looked set for a good score. He jumped out to thump Netravalkar into the sight screen then glanced him for a boundary. The Hyderabad was let off on 23 when Shalkwyk spilled a difficult chance in his follow-through as the batsman unleashed a full-blooded shot.

Revenge or repeat? Kiwis & Afghans in Sunday showdown

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC
CHENNAI, FEB. 7

They are no longer cricket's plucky outsiders. Going by their recent showings at ICC events, Afghanistan enter the T20 World Cup as genuine contenders. Semifinalists in the previous edition, the Afghans will be keen to push the envelope further when they open their campaign against New Zealand at the M. A. Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday morning.

Memories of their clash in the Americas in 2024 are still fresh for captains Rashid Khan and Mitchell Santner. On that occasion, Afghanistan outsmarted New Zealand and played a decisive role in the Black Caps' early exit. Revenge will certainly be on New Zealand's mind this time around, especially with both teams drawn alongside last edition finalists South Africa in a daunting 'group of death', where only two sides can move up.

Afghanistan arrived in Chennai brimming with confidence. Under the leadership of spin wizard Rashid, they are coming off series victories against the West Indies and Zimbabwe. They also capped their preparation with another impressive warm-up win over the Caribbean side.

The re-laid Chepauk surface remains something of an unknown, but Chennai has traditionally offered assistance to spinners — a factor that could play right into Afghanistan's hands.

Rashid will, as always, be central to their plans,

ICC T20 WORLD CUP 2026 Match 4
Group D | Feb 8 | 11:00 am
New Zealand vs Afghanistan
MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai
Rank 4 vs Rank 10
Head-to-Head
New Zealand won: 2 | Afghanistan won: 1
Matches played: 1 | 1
KBK SportsGraphics

with fellow spinners Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Noor Ahmad providing strong support. In the batting department, Rahman-ullah Gurbaz, the leading run-scorer of the last edition, gives them explosive starts, while left-arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi, the highest wicket-taker in 2024, adds bite to the attack.

New Zealand come into the tournament after a mixed tour of India. They won the ODI series but suffered a 1-4 mauling in the T20s. Santner's all-round contributions will be vital and the Kiwis possess ample firepower to post imposing totals. Apart from Tim Seifert, known for his 360-degree batting, the middle order, featuring Glenn Phillips and Daryl Mitchell, lends depth and aggression to the batting.

The tall fast-bowling duo of Jacob Duffy and Kyle Jamieson have the pace and bounce to trouble even the most settled line-ups.



New Zealand's Matt Henry during a practice session in Chennai on Saturday. — SANJAY KISHORE

Hetmyer, Shepherd star for WI

Kolkata, Feb. 7: Shimron Hetmyer

struck a counter-attacking fifty before Romario Shepherd unleashed a stunning five-wicket burst including a hat-trick as two-time champions West Indies began their T20 World Cup campaign with a comfortable 35-run win over Scotland in their Group 'C' fixture here on Saturday. Back at the venue where they had lifted their second T20 World Cup title a decade ago, WI were made to work early before Hetmyer's 36-ball 64 (6x6, 2x4) lifted them to a competitive 182/5.

In reply, Guyanese pacer Shepherd blew away the lower order with a sensational spell of 5/20 to bowl out Scotland for 147 in 18.5 overs.

Shepherd finished the game in dramatic fashion as he ripped through the tail with four wickets in five deliveries — including Matthew Cross, Michael Leask and Oliver Davidson off successive balls — to complete his second T20I hat-trick in four months.

He later added Safyaan Sharif to register his maiden five-wicket haul.

For West Indies, who had a difficult build up including a shock series loss to Nepal, it was redemption of sorts, having endured a shock loss to Scotland in the 2022-23 edition. — PTI



West Indies' Romario Shepherd holds the ball up to celebrate his five-wicket haul after the T20 World Cup match against Scotland at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Saturday. West Indies won by 35 runs. — PTI

Harry hopes focus shifts to WC as Eng face Nepal

Mumbai, Feb. 7: An embattled Harry Brook will hope England hit the top gear and the focus shifts from the incident at a Wellington club to cricket when the two-time champions take on Nepal in their T20 World Cup opener, here on Sunday.

Brook is at the helm of a formidable England side which has had a successful run in the T20I format, but the talk around the camp has also been around the incident at the nightclub where the English captain was reportedly involved in an altercation with a bouncer during a night out in

ICC T20 WORLD CUP 2026 Match 5
Group C | Feb 8 | 3:00 pm
England vs Nepal
Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai
Rank 3 vs Rank 16
Head-to-Head
Never played each other before
KBK SportsGraphics

the pre-Ashes tour. Away from the off-field episode, England have had a perfect build-up to the World Cup and will be one

of the teams to beat in the competition. Placed in Group 'C' along with debutants Italy, Nepal, Scotland and the West Indies, England know they will have to hit the top gear from the word go.

England won 11 out of their 17 T20Is while losing only two last year and the team has tremendous fireworks across the board to pile up, or even chase bigger totals.

IRISH CHALLENGE FOR SRI LANKA IN OPENING MATCH

Colombo, Feb. 7: An undercooked Sri Lanka

would look to put behind a disappointing preparation and dish out a solid effort when they take on an unpredictable Ireland in their opening Group 'B' match of the T20 World Cup in front of home fans here on Sunday. Sri Lanka didn't have the best of preparations for the showpiece they are co-hosting with India, as they were whitewashed 0-3 by England in a home T20 series, which was the final tune-up to the tournament.

And the islanders would now look to learn lessons from that drubbing and take corrective steps. The main concern for Sri Lanka is their inconsistency over a period of time.

In the series against England, both their batting and bowling were found wanting under pressure situations.

Sri Lanka enter this edition with home advantage and what appears, on paper, to be a decent squad, which needs to deliver in crunch situations. — PTI

ICC T20 WORLD CUP 2026 Match 6
Group B | Feb 8 | 7:00 pm
Sri Lanka vs Ireland
R Premadasa Stadium, Colombo
Rank 8 vs Rank 11
Head-to-Head
Matches played: 3 | 0
Sri Lanka won: 3 | Ireland won: 0
KBK SportsGraphics

Ashraf's knock scripts Pak win

Colombo, Feb. 7: All-rounder Faheem Ashraf

emerged as the hero for Pakistan, hammering 29 off 11 balls in a stunning late assault to snatch a dramatic three-wicket win over the Netherlands in the T20 World Cup opener here on Saturday. Chasing 148 for a win, Pakistan were 90/2 at the halfway stage but lost wickets in a heap as they were 114/7 in 16.1 overs, needing 34 more runs.

It looked all but over for Pakistan at that stage but walking in at number 8, Ashraf, who was dropped on 7, had other plans. Needing 29 runs from the last two overs, Ashraf hit three sixes and one four off Logan Van Beek and finished off the match with a four in the final over as Pakistan reached 148 for 7 in 19.3 overs. — PTI

BRIEF SCORES

Netherlands 147 in 19.5 overs (Scott Edwards 37, Bas de Leede 30, Salman Mirza 3/24, Saim Ayub 2/7, Mohammad Nawaz 2/38, Abrar Ahmed 2/23) lost to Pakistan 148/7 in 19.3 overs (Sahibzada Farhan 47, Faheem Ashraf 29 not out, Paul van Meekeren 2/20, Aryan Dutt 2/33).

Max O'Dowd dropped Ashraf when he was on seven in the second ball of the 19th over and perhaps that cost the match for the Dutch.

Pakistan's build-up was dominated by off-the-field matters after their Board decided to boycott the February 15 marquee match against India here, though they had beaten a depleted Australia 3-0 in the home T20I series. — PTI

All I can do is be there and help: Bianca Censori

3 >>



hyderabad CHRONICLE

SUNDAY | 8 FEBRUARY 2026

Rashmika gets busier in Bollywood

8 >>



DIL RAJU SEALS ₹120 CR DEAL FOR YASH'S 'TOXIC'

The landmark deal underscores the soaring expectations around the film's box-office potential in the Telugu market

DC CORRESPONDENT

Even before hitting theatres, *Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups* has rewritten trade history. Sri Venkateswara Creations, led by Dil Raju, has acquired the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana distribution rights for a staggering ₹120 crore on an advance-on-commission basis — the biggest-ever deal for a non-Telugu origin film in the region.



"WITH A FOUR-YEAR WAIT, THE BUZZ AND EXPECTATIONS AROUND THIS FILM ARE MASSIVE. WE AT SVC ARE STOKED TO PRESENT THIS PRESTIGIOUS PROJECT AND HOPE TO CONTINUE COLLABORATING WITH YASH ON MANY MORE FILMS."

— DIL RAJU

has only grown into a global force post-*KGF 2*, adding that expectations after a four-year wait are "massive," and expressing hope for future collaborations.



The superstar wants time for rest, recovery and to address recurring injuries

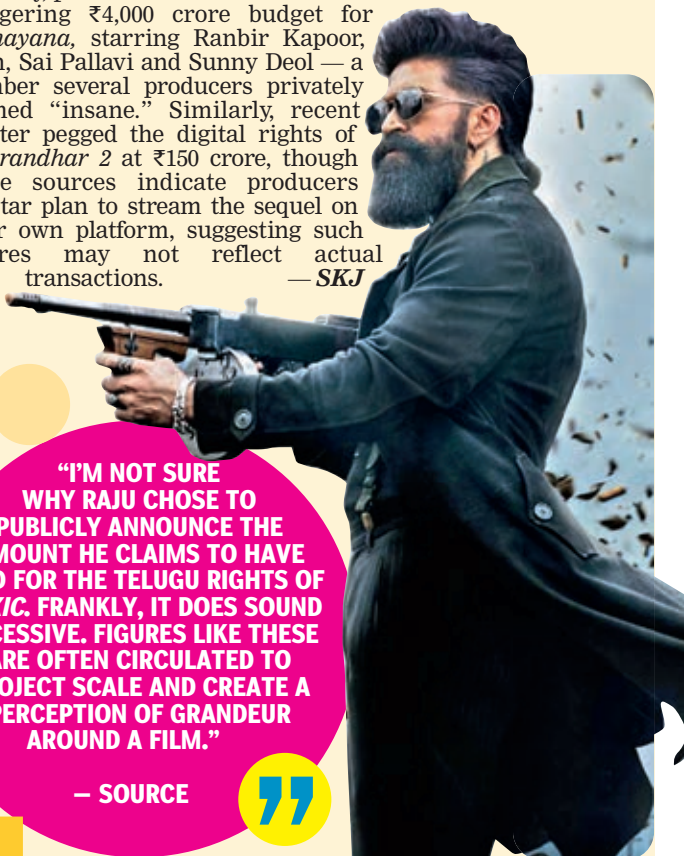
INFLATED OR IMPACTFUL? TRADE REACTS TO NUMBERS

Amid the fanfare over Dil Raju's reported ₹120 crore acquisition for *Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups*, a senior industry insider has raised eyebrows. Speaking anonymously, the source says the publicly declared figure "sounds excessive," adding that such numbers are often floated to build an aura of scale and dominance around a project.

The trend of headline-grabbing budgets and deal values, insiders say, has become increasingly common with big-ticket films. Recently, producer Namit Malhotra claimed a staggering ₹4,000 crore budget for *Ramayana*, starring Ranbir Kapoor, Yash, Sai Pallavi and Sunny Deol — a number several producers privately termed "insane." Similarly, recent chatter pegged the digital rights of *Dhurandhar 2* at ₹150 crore, though trade sources indicate producers JioStar plan to stream the sequel on their own platform, suggesting such figures may not reflect actual transactions. —SKJ

"I'M NOT SURE WHY RAJU CHOSE TO PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THE AMOUNT HE CLAIMS TO HAVE PAID FOR THE TELUGU RIGHTS OF TOXIC. FRANKLY, IT DOES SOUND EXCESSIVE. FIGURES LIKE THESE ARE OFTEN CIRCULATED TO PROJECT SCALE AND CREATE A PERCEPTION OF GRANDEUR AROUND A FILM."

— SOURCE



SRK plans 2-year pause after 'King'

SUBHASH K JHA

There is major news on Shah Rukh Khan — and it may not please his fans. The superstar is reportedly planning a two-year break from acting after the release of *King*.

A close friend reveals that *King* will be SRK's last release for a while. "After *King*, he's taking time off for serious rest and body repair," the source says. The actor is said to be

dealing with several lingering injuries, including a chronically troublesome shoulder. He was reportedly injured again while performing a stunt for the film. Following the film, he is not expected to sign any new projects.

THIS ISN'T HIS FIRST SABBATICAL. AFTER ZERO, HE TOOK NEARLY FIVE YEARS OFF BEFORE RETURNING WITH BACK-TO-BACK BLOCKBUSTERS.



RAJAMOULI HINTS AT 'RRR' ANIME ADAPTATION

The filmmaker says discussions with Japanese studios are on, inspired by his newfound love for anime storytelling

DC CORRESPONDENT



Blown away by Japanese anime, filmmaker reveals talks are underway to reimagine the movie in animated form. The filmmaker says discussions with Japanese studios are ongoing. "We have been in talks with a few studios to adapt *RRR* into anime," Rajamouli told a gaming website. The filmmaker, who recently discovered anime through titles

like *Demon Slayer*, *Attack on Titan* and animated series *Arcane*, says the format has opened up new storytelling possibilities for him.

"I WAS INTRODUCED TO ANIME RECENTLY. AND WHAT I HAVE SEEN HAS BLOWN ME AWAY."

Icy reception for Vance at Winter Olympics

The Vice President and wife Usha Vance drew boos from sections of the crowd during the ceremony

What began as a glittering celebration of global sport took a sharp turn when cameras panned to the couple during the opening of the 2026 Winter Olympics. While athletes were welcomed with applause and Team USA drew cheers, sections of the crowd reacted with audible boos at the sight of the Vice President and Second Lady.

Audible boos echoed through the venue, creating a striking contrast to the celebratory atmosphere of the night.





Beyonce loses 10 mn followers on Instagram

...after husband Jay-Z named in 'The Epstein Files'

✉ Beyoncé has reportedly lost over 10 million Instagram followers after her husband Jay-Z was named in the recently resurfaced 'Epstein Files,' triggering online backlash against those linked to the controversy.

The Epstein Files, which continue to draw attention to individuals associated with the late financier Jeffrey Epstein — a convicted sex offender who later faced federal sex-trafficking charges — have cast a damaging shadow beyond those directly named, dragging families and associates into negative public scrutiny.

The development comes even as Beyoncé reached a major career milestone. According to Forbes, she has officially become a billionaire, joining an elite group of musicians that includes Jay-Z, Taylor Swift, Rihanna and Bruce Springsteen.

CUOCO EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ALLOWING ONESELF TO CHANGE PERSPECTIVE OVER TIME. "SOMETIMES YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND AND THAT'S OKAY," SHE SAID, NOTING THAT HEALING TAKES PATIENCE AND FORGIVENESS.



'I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA DIE'

Kaley Cuoco recalls struggling with depression during divorce

✉ Actor Kaley Cuoco has opened up about the emotional toll her 2022 divorce took on her mental health, revealing she suffered a severe depressive episode just hours before a major career milestone.

According to *People*, the *Big Bang Theory* alum recalled struggling deeply on the day of the season two premiere of *The Flight Attendant* in a forthcoming episode of *The Drew Barrymore Show*, airing Monday.

"I woke up that morning so depressed and so sad I couldn't even breathe," Cuoco said. "I was just lying on the floor. I literally thought I was gonna die."

She described the moment as the lowest point of her life, even as she was preparing for what was meant to be one of the happiest nights of her career. Cuoco admitted she felt paralyzed by despair, believing she had "blown up" her life and would never marry or have children. Despite the darkness of that period, Cuoco said the experience ultimately changed her. Just three weeks later, she met actor Tom Pelphrey, whom she is now engaged to.

Emails reveal Epstein's role in Allen family favours

Records show Epstein arranged a 2015 White House visit for the couple and assisted in their daughter's Bard College admission in 2017



ALLEN HAS DENIED SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AND HAS NOT BEEN ACCUSED OF INVOLVEMENT IN EPSTEIN'S CRIMES.

✉ Newly released U.S. Justice Department emails shed fresh light on filmmaker Woody Allen and his wife, Soon-Yi Previn's long-standing relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, revealing personal exchanges in which they sought his help on private matters including a White House visit and their daughter's college admission.

Records show the trio were neighbors in New York City, frequently dined together and offered each other emotional support amid public criticism and sexual misconduct allegations.

In May 2015, Epstein contacted then-White House counsel Kathy Ruemmler to request a tour for the couple, noting Allen might be "too politically sensitive." White House records later confirmed Allen and Previn

toured the White House on December 27, 2015, while President Barack Obama was in Hawaii.

A 2017 exchange shows Previn thanking Epstein for helping their daughter, Bechet Allen, gain admission to Bard College through his connection with the school's president. Bard College later said Bechet was admitted on merit and denied Epstein played any role.

— AP



NEITHER BEYONCÉ NOR JAY-Z HAS COMMENTED ON THE REPORTED DROP IN FOLLOWERS OR THE RENEWED ATTENTION SURROUNDING THE CONTROVERSY.

Lil Jon's son found dead at 27

Nathan Smith was discovered deceased days after being reported missing

✉ Rapper Lil Jon is mourning the death of his son, Nathan Smith, also known as DJ Young Slade. The 27-year-old was found dead near his residence on February 6, days after being reported missing.

Nathan was last seen on February 3, prompting a search by local authorities. The Milton Police

POLICE RECOVERED A BODY BELIEVED TO BE SMITH'S FROM A POND NEAR HIS RESIDENCE; AUTHORITIES SAY NO FOUL PLAY IS SUSPECTED.

Department confirmed that a body believed to be Smith's was recovered from a pond near his home in Mayfield Park.

"I am extremely heartbroken for the tragic loss of our son," Lil Jon said in a statement to *E! News*. "His mother and I are devastated." He added: "Nathan was the kindest human being you would ever meet. He was immensely caring, thoughtful, polite, passionate, and warmhearted -- he loved his family and the friends in his life to the fullest."

Authorities have reportedly stated there is no indication of foul play. The investigation remains open pending official confirmation from the medical examiner.





Halle Berry confirms engagement to Van Hunt

The clarification follows the musician's earlier remarks that the proposal was "on hold"

Actor Halle Berry has confirmed that she is engaged to singer-songwriter Van Hunt, putting to rest recent speculation that she had declined his proposal.

While the couple plans to marry, they have not yet set a wedding date.

Berry clarified the rumours during her appearance on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, saying reports that she had said no were incorrect. "I did not say no — we just don't have a date. Of course, I said yes," the 59-year-old actor said, adding that Hunt had "put a little ring on it."

Berry also showed off her engagement ring during the interview, joking, "He did put a little ring on it."

The clarification follows comments Hunt reportedly made to June 2025, where he said his proposal was "still on hold," suggesting Berry's hesitation stemmed from her past marriages.

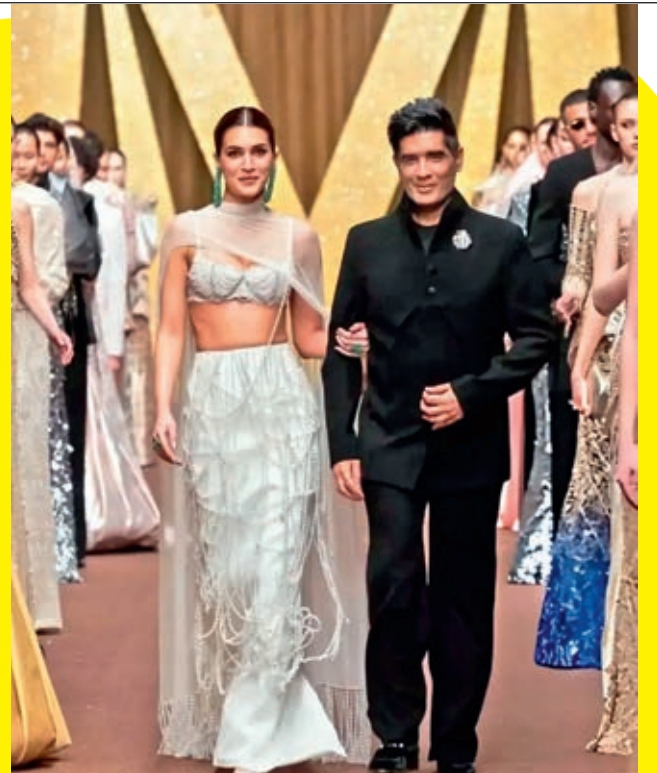
Berry has been married three times before — to David Justice, Eric Benét and Olivier Martinez — while Hunt was also previously married and later divorced.

DUBAI FASHION WEEK 2026

Kriti turns showstopper for Manish Malhotra

Kriti Sanon turned heads as the grand finale showstopper for Manish Malhotra at Dubai Fashion Week 2026, dazzling in a pearl-embellished white skirt, blouse, and sheer dupatta. Her look was complemented with diamond and emerald jewelry from Malhotra's exquisite collection.

Malhotra's *The Indian Story: Inaya 2026* collection featured sequins, brocade, and embellished outfits, each styled with sparkling jewels. He show ended with Sanon and Malhotra walking the runway together as spectators applauded the collection.



Karisma channels 'Bridgerton' glamour

Karisma Kapoor brought regal elegance to Dubai Fashion Week as the showstopper for Runway By Minaaz, donning a stunning peach gown that exuded *Bridgerton*-inspired glamour.

The floor-length gown featured a fitted silhouette with sheer yet structured fabric, off-shoulder 3D floral appliques, crystal embellishments, and a detachable sculptural train that added drama to the look. Subtle stones and sequins adorned the entire gown.

The actress paired the ensemble with low ponytailed hair and minimal jewelry.

'All I can do is be there and help'

Bianca Censori opens up on marriage to Kanye West, his mental health and public scrutiny



MEANWHILE

Kim Kardashian will 'always be family' with Kanye

Kim Kardashian has struck a conciliatory tone when speaking about her relationship with West. In a recent interview with *Complex*, she said the former couple will "always be family." "We both know that," Kardashian said. "There's so much love for our family, and we

doing something I didn't want to do," she said, explaining that her outfits are collaborative. "It was never 'I was being told to do something.'"

Describing the past year as emotionally exhausting, Censori said supporting West during his mental health struggles felt like "doing CPR for months." "All I can do is be there and help," she said. "I understand that the world doesn't."

Censori and West have been together since 2022. West, who has spoken about living with bipolar disorder, issued a public apology earlier this year in *The Wall Street Journal*.



want what's best for our kids." Kardashian, who was married to West from 2014 to 2021, shares four children with him. Her remarks follow candid comments made on *The Kardashians*, where Kim revealed that the emotional strain of her marriage contributed to recurring health issues and left her feeling emotionally trapped.

PAPERBACK RIDERS IN 'STARRY BOOK CLUBS'

Some celebrity book clubs genuinely introduce readers to unexpected corners of literature and help form local reading communities

TREYA SINHA

Celebrity book clubs can have a glamorous allure — from Kaia Gerber's Library Science to Dua Lipa's Service 95, from Sonali Bendre's SBC @sonalisbookclub to Oprah's Book Club. It's paperbacks, popstars, actors and the human touch of reading! Beyond the attention they attract, the books chosen have the capacity to open readers to new ideas, perspectives, and sensitivities previously unfathomable.

READ BETWEEN THE LINES

Aashna Malhotra, third-generation bookseller at Bahrisons Booksellers in Delhi says, "Celebrity book clubs haven't dramatically altered how Bahrisons readers discover books, though they've certainly added another layer to the ecosystem." Having worked at the 70-year-old store since July 2025, she has a real understanding of how people read, from fleeting online hype to the slow work of human recommendation. "There was a time when landing on Oprah's reading list could significantly move sales for a title or author. Today, discovery is far more fragmented."

PLOT TWIST, LITERALLY

This fragmentation is generational. Older readers still rely on newspaper reviews, prize lists, bestseller charts, and bookseller guidance, while younger audiences often turn to Bookstagram and online influencers.

Celebrity book clubs operate as one node among many, not the dominant force they appear to be on Instagram. Their presence, however, can still spark curiosity, even if it rarely translates into long-term engagement. "A customer may circle a book a few times, unsure whether to pick it up, and a thoughtful recommendation from a staff member often makes the difference," Malhotra explains.

STARSTRUCK READING MATERIAL

Celebrity book clubs often act as a door to discovery rather than a map. "The initial curiosity may stem from the celebrity endorsement and the trust placed in that public figure's taste," Malhotra observes. "Once readers begin the book, the focus tends to shift." Conversations move toward the writing, themes, and the author's voice, and the celebrity presence fades. In this sense, books ultimately stand on their own, while celebrity picks act as an invitation rather than a command.

INTERESTING FOOTNOTES

Kriti Sachan, a book influencer known for making complex literature approachable, adds a lens on the gendered assumptions shaping perceptions. "Most popular celebrity book clubs are women-led, and I think society has a tendency to brand anything women do as performative or a 'branding exercise,'" she notes. For her, genuine literary

FAMOUS BOOKWORMS

- **Oprah Winfrey** started her book club in 1996 as part of a filler section in The Oprah Winfrey Show.
- **Emma Watson's** book club, Our Shared Shelf (@oursharedshelf) is a feminist book club focusing on gender equality and empowering literature.
- **Shashi Tharoor** does not have a book club, but he regularly shares information about his favourite books and new reads on social media
- **Emma Roberts** online literary book club is called Belletrist (@belletrist)
- **Sonali Bendre's** book club SBC (@sonalisbookclub) is a cozy little space where members talk, breathe and dream books



MOST POPULAR CELEBRITY BOOK CLUBS ARE WOMEN-LED, AND I THINK SOCIETY HAS A TENDENCY TO BRAND ANYTHING WOMEN DO AS PERFORMATIVE OR A 'BRANDING EXERCISE.'

— KRITI SACHAN, Book Influencer

FULLY BOOKED ONLINE

Social media has made reading a visible, performative act. Sachan sees this as both a challenge and an opportunity. "Reading has definitely become more visible," she says, but visibility does not necessarily undermine depth. "For many people, seeing others talk openly about books makes reading feel less lonely and less intimidating." Visibility may sometimes look performative, but it can also democratise literary culture by signalling that reading is permissible, even aspirational.

Some celebrity book clubs are also criticised for favouring emotionally

"THERE WAS A TIME WHEN LANDING ON OPRAH'S READING LIST COULD SIGNIFICANTLY MOVE SALES FOR A TITLE OR AUTHOR. TODAY, DISCOVERY IS FAR MORE FRAGMENTED."

— AASHNA MALHOTRA, Bahrisons Booksellers, Delhi



PHOTO: INSTA

ways matter.

PROSE BEFORE HOES

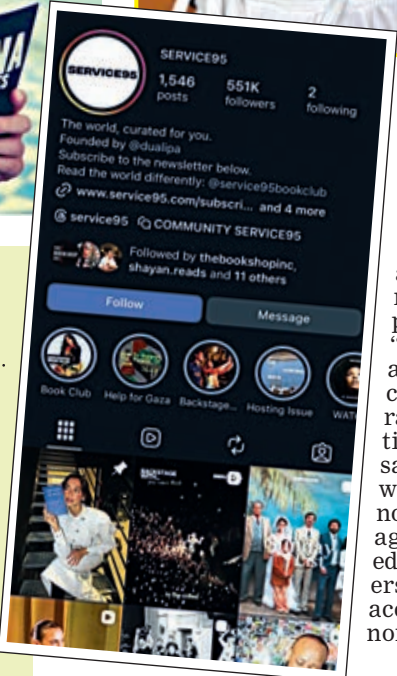
Service 95, demonstrates how celebrity initiatives can introduce readers to unexpected corners of literature. Selections range from international literary fiction like Shuggie Bain to novels such as Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead, offering a spectrum of sensitivity and voices from all around the world. As Kriti Sachan notes, the club "Feels considered and intentional. There's a book for everyone, which isn't the case with all celebrity book clubs."

In India, that invitation works best alongside bookstores, where human guidance, conversation, and context help readers engage fully with these books — showing how celebrity-led curiosity and bookseller expertise can work together to deepen reading.

LOCAL READING COMMUNITIES

In India, celebrity influence coexists with intimate, local reading practices. Malhotra notes a rise in small, community-driven book clubs: groups of friends, neighbourhood reading circles, or in-store discussions that offer structure, accountability, and a sense of belonging. These spaces often feel more sustaining than participation in a distant, celebrity-led club.

"They're changing who feels invited," says Sachan, referring to the cultural impact of celebrity-led reading initiatives. "Invited to read, to talk about books, and to have an opinion." In a country where literary participation has historically been tied to privilege and education, that invitation is meaningful.



SEA THE SKIN-CREDIBLE DIFFERENCE

Natural minerals in seawater calm the skin and keep it moisturised, unlike shower or tap water

ANUSHREE CHAURASIA

For millions of people living with eczema, acne, psoriasis, or persistent skin inflammation, beach vacations often come with an unexpected bonus: clearer, calmer skin. Redness fades, itchiness eases, and stubborn flare-ups seem to retreat after just a day or two by the ocean. Yet once the holiday ends and daily showers resume at home, those same skin issues often return with full force. Dermatologists say this contrast is no coincidence — and the explanation lies in what saltwater does differently from regular tap water.

POWER OF SALTWATER

Seawater is rich in minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium, and sodium, all of which play a role in maintaining the skin's barrier function. These minerals help reduce inflammation, balance oil production, and support the skin's natural healing processes. Saltwater also has mild antiseptic properties, which can help reduce bacteria on the skin — particularly beneficial for people struggling with acne or infected eczema patches.

"Saltwater creates a naturally hostile environment for harmful bacteria while supporting the skin's own repair mechanisms," explains Dr. Anjali Mishra, Consultant Dermatologist, Mumbai. "This dual action is something we simply don't get from ordinary bathing water."

TAP WATER WOES

While saltwater heals, tap water often disrupts. Most municipal water supplies contain chlorine and other disinfectants designed to kill microbes, but these chemicals can also strip the skin of its natural oils. Frequent exposure weakens the skin barrier, making it harder for the skin to retain moisture and defend against irritants. For people with sensitive or inflamed skin, this can trigger dryness, itching, and flare-ups.

"Hard water and chlorinated water can significantly aggravate conditions like eczema and rosacea," says Dr. Vishal Gupta, Dermatologist, New Delhi. "Repeated showers may feel cleansing, but they can quietly worsen inflammation over time."

SUN, SAND & SEA

Saltwater doesn't work alone. Controlled sun exposure plays a complementary role in calming skin. Ultraviolet light has



"SALTWATER CREATES A NATURALLY HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT FOR HARMFUL BACTERIA WHILE SUPPORTING THE SKIN'S OWN REPAIR MECHANISMS."

— Dr. ANJALI MISHRA, Consultant Dermatologist

environments, also reduces exposure to airborne irritants that can trigger skin reactions. Together, sun, salt, and sea form a powerful — though temporary — therapeutic combination.

Despite the benefits, the beach effect is often short-lived. Once people return to daily routines involving hot showers, soaps, pollution, and stress, the skin barrier becomes compromised again.

Long, hot showers further dry the skin, undoing much of the moisture balance restored by seawater. Dermatologists emphasize that while saltwater can soothe symptoms, it does not cure chronic skin conditions on its own.

SALT BATH HACKS

While nothing fully replaces the ocean, dermatologists suggest a few ways to mimic its benefits at home. Salt baths using medical-grade sea salt or Epsom salt can offer mild relief for inflamed skin when used sparingly.

Switching to lukewarm showers, limiting bathing time, and using gentle, fragrance-free cleansers can also help protect the skin barrier. Applying moisturizers immediately after bathing + while the skin is still damp - helps lock in hydration.

THE SKIN-ERGY SYSTEM

The beach-versus-bathroom contrast highlights a larger truth about skin health: skin is an ecosystem, not just a surface. Natural environments often support balance, while modern routines can unintentionally disrupt it. As researchers continue exploring mineral therapies and barrier-repair skincare, the ocean remains a powerful reminder that sometimes, the most effective solutions are also the simplest - and have been around far longer than our showers.

"HARD WATER AND CHLORINATED WATER CAN SIGNIFICANTLY AGGRAVATE CONDITIONS LIKE ECZEMA AND ROSACEA."

— Dr. VISHAL GUPTA, Dermatologist

been shown to reduce inflammation and slow the rapid skin cell turnover seen in conditions like psoriasis. Sea air, typically cleaner and less polluted than urban

BRIDGE | Goren

Both vulnerable, East deals

NORTH
 ♠ A 7
 ♥ 9 6 5
 ♦ A Q 9
 ♣ A K J 9 2

WEST
 ♠ Q 9 5 3
 ♥ J 7 2
 ♦ 7 3
 ♣ 10 8 7 5

EAST
 ♠ 6 4
 ♥ A K Q 10 8 4
 ♦ K 10 8 5
 ♣ 3

SOUTH
 ♠ K J 10 8 2
 ♥ 3
 ♦ J 6 4 2
 ♣ Q 6 4

The bidding:
 EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH
 1♥ Pass Pass Dbl
 2♥ 2♠ 3♥ Dbl
 Pass 4♠ All pass

Opening lead: Two of ♥

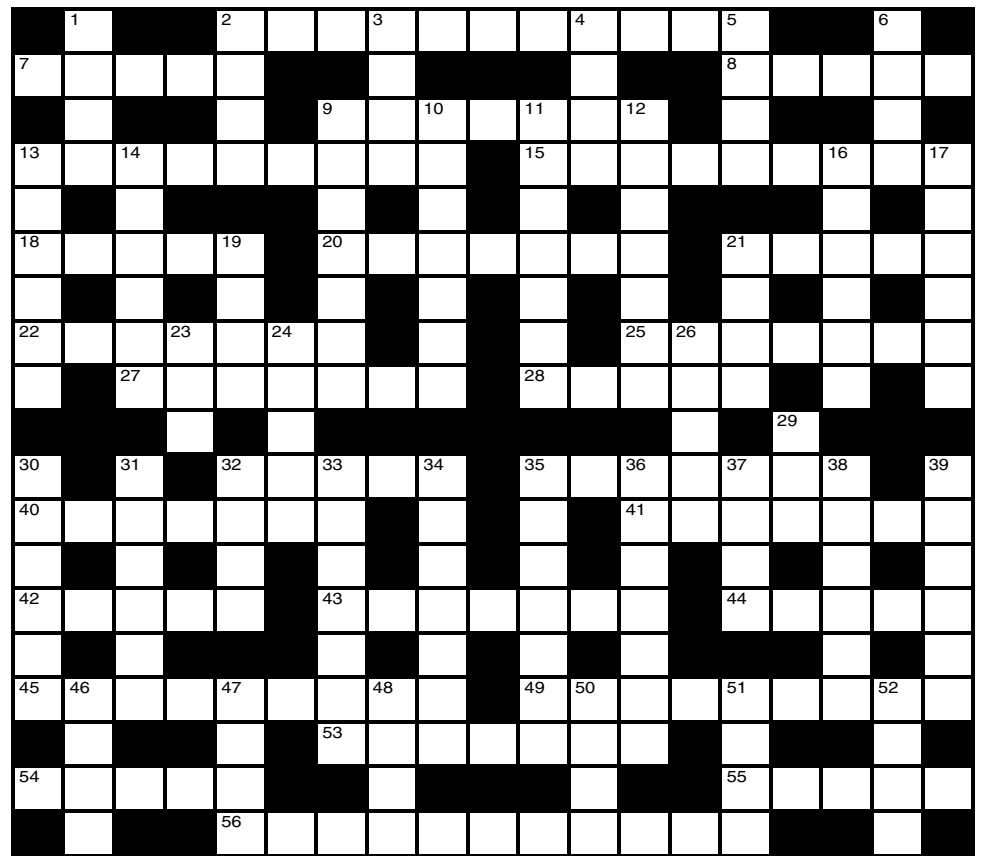
North's second double showed extra values in a hand that could not raise spades. South might have bid four diamonds instead of four spades, but it was reasonable to take a shot at game. East won the opening heart lead and continued the suit. South ruffed, led a low spade to dummy's ace, and a spade back to his jack. West took his queen and led another heart, which South had to ruff. South cashed the king of spades, his last trump, and ran his clubs. West ruffed the fifth club and led a diamond. South had to lose a diamond trick and finished down one. South did not play this hand properly. Can you spot what he did wrong?

South should have expected that the hearts would split 6-3 after this bidding. He should simply have discarded a diamond at trick two instead of ruffing. He could then ruff the third heart and play the spades the same way. This time, when West won his queen, he would have no heart to lead. West would shift to a diamond, but South should play dummy's ace and cross to his hand with the queen of clubs. The king-jack of spades would draw the trumps and allow both of dummy's remaining diamonds to be discarded. South could then claim with all good clubs in dummy.

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001.)

SUNDAY CROSSWORD - 1233

- ACROSS :**
- Thought highly of (7)
 - Star-spotter? (6,5)
 - Authorization (3-2)
 - Tear into pieces (3,2)
 - Thick yellow fog or something to eat? (3-4)
 - In love (9)
 - Edifying; inspiring (9)
 - Bit player (5)
 - In a few words (7)
 - Texas mission? (5)
 - Packet or parcel (7)
 - Self-importance (7)
 - Frightened, startled (7)
 - The desert in Israel (5)
 - Become distended (5)
 - Bungling or missing a catch (7)
 - Firm, unyielding (7)
 - Correspondence (7)
 - Illumination (5)
 - Set apart (7)
 - Sonic art form (5)
 - In good order (9)
 - Impediment (9)
 - Yearning (7)
 - On the move (5)
 - Fierce stare (5)
 - Makes something shorter (11)
- DOWN :**
- Small chess-piece (4)
 - Dorothy's dog! (4)
 - A French duelling sword (4)
 - Illegal seizure of power (4)
 - Not kosher (4)
 - Destroy by fire (4)
 - Difficulty (7)
 - Groups, troupes or companies (7)
 - Infant's enclosure (7)
 - Free from an obligation (6)
 - Ancient Greek region (6)
 - Sloping type (6)
 - Dejected or sad (6)
 - American Inst. of Aeronautics and Astronautics (4)
 - Marne mine (4)
 - Kilolites, abbr. (3)
 - Developed (5)
 - Indiscreet act or remark; a social blunder (5)
 - Tolkien's tree like creature (3)
 - Stories as told by Aesop? (6)
 - Mahara-shtra city (6)
 - Sodium chloride (4)
 - Moral (7)
 - Expose or reveal as in, "shocking facts...."? (3,4)
 - Language of Maharashtra (7)
 - Running away (7)
 - Piece of news (4)
 - Advances or makes progress? (4,2)
 - The human soul or spirit (6)
 - Sibilance (4)
 - Ms Ali Khan of Bollywood (4)
 - Rain heavily (4)
 - Peru native (4)
 - Tattered clothing (4)
 - Caution or regard (4)



SOLUTION FOR CROSSWORD - 1232



WIN A PRIZE

Here's your chance to win a cash prize of ₹200 each.

All you need to do is rush in your completed crossword entry to us by Wednesday with your full name and address. Mark the envelope to:

Sunday Crossword-1233
 Sunday Magazine,
 36, S.D. Road,
 Secbad-03

WINNERS OF CROSSWORD 1232

M. Parthasarathy,
 Tirupati

B. Mallu Bai,
 Secunderabad

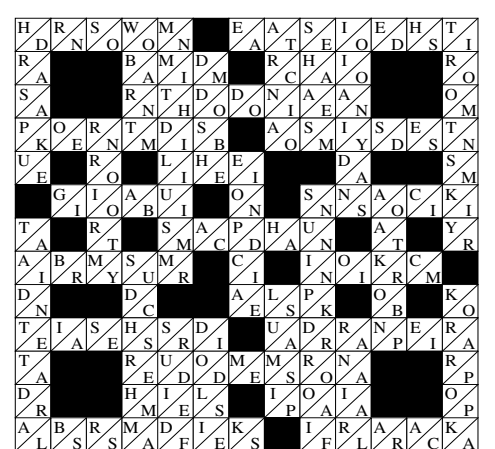
CROSSWORD JIGSAW

Here the crossword puzzle is broken up into fragments which may or may not be shuffled. Your task is to reconstruct the complete puzzle from the fragments. We have retained the black squares in the grid to help you out.



STRIKE OUT

This crossword has no clues and the answers there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it! In each square you have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you chose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.



'I DO BELIEVE EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS, HAPPENS FOR THE BEST'

SUBHASH K JHA

Taapsee Pannu's *Assi* will soon be hitting the screens. The actress talks of her hopes for the film, coming as it is after a gap, and also about how life has been after her marriage to badminton player Mathias Boe.

Q *Assi* will be your first release in three years. Does that make you a tad nervous?

Well, in a way, yes. But I have never really had control over the release of my films. I remember the time during COVID when I was working non-stop; and then I had *Thappad* and no other release that year. Then I had *Haseen Dilruba* one year and again there was a huge gap and suddenly there were four films together, which obviously is not how I would have liked it. But that's how it happened. They initially waited for theatrical release and when it didn't happen they started releasing back-to-back because there's a certain cost incurred on the film when it's ready and not released.

I feel something similar in terms of being out of my control has happened again.

Q What do you mean?

I shot for *Assi* and *Gandhari* almost back-to-back and finished them in the first quarter of last year, but it so happened that they didn't come out, because they needed to be put together, edited, patchwork done, etc. So now, both films are coming out this year. It

Taapsee Pannu is optimistic that her absence from the screen for a time is only going to make audiences curious about what she's bringing out next

was completely out of my control. Had it been the way I planned it, both films should have come out last year. It never really happens according to an actor's plans.

But I genuinely feel that whatever happens, happens for the good. I hope people who haven't seen me around for two years look forward to seeing what I can bring on the screen next. I'm optimistic that this absence is going to make them curious about seeing what's going to come out next.

Q On a personal note, what is it like being married?

I feel a little strange, answering this question, because I really don't feel much of a difference in our relationship, or between how we both lived before marriage, and now, except for the fact that my husband Mathias Boe spends more time in India than used to, now that he's sort of retired even

from coaching. We were living together even before we got married, in Denmark and in India; we used to live in each other's houses in the respective countries, with our parents. So honestly, nothing has changed.

I HAVE NEVER HAD CONTROL OVER THE RELEASE OF MY FILMS...I HOPE PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T SEEN ME AROUND FOR TWO YEARS LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT I CAN BRING ON THE SCREEN NEXT.

'It will be full of action'



Ahan Shetty on 'Border 3'

Ahan Shetty is keeping his focus sharp as the buzz around *Border 2* continues. "I just try to keep my head down and focus on the work. I believe my work should speak for itself. Everything else is secondary," he says.

On the success of *Border 2*, Shetty remains grounded. "I don't look back too much or think too highly of success. I'm just grateful to have been part of the project and to receive so much love," he adds.

Looking ahead, *Border 3* promises a fresh take. "It's not

about the armed forces this time, but it has strong action elements. It's a very different space altogether," Shetty reveals.

When asked about being tagged the new action hero of his generation, he smiles: "I hope so, fingers crossed. For me, it's about continuing to work hard, staying grounded, and giving my best with every opportunity."

Reflecting on his father Suniel Shetty's saying, "*Jab Bhagwan deta hai toh chhappar faad ke deta hai*," Ahan remains humble. "I'm thankful for the chance to play such a wonderful character in *Border 2*. I didn't leave any stone unturned, and I'm happy audiences have loved my work. I'll continue working hard to make my fans happy."

Rashmika gets busier in Bollywood

She and other South actresses are making smart career moves in expanding their horizons

B.V.S. PRAKASH

DECCAN CHRONICLE

Rashmika Mandanna continues to balance her career across Telugu, Hindi and Tamil cinema, steadily expanding her footprint beyond regional boundaries.

The actress recently wrapped *Cocktail 2* with Shahid Kapoor and has reportedly signed another Hindi project with the same co-star, to be produced by Jio Studios and The Vermilion World. Amit Ravindernath Sharma (*Badhaai Ho*, *Maidaan*) will direct, with filming set to begin in the second half of this year.

On the Telugu front, Rashmika recently joined her *Pushpa* co-star Allu Arjun for Atlee's much-anticipated project in a negative role. She will also reunite with Vijay Deverakonda for *Ranabaali* and take on a challenging, author-backed role in *Mysaa*. Telugu actresses Sreeleela, Keerthy Suresh and Sai Pallavi are also exploring Bollywood with varied roles.

Commenting on the growing preference for Bollywood among South actresses, director Kona Venkat says, "Hindi movies always have better reach and popularity across the world compared to regional films. The Hindi-speaking audience is much larger, so Telugu actresses

appearing in Hindi films can significantly expand their fan base. This also helps them secure major endorsements, which today often pay more than acting."

"HINDI MOVIES ALWAYS HAVE BETTER REACH AND POPULARITY ACROSS THE WORLD COMPARED TO REGIONAL FILMS. THE HINDI-SPEAKING AUDIENCE IS MUCH LARGER, SO TELUGU ACTRESSES APPEARING IN HINDI FILMS CAN SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND THEIR FAN BASE," SAYS DIRECTOR KONA VENKAT.

