

TUWJ calls for Maha Dharna in Hyderabad on December 3

Sangareddy: Telangana Union of Working Journalists leaders urged journalists from across the erstwhile Medak district to participate in a “Maha Dharna” at the Information and Public Relations Department office at Masab Tank in Hyderabad on December 3.

In a press statement on Monday, TUWJ leaders said the government had failed to issue new accreditation cards by not constituting the accreditation committees. They said I&PR Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy had not responded to issues concerning journalists, despite several representations seeking a resolution.

Karimnagar’s metal magic wins praise in PM Modi’s ‘Mann Ki Baat’

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Hyderabad: Inthe 128th edition of his monthly radio address, ‘Mann Ki Baat’, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spotlighted the rich heritage of Indian craftsmanship, with a special mention of Telangana’s famed metal craft tradition from Karimnagar. Emphasising the mantra of ‘Vocal for Local’, the Prime Minister reiterated the importance of promoting indigenous art and artisans on global platforms.Sharing insights from the recent G-20 Summit, PM Modi revealed how India showcased its cultural legacy through handcrafted gifts presented to world leaders. “Just a few days ago, during the G-20 Summit, when it came to presenting gifts to several world leaders, I reiterated this sentiment ‘Vocal for Local’. In the gifts I presented on behalf of my countrymen, this sentiment was carefully kept in mind,” he said.

Among the gifts, the Prime Minister of Japan received a silver Buddha replica, a masterpiece reflecting the intricate artistry of Telangana’s silver craft, particularly from Karimnagar. Similarly, the Prime Minister of Italy was gifted a silver mirror adorned with floral motifs, another example of the region’s exceptional metal craftsmanship. These gifts not only symbolised India’s cultural depth but also highlighted the skill and creativity of local artisans.

PM Modi further mentioned presenting a brass urli to



the Prime Minister of Australia, an exquisite craft from Mannar, Kerala, and underscoring India’s diverse artisanal traditions. “My aim was to make the world aware of Indian crafts, art and traditions, and to provide a global platform to the talent of our artisans,” he added.The Prime Minister’s remarks have brought renewed attention nationwide to Karimnagar’s metal craft industry, which has been a cornerstone of Telangana’s cultural identity for generations. Known for its detailed silverware and ornamental designs, the craft combines traditional techniques with artistic finesse, making it a sought-after heritage art form.

Telangana High Court invites applications for 66 Civil Judge posts



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court has announced a notification inviting online applications from

eligible candidates to fill 66 posts of Civil Judges (Junior Division) in the Telangana State Judicial Service. The recruitment drive aims to strengthen the judicial system by inducting qualified professionals into the service. On Sunday, the Registrar of the High Court said the application process will be conducted online and will remain open from 8 December to 29 December. Candidates interested in applying for these posts must ensure the timely submission of their applications through the official portal.

The Registrar further informed that details regarding the examination schedule, download of hall tickets, and the computer-based screening test will be announced on the High Court’s official website. Aspirants are advised to regularly check the website for updates. The complete notification, including eligibility criteria, application procedure, and other relevant details, is made available on the High Court’s official website: <http://tshc.gov.com>.

KTR questions Rahul’s silence on HILTP ‘scam’



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Hyderabad: Expressing deep concern over what he described as “one of the biggest land scams in independent India,” KT Rama Rao on Sunday questioned whether Rahul Gandhi’s silence on the recently introduced Hyderabad Industrial Land Transformation Policy (HILTP) by Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy amounted to approval and shared guilt.The BRS Working President on Sunday wrote an open letter to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Rama Rao warned that the policy could cause a loss of Rs 5 lakh crore to the people of Telangana by enabling private entities to acquire highly valuable public lands at a fraction of their actual market value.

KTR explained that previous governments had allotted nearly 9,300 acres of industrial land in Hyderabad in key clusters such as Balanagar, Jeedimetla, Sanathnagar, Uppal, Mallapur, Ramachandrapuram and Hayathnagar.

These lands were originally provided at concessional rates to promote industrial growth, employment generation, and long-term economic development. He alleged that under the new HILTP, industrial landholders can now convert these lands into commercial or residential zones by paying only 30 per cent of the SRO value—despite current market prices being several times higher.According to him, this policy effectively converts public assets into massive private windfall gains, with land valued at lakhs of crores being regularised for a minimal cost.KTR also raised doubts over the government’s decision to offer fast-track approvals within 45 days for conversions involving assets worth thousands of crores.The BRS leader criticised the policy’s stated objective of relocating polluting industries outside the Outer Ring Road (ORR), calling it misleading and poorly designed.

He listed several shortcomings of the policy, including the fact that relocation is purely voluntary, approvals are done on a case-by-case basis, and no mandatory condi-

tions or timelines are imposed on industries to shift.The policy appears tailored to benefit ‘a handful of Congress leaders, influential real-estate groups, and individuals closely associated with the Chief Minister’, allowing them to acquire prime land for a fraction of its real value.KTR asked whether the Congress leader was unaware of the alleged large-scale misappropriation and whether he would now intervene to protect Telangana’s interests.

Furthermore, he questioned whether Rahul Gandhi’s silence on the matter indicated tacit approval, thereby making him equally accountable. Telangana has always been a land of self-respect and justice, and that the state cannot allow its future to be mortgaged by a nexus of political and commercial interests, he said asserting the Congress party’s response to his letter would determine whether it stands with the people of Telangana or with those accused of looting its public assets.

Sri Lanka’s death toll climbs to 334

GNS News Agency, Dec 1Colombo: At least 334 people have lost their lives, and 370 others are still missing as Cyclone Ditwah wreaked havoc in Sri Lanka, local media reported, quoting the Disaster Management Centre (DMC).

The worst-hit district is Kandy, where 88 deaths and 150 missing persons have been recorded. In Badulla, 71 people died, 68 in Nuwara Eliya and 23 in Matale. According to the DMC, the disaster has affected 1,118,929 people from 309,607 families across the country, reports leading Lankan media outlet, Daily Mirror.Communication challenges have continued to complicate rescue and coordination efforts in some of the worst-hit areas.

The President’s Media Division said Sri Lanka’s telecommunications operators have agreed to prioritise emergency calls to ease network congestion and strengthen the response system.Meanwhile, Indian rescue teams are working in coordination with the Sri Lanka Air Force, Navy, Army, Police, and local first responders to assist flood-affected communities.Evacuations, supply delivery, and emergency support efforts are underway across the island.Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disسانayake on Sunday described the ongoing extreme weather crisis as the worst natural disaster the country has ever faced, pledging full state support for recovery from the catastrophe.

Air Marshal Jayasimha assumes charge as Senior Air Staff Officer

Hyderabad: Air Marshal Samir Jayasinha Pendse assumed the appointment of Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO), Training Command, Indian Air Force (IAF) on Monday, December 1, 2025.

An alumnus of National Defence Academy, the Air Marshal was commissioned in the Flying (Pilot) branch of the IAF on 16 December 1989 as a helicopter pilot. In his career spanning over 36 years, he has flown over 5100 hours of accident-free flying.During his illustrious service career, the Air Officer has held numerous command and staff assignments. These include command of an Advanced HQ, two IAF bases, and a frontline helicopter unit.

On Bhopal gas tragedy eve, survivors' groups slam BJP over 'denial' of justice

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

On the eve of the 41st anniversary of the Bhopal gas tragedy, four organisations representing survivors on Monday (December 1, 2025) accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of denying them justice and prolonging their suffering, a charge stoutly denied by the saffron party.At least 5,479 people died and thousands were maimed for life after the highly toxic methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas leaked from Union Carbide Corporation (UCC)’s pesticide unit in Bhopal on the intervening night of December 2-3, 1984, in one of the worst industrial disasters in the world.

At a press conference marking the 41st anniversary of the disaster, the organisations released a "Bhopal Survivors' Chargesheet against the BJP" and alleged the party, currently in power in Madhya Pradesh and at the Centre, has consistently served the interests of U.S. corporations over those of Indian citizens.Rashida Bee, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmchhari Sangh, said, "The BJP in the State government and at the Centre has betrayed the Bhopal gas tragedy survivors like no other political party." "A prominent member of BJP is known to have protected Union Carbide’s local management from charges of poisoning water around the factory and another prominent member wrote a legal opinion absolving Dow Chemical (the current owner of Union Carbide) of its environmental liabilities in Bhopal which was contrary to the Indian government’s official opinion," she alleged.

Balkrishna Namdeo, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pensionbhogee Sangharsh Morcha, said, "Then-Union Home Minister L.K. Advani in 2002, directed the prosecuting agency CBI to seek dilution of criminal charges against Warren Anderson (former CEO of US firm UCC) and Union Carbide in the criminal case related to the disaster. Credit must go to the judge in the Bhopal district court who rejected CBI’s application and prevented this injustice against the victims." Commenting on rehabilitation measures, Rachna Dhingra of the Bhopal Group for Infor-



mation & Action said, "Medical and economic rehabilitation of Bhopal survivors have been worst under the BJP rule."In 2008, under the Congress rule at the Centre, we were granted our demand for setting up of an Empowered Commission on Bhopal for long-term rehabilitation (of survivors), but the then-BJP Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan stopped it. Today, the survivors are suffering in the absence of such a commission," Ms. Dhingra alleged.Nawab Khan, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha, maintained that American multinational Dow Chemical, which bought Union Carbide in 1999, continues to expand its business in India."Despite being legally forbidden, public sector undertakings are brazenly purchasing Union Carbide’s products from Dow Chemical and the corporation is expanding its business in India like never before," Mr. Khan alleged.However, the Madhya Pradesh BJP rejected the allegations made by the organisations."Our government has always treated issues concerning the Bhopal gas survivors with priority and seriousness, whether they relate to judicial matters, medical treatment or any other subject. I respectfully disagree with all the allegations levelled against the BJP," State party spokesman Pankaj Chaturvedi asserted.

CM Revanth Reddy Reaches Makthal, Offers Prayers at Padamati Anjaneya Swamy Temple



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Narayanpet: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy arrived in Makthal on Monday, where he offered special prayers at the revered Sri Padamati Anjaneya Swamy Temple.The Chief Minister’s visit to the region marks significance, as the government is going to highlight 'PrajaPalana Vijayotsavalu,' during the public meeting.Earlier the CM was accompanied by senior ministers Damodara Rajanarasimha, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Jupally Krishna Rao, and Vakiti Srihari, who joined him during the visit.CM Revanth Reddy’s temple visit drew the attention of devotees and locals, who gathered in large numbers to welcome him as he sought the blessings of Lord Anjaneya for the welfare of the state.

Samantha confirms marriage to Raj Nidimoru with Instagram post



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Mumbai: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu tied the knot with filmmaker Raj Nidimoru in a traditional ceremony on Monday.While reports were doing the rounds that the couple would be entering matrimony soon, the ‘Yashoda’ actress formally announced the new chapter in her life through a special social media post.Samantha took to her official Instagram handle and shared some beautiful moments from her simple, traditional yet elegant nuptials.While the bride was a sight for sore eyes in a red silk saree with golden embellishments, the director opted for a white kurta pajama with a cream Nehru jacket for the special day.Samantha’s bridal look was further enhanced with heavy gold jewellery, along with a gajra, mehendi, and complementary makeup.The post captioned “(white heart emoji) 01.12.2025 (white heart emoji)” showed the newlyweds exchanging rings and praying before starting their new journey.As per reports, the two got married at Isha Foundation’s Linga Bhairavi Temple in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.For the unaware, Samantha is believed to have first met Raj during the shoot of the Amazon Prime Video series “The Family Man 2”, in which she played a strong role.The two once again worked together for the web show “Citadel: Honey Bunny”, co-starring Varun Dhawan.The rumours of Samantha and Raj being in a relationship began to circulate as the two were seen together at various events.Earlier this year, Samantha posted about her first step into the world of sports. The photos shared on her IG also included Raj.Another post by Samantha talked about new begin-

nings. Uploading a string of photos which also had Raj, she mentioned, “It’s been a long road, but here we are New beginnings @tralalamovingpictures. (sic)”For the unversed, Samantha was earlier married to actor Naga Chaitanya. The couple tied the knot in 2017 in a grand ceremony. However, they went their separate ways in 2021. Naga Chaitanya married actress Sobhita Dhulipala in December last year.

Congress govt conspiring to cut Rythu Bharosa for Yasangi, says Harish Rao

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Sangareddy: Former Minister T Harish Rao on Sunday said the Congress government was conspiring to cut the Rythu Bharosa benefit for cotton, sugarcane, redgram, turmeric, orchards and other crops which were cultivated only once a year.

Quoting a government statement on disbursing Rythu Bharosa for 70 lakh acres only once while the area under cultivation was 1.46 lakh acres, he said Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had demanded Rythu Bharosa for three crops a year when he was in the opposition.Speaking to news reporters in Narayankhed, Harish Rao said Revanth Reddy had however changed his stance after being voted to power, and had decided to confine the Rythu Bharosa assistance to only one crop a year since cotton and sugarcane were cultivated only once a year.

Stating that after denying the loan waiver and crop insurance, the Congress government was now focussing on slashing the Rythu Bharosa assistance as well, Harish Rao said the BRS government had extended Rythu Bharosa (then Rythu Bandhu) for 11 consecutive seasons braving the challenges thrown by Covid-19. The Congress government would correct its mistakes only if the party was defeated in the panchayat elections, he said.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

On the Congress in Karnataka

The Congress is in a spot in Karnataka. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar are locked in a power tussle, as the deputy wants to replace the leader, who is in no mood to oblige. When they both assumed their current positions in 2023, it was reportedly based on a mutual agreement which also provided for a mid-term change of guard. Only the central functionaries of the Congress and these two leaders know the exact details of the power-sharing arrangement that was agreed upon in 2023. If indeed there was an agreement that Mr. Shivakumar would be handed over the baton, it is only honourable for that to be enforced by all involved, particularly the party supremo Rahul Gandhi. Mr. Shivakumar has remained loyal to the party through difficult times, facing cases and imprisonment, and accused of corruption by central agencies. While Mr. Shivakumar is valuable for a different reason. His standing as a champion of social justice enabled the Congress to widen and consolidate its acceptance among the subaltern communities in the State. The Chief Minister has dug his heels in, knowing that replacing him with Mr. Shivakumar, who hails from the dominant Vokkaliga community, is not an easy choice for the party. A Vokkaliga at the top can create a rupture in the Congress's social base in Karnataka, and that works against Mr. Shivakumar. That is the deadlock. It is high time Congress leaders at the State and national levels look beyond their narrow individual interests and calculations. In fact, the party could use the tussle in Karnataka to shuffle its deck nationally. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is also from the State. If the social dynamics of the State make it risky to make Mr. Shivakumar the Chief Minister.

Veeramalla Suresh Shetty Appointed as Pan-India Executive Member of Head World Human Rights Council



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, HYDERABAD, DECEMBER, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):” “The Head World Human Rights Council, which has been actively operating across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, has appointed Telangana native Veeramalla Suresh Shetty as its Pan-India Executive Member. The appointment order was issued by the organization's Chairman Madhav, who also handed over the official appointment letter to Suresh Shetty. “Speaking on the occasion, Veeramalla Suresh Shetty expressed heartfelt gratitude to Chairman Madhav for placing confidence in him, and conveyed special thanks to National General Secretary Satish Devarakonda for his efforts in facilitating the appointment. “He stated that he would dedicate his efforts to the growth of the organization and stand firmly with victims in their pursuit of justice. He reaffirmed his commitment to the protection of human rights on behalf of the Head World Human Rights Council. To mark the occasion, several members of the organization along with local dignitaries felicitated Veeramalla Suresh Shetty and extended their best wishes.



(Mandava Srisailem.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- B. N. Edla Venkat Reddy submitted his nomination as the Sarpanch candidate of Thimmapuram village to the Election Returning Officer at the Vadaparthi Election Cluster Office. A large number of village elders, leaders and villagers participated in a huge rally from B. N. Thimmapuram village to Vadaparthi Election Cluster Office to support Edla Venkat Reddy in filing his nomination

Elekta introduces Evo, its AI-powered, adaptive CT-Linac, to India for next-level cancer care



Hyderabad: Elekta announced the introduction of its latest linear accelerator (linac), Evo, to the Indian market. Already launched in Europe and other regions, Evo is now available in India, bringing high-definition AI-enhanced imaging and its adaptive radiation therapy capabilities to clinicians across the country. This highly versatile CT-Linac will enable clinicians to choose the most suitable radiation therapy technique for each individual patient. Evo was showcased for the first time in India at the Association of Radiation Oncologists of India Conference (AROICON) in Kolkata, the country's largest industry exhibition in radiation oncology.

Feras Al Hasan, Head of TIMEA, Elekta said: “We are delighted to bring our flagship innovation Evo Elekta to India. Evo brings a new level of flexibility to India's radiotherapy landscape and is designed to help centres deliver more personalized, efficient care. Its ability to support both

online and offline adaptive treatments on a CT-Linac gives clinicians the confidence to adjust therapy based on daily anatomical changes which is especially important in India, where many patients present with complex and advanced stage diseases. Our aim is to strengthen Elekta's commitment to making high-quality cancer treatment accessible to more patients across the globe.” Shankar Seshadri, VP & Head - India Sub-continent, added: “India needs radiotherapy solutions that combine precision with practicality and Evo is uniquely positioned to address India's growing cancer burden and evolving patient needs. Its adaptive capabilities and streamlined workflow help high-volume centres treat more patients without compromising treatment quality. The arrival of Evo in India marks a significant milestone, as it will help accelerate our market growth in the region.”

Adaptive radiotherapy, also known as Adaptive Radiation Therapy or ART, is a treatment approach in which the radiation plan is adjusted over the course of therapy to account for changes in a patient's unique anatomy and or tumor. Delivering this therapy requires high-quality imaging that enables clinicians to visualize tumors and organs at risk, ensuring precise contouring. Evo helps address this need with two essential features: Iris®™ high-definition, AI-enhanced imaging, which allows visualization of target areas with greater clarity, and Elekta ONE Online™ software, which brings distributed treatment planning, faster dose calculation and AI-driven automation for contouring and dose planning.

Review Meeting with Officials on Global Summit Preparations

Hyderabad: Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu instructed officials to work in close coordination to ensure security arrangements and heavy bandobust for the Global Summit scheduled to be held at Future City in Kandukur mandal of Rangareddy district. A review meeting was conducted with officials of all departments regarding the Global Summit to be held on December 8 and 9 at Future City. The meeting was attended by Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudheer Babu, Additional DGP D.S. Chauhan, and Future City Development Authority Commissioner Shashank (IAS), along with various departmental heads. Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner emphasized that all departments must work in coordination to complete the summit-related works at a fast pace, and that continuous supervision by officials is essential. He instructed them to ensure that delegates coming from various countries and states face no inconvenience and that all necessary facilities are provided without fail. He directed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted power supply and flawless internet connectivity. He also asked officials to avoid any issues related to transportation, drinking water, toilets, helipads, and parking facilities. The Commissioner instructed the health department to set up required medical camps with adequate staff.



He stressed that all arrangements must be completed meticulously without leaving room for any errors. Every official must carry out their assigned responsibilities diligently to ensure the successful conduct of the Global Summit, he added. The meeting was attended by Maheshwaram DCP Narayana Reddy (IPS), Protocol Secretary Narsimha Reddy, officials Prem Raj, HMWSSB MD K. Ashok Reddy, District Additional Collector (Revenue) Chandra Reddy, and officials from R&B, Fire Safety, Transport, RTC, TGSPDCL, Tourism, and Health Departments.

“Forest Razed, Roads Laid: Massive Destruction Inside Reserved Forest!”



December 1st manuguru Indian chronicle “Illegal Sand-Lorry Corridor Tears Through Manuguru Forest — Wildlife Under Severe Threat” “NGT Intervention Urged Immediately” “Manuguru, Indian Chronicle” “A shocking case of large-scale forest destruction near Manuguru has triggered outrage among local communities and environmental groups. A reserved forest — legally protected and ecologically crucial — has reportedly been bulldozed to create unauthorized roads, raising serious questions about the role of the very officials meant to safeguard it. “A Secret Road Network Built for Sand Lorries” “According to local residents, the newly carved roads inside the forest were not meant for public use. They were allegedly created to facilitate the swift movement of sand-laden lorries. Multiple forest patches have been cut open, forming what locals describe as an “illegal sand corridor.” “Continuous heavy-vehicle movement has already disrupted the natural habitat. Wildlife has begun migrating deeper into the forest as the noise and human intrusion escalate. Environmental experts warn that road construction through the heart of a forest can permanently alter the ecosystem and fragment wildlife movement.” “Government Plantations Reduced to Rubble” “An afforestation plantation developed with crores of public funds has been completely destroyed. Thousands of saplings have vanished without a trace. Officials remain silent as citizens question who is responsible for this massive loss of government investment and green cover.” “Forest Officials Accused of Turning a Blind Eye” “Despite large machinery entering the forest, trees



being felled, and unauthorized roads being carved out, forest officials have allegedly taken no action. Locals claim the officers have ignored the violations deliberately, hinting at corruption and collusion. “Those who should protect the forest are the ones allowing its destruction,” villagers lament. “Clear Violation of Environmental and Forest Laws” “Activities inside reserved forest areas require strict permissions from central authorities. In this case, there is no record of any legal approval. The violations openly contradict: “The Forest Conservation Act, 1980” “The Wildlife Protection Act” “National environmental norms” “These actions amount to serious environmental offenses, activists say. “Public Demand: Immediate NGT Action” “Environmental groups, student unions, and villagers are preparing to approach the National Green Tribunal (NGT). They demand criminal action against the officials and contractors responsible for the illegal clearing. “Locals insist that unauthorized roads must be shut down and the damaged plantations restored immediately.” “Who Will Save Manuguru's Forests?” “Manuguru's forests are vital for ecological balance, local livelihood, and regional climate stability. Their destruction threatens not just wildlife but the future of the entire region. Despite strong laws, lack of enforcement has opened the door to unchecked environmental damage. “Citizens are raising their voice: “Close the illegal roads” “Restore the ravaged plantations” “Book the officials and contractors responsible” “A forest cannot speak for itself — but the people of Manuguru are speaking louder than ever.

Hooda announces statewide stadium inspections, blames BJP for ‘collapsed’ sports infrastructure

Bhupinder Singh Hooda Bhupinder Singh Hooda criticised the government for failing to utilise a Rs 12 lakh grant provided by MP Deepender Hooda to improve the grounds. (Source: FB) Haryana's Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda Monday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government in the state of “completely destroying” sports infrastructure and endangering athletes' lives. Hooda's remarks come after two young basketball players died in separate incidents in Bahadurgarh and Lakhanmajra last week.

Speaking to media persons in Chandigarh, Hooda said he will tour stadiums across the state after the Congress rally in Delhi on December 14 to highlight what he called

“gross negligence” in sports facilities. Calling the deaths of the basketball players “not accidents but murder due to government negligence,” Hooda demanded a high-level investigation, strict action against those responsible, and immediate government jobs and financial support for the victims' families. He also criticised the government for failing to utilise a Rs 12 lakh grant provided by MP Deepender Hooda to improve the grounds. “World-class sports facilities built during the previous Congress government have been left to deteriorate,” said the Haryana Leader of Opposition. He claimed that key initiatives such as “Sports Talent Hunts” and “Sports Academies,” as well as high-ranking job appointments for athletes.

Jyothi Kalakshetram's 7th Annual Day Shines with Classical Brilliance at Shilparamam



Hyderabad: Jyothi Kalakshetram – School of Arts, in association with Shilparamam, celebrated its 7th Annual Day with grandeur and cultural elegance at the Shilparamam Amphitheater, Hitec City. The evening unfolded with spellbinding Kuchipudi performances by students across all levels, showcasing classical finesse, discipline and creativity.

Tollywood Director Mr. Muppalaneni Shiva graced the event as Chief Guest, while noted Archaeologist & Sthapathi Dr. Sivanagi Reddy attended as Guest of Honour. Both guests appreciated the tradition upheld by Jyothi Kalakshetram and praised the young dancers for their dedication to classical arts. The event commenced with Ganapathi Atharvashirsha, performed by Kum. Ameya, invoking blessings for an auspicious beginning. This was followed by the tiny tots' delightful Slokamala, presented by Thanvi, Likshitha, Jeshwitha, Anagha, Tarasri, Devansha and Midhuna.

Senior students delivered a powerful rendition of Rajashri Sbdam, performed by Aishwarya Sri, Thanvi, Sannidhi, Nandini, Sahasra, Sobha Reddy, Vaishnodevi, Vyshnavi and Yogadha, praising the valor and legacy of Prince Pratap Simha. The audience enjoyed the graceful Brindavani Thillana, performed by Lalitha Sri, celebrating the charm of Lord Krishna. A dramatic presentation of Mandooka Sbdam, performed by Haadvi, Devansha, Manvitha, Midhuna, Thanmayee, Jeswitha, Tara and Chinmayi, captivated spectators with its narrative of Gajendra Moksham. One of the highlights of the evening was Dashavataram, performed by Aditri, Akshara, Haneesha, Harshitha, Tanusri, Yuvasri and Sarvani, beautifully depicting the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu.

Senior Leader Gaddam Ravikumar Extends Grand Welcome to CM Revanth Reddy



“KISHORE, VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 1 (Indian Chronicle): “As part of his district tours, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy visited Atmakur in the Makthal constituency of Narayanpet district on Monday. “During his visit, the Chief Minister received a grand welcome from Minister Srihari, former minister Chinna Reddy, MLA Madhusudan Reddy, senior Congress leader from Uppal Gaddam Ravikumar, MLAs from the erstwhile Palamuru district, and several key leaders. “Along with Minister Vakati Srihari, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for development works worth ₹173 crore. These include the construction of a high-level bridge from Atmakur to Jogulamba Gadwal at a cost of ₹122 crore, a 50-bed hospital costing ₹22 crore, and infrastructure development works worth ₹30 crore in Amarachinta and Atmakur municipalities.



“(Mandava Srisailem.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Chairman Pasham Sanjay Babu Mudiraj met Bhuvanagiri Legislative Assembly member Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy on the occasion of his election as the District President of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Fisheries Industrial Cooperative Society. Meeting the MLA who supported my election, I thanked him. Youth Congress leaders Elamoni Srikanth, Pasham Rajasekhar and others participated in this program.

Everyone Should Participate in the Development of Chilukanagar Hari Hara Kshetram: Committee President Dasari Krishna



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 01 (Indian Chronicle):”“A general meeting of the Chilukanagar Hari Hara Kshetram Sri Chilukeswara Anjaneya Swamy Temple Committee was held under the leadership of Committee President Dasari Krishna. The meeting focused on gathering suggestions and advice from committee members regarding the collection of donations for the temple’s

reconstruction.”New members were also inducted into the committee during the session. Members expressed the need to intensify donation campaigns in the coming days to support the temple redevelopment.”Speaking on the occasion, President Dasari Krishna said that the committee is moving forward by involving all those who are willing to contribute their time and service for the construction of the temple. He emphasized that everyone should come forward to take part in this divine endeavor.”Executive President Burugula Ramesh Goud, General Secretary Gone Srikanth Mudiraj, Treasurer Amruth Rao, Vice Presidents Ramacharla Balaram, Ashok Chari, Masa Shekhar, Advisors Gone Anjayya, Secretaries Ramachander, Guda Srisailam, Kavali Narasimha, Gurralla Mallesh, Vaidyula Veerareddy, Perumal Shiva Kumar, Publicity Secretaries Madipadige Srinivas, Poloji Srinivas Chari, Indrarala Ramesh, Gone Mallesh, Ram Reddy, and several others participated in the meeting.

Officials Supporting the Rich While Targeting the Poor: BRS Leader Ragidi Lakshmareddy Allegations on Illegal Constructions



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 1 (Indian Chronicle):”“BRS Malkajgiri Parliamentary in-charge Ragidi Lakshmareddy lodged a complaint with Uppal Deputy Commissioner Raju through Prajavani, alleging serious irregularities in handling illegal constructions under the Uppal GHMC limits.”Speaking on the occasion, Lakshmareddy expressed anger that GHMC authorities were discriminating between the poor and the wealthy. “If a poor man builds even two rooms, the GHMC demolishes them immediately, but no action is taken against influential persons who construct multi-storeyed buildings,” he said. “He further alleged that the Uppal Town Planning officials were openly violating High Court orders. “As per the High Court’s directions, they



pretend to seal illegal buildings, but by the next day, the same buildings are reopened. This is a clear violation of the Court’s orders,” he stated. “Lakshmareddy accused GHMC officials of acting under the influence of certain groups and questioned where the crores of rupees in revenue owed to GHMC were being diverted. He warned that large-scale illegal constructions in Uppal were causing huge financial loss to the government.”Demanding firm action against illegal constructions, he urged officials to strictly follow High Court directives and take measures to ensure proper revenue generation for GHMC. Lakshmareddy stated that if prompt action is not taken, he would approach the courts, file a complaint with the Lokayukta, and meet the State Chief Secretary to seek action on the illegal constructions in Uppal.

Number-1 in Development: Chilkanagar Division – Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 1 (Indian Chronicle):”“Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy, along with Chilkanagar Division Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, inaugurated several developmental works worth ₹1.29 crore across various colonies and bastis in the Chilkanagar Division.”The MLA launched works at Balaji Enclave and North Kalyanpuri, including the development of parks with walking tracks, a watchman’s room, chain-link fencing, CCTV cameras, gazebos, benches, greenery, and plantation work.”In the Beerappa Gadda area, foundation stones were laid for CC roads in multiple lanes, including the lane opposite the library and Dr. Tulasi’s lane. New drainage pipelines were sanctioned for the lanes near Beerappa Gadda Basti Dawakhana and the street opposite Buchchireddy’s house. In Sairam Nagar Colony, the MLA initiated the repair works of the box drain.”He also laid the foundation stone for a new CC road in the lane behind Chilkanagar Bodrai.Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy said that development in Chilkanagar Division is progressing in a phased manner, and he is committed to fulfilling every promise made during the elections to the people of the division. Corporator Geetha Praveen stated



that development works in Chilkanagar are being taken up as a mission, and funds allocated for the division have already crossed ₹105 crore. She expressed gratitude to MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy for his continuous support in securing major funds and ensuring all promises made to the public are fulfilled.”The program was attended by DE Veneel Goud, AE Radhika, Work Inspector Kedar, BRS party leaders, colony association presidents, secretaries, committee members, women leaders, and local residents.

3.11 Crore Sanctioned for Uppal Division: Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Thanks CM Revanth Reddy



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 1 (Indian Chronicle):”“The Uppal Division has once again received significant funding, with development works set to get a major boost. Funds amounting to ₹3.11 crore have been sanctioned for various developmental activities across several colonies in the division. This financial allocation is expected to accelerate long-pending works and usher in a new wave of progress in the area.Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy played a key role in ensuring these funds were approved, while Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy extended crucial support in securing the allocation. Corporator Mandumula Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy’s persistent efforts to address the issues faced by colonies also contributed significantly to obtaining these funds.As a result, a series of development works will now be undertaken across all colonies in Uppal Division.”Development Works Across All Colonies: Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy”Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy stated that comprehensive develop-



ment works are being taken up across all colonies in Uppal to address local problems effectively. On Monday, she, along with Congress constituency in-charge Parameshwar Reddy, handed over official sanction papers for the newly approved development funds to residents of various colonies.”The sanctioned works include:” Kaveri Nagar: ₹39.70 lakh for construction of a sewerage line” Saibaba Colony: ₹22.37 lakh for sewerage line construction” Shesha Sai Nagar: ₹63.80 lakh for sewerage line construction” Sri Rama Colony, Bharat Nagar: ₹32.10 lakh for sewerage line construction” Shanti Nagar – Satya Nagar: ₹38.10 lakh for sewerage line construction” Vijayapuri Colony: ₹37.77 lakh for repair of drainage pipelines” Lakshminarayana Colony – Devender Colony: ₹3.50 lakh for new sewerage line,Lakshminarayana Colony: ₹41 lakh for construction of drainage pipelines”Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy affirmed that these works would be taken up immediately to ensure improved infrastructure and better living conditions for residents.

Fresh water pipe line leak in center point main road..



SECUNDERABAD CANTONMENT. DECEMBER 1 (Indian Chronicle):“The drinking water main pipeline burst at the center point under the Sixth Ward of Cantonment Board and the drinking water is going to waste. For the past five days, the water has been drawing water from this main road. Locals say that it is drought. coming together For about five days, all the water has been running on the roads in

vain, the roads in this area are full of potholes, and the water that is standing on the road has become bigger and the potholes have become bigger and it has become more difficult for the motorists and the traders doing business there. The water supply to many areas is temporarily stopped and the sewage water from the broken pipe line is getting polluted due to which the people are facing serious problems. Locals are criticizing that pipe lines are bursting from time to time due to lack of quality pipelines. They complain that drinking water is wasted due to broken pipelines. People want the authorities to take strict action so that similar situations do not repeat. Since this morning, people are angry that officials and public representatives are acting as if they do not see them. However, Banuka Narmada, a civilian nominated member of the Cantonment Board, lives in the same area under the same ward and has to travel on the same route to where she is going all the time. Officials failed to respond and repaired

MP Chamalaku requests that senior teachers be exempted from TET through a law amendment in Parliament: - Tapas Yadadri District President Repaka Uma“

“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Senior teachers should be exempted from TET. Tapas District President Repaka Uma has appealed that service teachers appointed before 2010 should be exempted from the TET rule. As part of the call of the TPUS state branch, Bhuvanagiri Lok Sabha member Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy met at his residence in Hyderabad on Sunday and submitted a petition to the Parliament seeking exemption from TET for senior teachers through an amendment to the law and protection of their jobs. Speaking on the occasion, the MP assured that he would raise the issue during Zero Hour in the Parliament session, discuss it with the Union ministers and do his best for the exemption. Tapas Yadadri District President Repaka Uma Honorary President P Ramakrishna Reddy Yadagirigutta Mandal President G Saidarao, Rajpet Mandal President D Janaiah, and Turkpalli Mandal President B Manjula participated in the program.



Government showing negligence in resolving the problems of journalists..



“Journalists’ Mahadharna on December 3:-District President Secretaries Narasimha, Karunakar”“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- TUWJ (IJU) District President Secretaries Yamba Narasimha and Pothamsetty Karunakar said that the state government is showing negligence in

resolving the problems of journalists. They spoke at the union district meeting held in Bhuvanagiri on Sunday. They said that journalists who played a key role in the Telangana movement are facing discrimination by the rulers in their own state. They said that the insurance received in the united state is not enough today. All the district journalists are requested to participate in the Maha Dharma held in front of the State Information Commissioner’s office in Hyderabad on December 3 with demands such as accreditation card, health insurance scheme for the solution on December 3, immediate housing plots for all eligible journalists, etc. The meeting was attended by Union Print Media Urban President Secretaries Madikonda Mallesham, Kandula Srinivas, Electronic Media President Secretaries P Lakshminarayana Chari, Charan, M Chennaiyya, G Sridhar, Nalla Venu, MD Jamal, Mudra Shiva, Shankar, Dilip, Bugga Srinivas and others.

Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala requests that seats be allotted to students who are local to Telangana State in Sainik Schools...



as per Andhra Pradesh State Bifurcation Guarantee Act...”(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :-”“As per the implementation of Andhra Pradesh State Bifurcation Guarantee Act, i.e. from 02-06-2014 to 02-06-2024, Telangana State students who are studying in Sainik Schools in the state of Andhra Pradesh and have locality to Telangana State should be considered as Local to Telangana State, the parents of the students Asst Mpl Commissioner,S. Mahender,S. Suresh Advocate and Bandiga Bala Narasimha jointly submitted a petition to Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy. Before the bifurcation of the united Andhra Pradesh state, that is, when it was Andhra Pradesh state, there were two Sainik Schools in Andhra Pradesh state run by the Sainik School Society under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence Government of India,”Sainik School Kalikiri Chittoor, Annamaya district, Andhra Pradesh state.”Sainik Schook Korukonda Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh state.”In India, the Ministry of Defence Government of India has issued a notification for admission to 6th Class & 9th Class in 33 Sainik Schools run by the Sainik School Society under their auspices and All India Sainik School Entrance Examination is being conducted. Since the date of implementation of the division of Andhra Pradesh State is 02-06-2014 to 02-06-2024 for ten years, along with various aspects, the Joint Andhra Pradesh State Bifurcation Guarantee Act is in force regarding education, and since there is no Sainik School run by the Sainik School Society under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence Government of India in Telangana State,

students of Telangana State whose parents are permanent residents/localities, students who have studied in Telangana State up to 5th Class up to 8th Class, students who have passed the All India Sainik School Entrance Examination (AISSEE) for 6th Class & 9th Class, and 67% seats are reserved for boys belonging to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Telangana State students who have qualified under the 67% quota have been admitted to Sainik School Korukonda & Sainik School Kalikiri for 6th Class & 9th Class.” In the wake of the Supreme Court’s verdict on 01-09-2025 that only students who have studied 9th, 10th, 1st, and 12th classes in Telangana State for four consecutive years are considered local to Telangana State and are eligible to pursue medical education under the Telangana State government, there is a possibility that students who are local to Telangana State in Sainik Schools in Andhra Pradesh State will be considered non-local to Telangana State and will lose out.

What we are appealing to you is that we are appealing to you to take steps to ensure that justice is done to the students of Telangana State and not to be considered local to Telangana State. Others participated in this program and presented a petition to Bhuvanagiri Member of Parliament Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy.



(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- At the local Divya Bal School in Anajipur village of Bhuvanagiri mandal, Divya Bal students showed their talent at the district level in the district level essay writing, picture writing, Gagana, Asmit athletics competition. They were felicitated by the school management, the school founder, Kata Rajulu, correspondent Chinnappa, and the principal. On this occasion, he said that they should come forward not only in the field of education but also in the field of sports.

Arun Patel Submits Petition for New Buses from Ram Reddy Nagar to Koti and Secunderabad



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 1 (Indian Chronicle): ""Following the directions of Uppal constituency in-charge Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy, Arun Patel,

president of the Uppal Youth Congress, who noticed that residents of Ram Reddy Nagar, Vasavi Nagar, Kamakshipuram, and Vivek Nagar colonies have been facing difficulties in commuting by bus for several years, respectfully met Uppal Depot Manager Srinivas on Monday. He explained the passengers' problems and submitted a petition requesting the operation of new buses—115 buses to Koti and 18 buses to Secunderabad."Uppal Depot Manager Srinivas responded positively and assured that new bus routes would be started within the next 10 days."The program was attended by Habsiguda Division Working President Balayya Kurum, former association president Allam Komurayya, general secretary Suresh, Habsiguda Division Youth Congress Working President Gummula Bharu, chief advisor Gummula Komarayya, Habsiguda Division secretary Nagachari, Lingam, Bhaskar, Bus Depot Officer Rohini, and others.

Steps should be taken to ensure that tab entries are completed on time without any pending issues and money is transferred to farmers' accounts on time

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao ""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that tab entries should be completed on time and money is transferred to farmers on time without any pending issues, so that farmers can get money on time."The District Collector, who conducted a surprise inspection of the IKP and PACS grain purchase centers in Peddagudem, Pochampally Mandal, and PACS grain purchase centers in Pillaipalli village on Monday, asked the district collector to talk to the center managers... how much grain has been purchased so far, how much grain is still to be purchased, and how many days will it take to complete the grain procurement. He asked whether the tab entry has been completed for the amount purchased so far and asked that the tab entries should be completed immediately after loading the lorries. He asked whether the lorries were reaching the purchasing



center on time or if there were any problems. He said that the remaining grain quota should also be completed quickly. The concerned officials participated in this program.

Pregnant women coming to the hospital should be provided with better medical services



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that all kinds of tests should be done to pregnant women coming to the hospital and better medical services should be provided."The District Collector conducted a surprise in-

spection of the village hospital in Pilayipalli village of Pochampally mandal on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector said that the register was checked to see if the staff was coming to the hospital on a daily basis. Separate registers should be maintained in each department of the hospital. He asked how many patients were coming to the hospital daily. He wanted the staff and doctors to be available to provide quality treatment to patients who came with various conditions. He asked how many deliveries took place within the hospital limits in the last month. He inquired whether pregnant women were being checked regularly. They asked if the newborns were being vaccinated regularly and wanted them to be vaccinated on time. The District Collector spoke to Bhargavi, a pregnant woman who had recently delivered at a government hospital, on the phone and asked if the delivery was done well in the hospital? Or did the hospital staff cause any trouble. When asked whether the tests were done in the hospital or were they sent outside, she explained that they were done in the hospital. They asked if the newborn was healthy and wanted the children to be vaccinated on time."The concerned officials participated in this program.

Leaders Appeal for Early Resolution of Employees’ Issues



“ Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, December 1: ""On the occasion of World AIDS Day (December 1), representatives of the Telangana AIDS Counselor Control Union met Sri Vasam Venkateshwarlu, IAS, the esteemed Project Director of the Telangana State AIDS Control Society, on Monday. The delegation apprised him of the long-pending

grievances of the employees and sought his intervention for their speedy resolution.""During the meeting, the union leaders highlighted that the Outreach Allowance of several employees has been pending for a long time. They requested the Project Director to immediately release the amount and ensure that it is credited directly into the personal bank accounts of the eligible employees without further delay."They also raised the issue of employee transfers, which have remained unresolved for several years. The leaders appealed for the initiation of a transparent and timely transfer process, as many employees have been facing hardships due to prolonged delays.""Responding to the concerns, the Project Director assured the delegation that he would hold detailed discussions with the union representatives and take decisions that prioritize the welfare and benefit of the employees. He stated that the administration is committed to ensuring fairness and addressing genuine issues at the earliest.

The victory of the Cantonment residents in the Karate Championship.



“SECUNDERABAD CANTONMENT. DECEMBER 1 (Indian Chronicle):""Students of Can-

tonment area triumphed in Karate 11 boys from Okinawa Dragon Hearts

Martial Arts Academy, Secunderabad, Addagutta, from Under-8 to Under-18 categories participated in the

OMA National Karate Championship-2025 organized in Visakhapatnam Andhra Pradesh State and won 5 gold, 4 bronze and 2 silver medals in the program organized on this occasion. Cantonment MLA Sriganesh felicitated the coach karate champions on Monday and congratulated the parents of the students. He said that coach Satyanarayana should excel at the national and international level in the future and bring good name to the cantonment area. Students of the academy, coaches and parents participated in the program

The nomination process should be conducted in a strict manner.



.Precautions should be taken to avoid mistakes:- Election Officer, Collector Hanumantha Rao ""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Election Officer, Collector Hanumantha Rao suggested that the nomination process should be conducted in a strict manner and precautions should be taken to avoid mistakes. On Monday, the nomination election process was inspected in Juluru Cluster and

Pillaipalli Cluster of Pochampally Mandal under the Gram Panchayat. The procedure of receiving nominations was inspected and suggestions were made to the officials. He asked how many nominations were received. The nomination form of the candidate who came to file nomination was examined. He said that all arrangements should be made to conduct the elections smoothly and the nominations should be accepted in accordance with the guidelines set by the Election Commission. The facilities available at the nomination centers were inspected. He said that the second phase of nominations began on Sunday and nominations will be accepted for three days. Since more people are likely to file nominations on the last day, he instructed the officials to make appropriate arrangements. If any mistake is made at the last minute, the nomination will be rejected, so the candidates should take precautions. He said that a help desk has been set up at each nomination center and if the candidates have any doubts, they should contact the help desk. He said that nominations will be accepted from 10.30 am to 5.00 pm. He said that the candidates filing nominations have been instructed to open a new account immediately so that there are no difficulties while opening a new bank account. The collector was accompanied by local officials.

Applications received in Bhubharti and Village Revenue Conferences should be resolved immediately

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- If the applications received in Bhubharti and Village Revenue Conferences are pending, they should be resolved immediately, said Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao. "On Monday, the applications pending in Bhubharti were examined at the Tahsildar's office in Pochampally Mandal Center and the Collector inquired about the number of applications received in the respective modules, how many of the Sadabai Nama applications were approved, how many applications were rejected, how many applications were related to POT lands and other details. If it is found that there are eligible people regarding Sadabai Nama applications, he said that appropriate justice should be done to such people. Applications should not be rejected for trivial reasons, and applications of those who are found eligible after thorough examination at the field level should be accepted. If applications are rejected, the reasons should be



clearly stated and they should be in accordance with the Bhubharati guidelines."Tahsildar Srinivas Reddy and concerned officials participated in this program.

Nacharam Corporator Holds Review Meeting with Engineering Officials



""Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, December 1: "" Nacharam Division Corporator Shanti Sai Zen Shekhar

conducted a review meeting on Monday with the officials of the Engineering Department regarding various development works in the division. The meeting was attended by Engineering AE Vineeth and other staff members."During the review, the corporator discussed several development works that have been sanctioned for Nacharam Division. He also instructed the officials to prepare proposals for the 72 crore funds allocated to the corporator as assured by the Mayor during the recent GHMC council meeting."Furthermore, he directed the officials to ensure that there are no issues or delays in the execution of developmental activities in the division and to resolve any pending matters promptly."Work Inspector Vijay Kumar, former Nacharam Division BRS President Muthyam Reddy Sai Zen Shekhar, and others participated in this programme.

Ongoing faculty protests at OU.

"Indian Chronicle OU November 01: Several teachers who were not promoted in the CAS interview have been protesting for the last 65 days. On Monday, the Osmania University Teachers Association organized a protest at the Physics Department of Science College during the lunch break. Speaking on the occasion, the teachers alleged that the university authorities were acting in a biased manner and preventing them from getting the promotions that were naturally due to them as per the UGC rules. In the history of Osmania University They allege that almost 47 teachers have been rejected without giving promotions for petty reasons, an unprecedented situation. They appealed to the state government to intervene in this matter and work to ensure that deserving teachers get promotions. The event was attended by the outgoing president Professor Manohar, teachers Kamalakara, Ramachander, Venkata Das, Venkateswara Rao, Lokande, Madhuri, Aravind Sujatha, Sasikala, Ramakrishna Goud, Rakesh Babu and others.



Feeling unsafe at night? Kolkata Police to launch 20 ‘pink booths’ manned by women personnel



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

The teacher's salary has been withheld pending investigation into the "inappropriate" song. Twenty pink booths will be established across the city's 10 police divisions, with two booths designated for each division at prime, carefully surveyed intersections. Kolkata Police have announced the launch of "pink booths", staffed entirely by women police personnel, across the city to improve women's safety, particularly at night. The move follows the recent incident in which a woman was allegedly molested by three people in a moving car in the city.

Twenty pink booths will be established across the city's 10 police divisions, with two booths designated for each

division at prime, carefully surveyed intersections. "Each booth will be led by a female officer-in-charge and supported by a team of three to five women personnel, operating throughout the night. If a woman feels threatened, she can immediately approach a pink booth for assistance, a safe space, and coordination with the concerned police station or control room for prompt action," said an official. In cases where a woman is unable to arrange safe transport home, the pink booth team will step in to arrange a vehicle to ensure she reaches her destination securely, the official added. The police are also expanding a system to designate women police officers as nodal officers at every police station to handle cases related to crimes against women. This system is designed to encourage complainants, who may feel hesitant to share sensitive details with male officers, to speak freely and comfortably. These nodal officers will serve as a trusted point of contact, guiding the complainant sensitively through the legal process, even if they are not the investigating officer for the case. While the latest National Crime Records Bureau data shows there has been a marginal drop in crimes against women in West Bengal, there have recently been incidents raising questions about women's safety in the state. On the night of November 28, a woman was waiting for a bus near Ambekar Bridge on the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass in Kolkata when a car stopped near her, and the occupants offered her a lift. They allegedly forced her to drink alcohol spiked with drugs.

Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah participated in the Giri Pradakshina of Ayyappa Swamula



“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- A Giri Pradakshina program was organized under the auspices of the Yadagirigutta Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy Temple and Ayyappa Swamula, a holy shrine of Telangana. *Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah participated as the chief guest in this Giri Pradakshina. Like every year, the Yadagirigutta Temple organized a Giri Pradakshina program by Ayyappa Swamula this time too. Thousands of Ayyappa Swamula Maladarana devotees from all over the state participated in the Giri Pradakshina..“At five in the morning, Aleru MLA Government Whip Ayilaiah..started the Giri Pradakshina of



Ayyappa Swamula. Thousands of Ayyappa devotees participated in the Maha Giri Pradakshinam, saying that Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy is the refuge of Govinda Swamy. The temple authorities provided direct darshan of the sanctum sanctorum to the devotees participating in the Giri Pradakshinam. The Swami's laddu prasad is also being served free of cost to the visiting devotees. Speaking on the occasion, Aleru MLA Government Whip said, “It is very happy that thousands of devotees wearing Ayyappa garlands from all over the state are participating in the Giri Pradakshinam of Yadagirigutta Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy and it is also a pleasure to organize this program every year as a tradition.”

Priority to Medical Services for the Poor “Former Deputy Speaker T. Padma Rao Goud



Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, December 01“Secunderabad: Giving priority to medical services for the poor and ensuring that education and healthcare remain accessible to underprivileged families is the government's commitment, said Secunderabad MLA and former Deputy Speaker T. Padma Rao Goud.“Keerthana from Sitafalmandi and Vennu Sarala from Buddhunagar, who were suffering from serious health issues, approached the MLA's camp office for support. Responding immediately, Padma Rao Goud arranged Letters of Credit (LOCs) from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) to facilitate their medical treatment.“At a brief programme held at the MLA camp office in Sitafalmandi, he handed over LOCs worth ?2 lakh each, in the presence of local leaders.

Journalists' problems should be resolved immediately..



Advertisement dues should be paid..“Statewide agitation if there is delay:-“TWJF Convener Mamidi Somaia “Journalists hold a massive dharna in front of S a m a c h a r a B h a v a n “ (m a n d a v a Srisailam Hyderabad, Indian Chronicle December 1) :- Journalists held a dharna in front of the State Information C o m m i s s i o n e r a t e (Samachar Bhavan) in Masab Tank, Hyderabad on Monday, demanding that their long-standing problems be resolved. Many journalists from print and electronic media participated in this dharna organized under the auspices of the Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF). The journalists protested the negligent attitude of the state government with open arms. They raised slogans on a large scale demanding that the problems be resolved. On this occasion, the founding president of the federation and convener of the state convening committee, Mamidi Somaia, addressed the dharna and said that even though the Congress government has been in power

in the state for two years, none of the problems of journalists have been resolved, at least the government is not in a position to issue new accreditation cards. He said that there is no hope of providing housing to journalists and the government is stalling on the pretext of a court verdict. Mamidi Somaia alleged that the health insurance scheme has been stalled and small and medium newspapers have been thrown into crisis. He said that if the previous government had done immense injustice to journalists, this government is doing even more injustice. The Chief Minister and the Information Minister have promised many times to resolve the problems of journalists quickly, but have not put them into practice. He criticized that even the Chairman of the Media Academy, who is the representative of journalists, has stalled in the name of committees and finally gave up. He demanded that journalists be given house plots by citing the Supreme Court verdict as an excuse, which is very unfair, and that journalists be

given house plots through an alternative JIVO. The main issues of journalists include house plots, accreditation cards, health cards, free education in private and corporate schools for the children of journalists, pension for senior journalists, special facilities for women journalists, and an increase in the government's assistance of one lakh rupees to the family of a deceased journalist to Rs. 10 lakh. Mamidi Somaia demanded that small newspapers be included in the empanel and

that advertisement payment bills be paid immediately. Federation State Convening Committee Co-Convenors Pulpalupula Anandha, Valla Jagan, Bandi Vijay Kumar, Thanniru Srinivas, R. Venkateswarlu, Kudutadi Bapurao, M. Yadagiri, K. Panduranga Rao, leaders of various districts Kanteti R a m a d e v i , Padmanabharao, Uday Bhaskar Reddy, Giribabu, Akbar Pasha, Pantati Ravinder, P. Gopal, M. Gopal, Jakkula Vijayakumar, Swamidas, Mittapalli Madhu, Satya Goud, Satyanarayana, Srinivas Goud, Parvatalu, Neela Naresh, Mallesh, Ashok, Shankar, Dappu Ramaswamy, Shanti, Saubhagyavati, Sushma, Manjula Reddy, Sivaparthi and others participated in this dharna. Later, the Joint Director DS Jagan handed over the petition to the Commissioner of Information and Public Relations. Jagan assured that he would bring the problems of journalists to the attention of the government and work to resolve them.



Will turn Nalla Cheruvu into a tourist destination: Government Whip MLA Beerla Ayilaiah“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau...Indian Chronicle.. December 1) :- Telangana State Government Whip Beerla Ayilaiah performed Bhumi Puja for the beautification work of Nalla Cheruvu in Yadagirigutta town of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district.

Baramati civic polls postponed to December 20 after candidates challenge process in court

GNS News Agency, Dec 1
The Baramati Nagar Parishad elections, scheduled for Tuesday, have been postponed to December 20 after the Maharashtra State Election Commission suspended them along with a few other civic polls elsewhere in the state, citing court challenges to the process raised by a few candidates.In Pune district, elections to the newly formed Uruli Devachi nagar parishad and a few wards of the Saswad, Talegaon Dabhade, Lonavala, and Daund nagar parishads have also been postponed to December 20.

The election process for other civic bodies will proceed as scheduled. The State Election Commission had declared elections for 14 nagar parishads and three panchayat samitis in Pune district.In Baramati, elections are to be held for 41 seats with a direct contest between the Ajit Pawar-led NCP and the alliance of the NCP(SP), Shiv Sena (UBT), and the Congress. This is the third recent election in Baramati, after the Lok Sabha and the Assembly polls. The Lok Sabha seat was won by NCP(SP) working president Supriya Sule by defeating her sister-in-law Sunetra Pawar, wife of the NCP chief, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. In the Assembly election, Ajit Pawar defeated his nephew Yugendra Pawar.According to a statement from the State Election Commission, the current process has been rendered “irregular” because of the delayed disposal of candi-



date appeals and the subsequent denial of a mandatory withdrawal window.NCP leader Kiran Gujar said the State Election Commission postponed civic polls of Baramati nagar parishad after a few candidates challenged the election process. “The election of the entire Baramati civic body will be held on December 20 so that everyone gets a fair opportunity in the contest after issues were raised in the court,” he said.No new application for candidature will be accepted. Only those who have filed nominations till now will be considered. Voting will take place on December 20, and results will be declared on December 21.

Tension prevails as BJP delegation visits office of Bengal Chief Electoral Officer amid protests by BLOs

GNS News Agency, Dec 1
BJP MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, who went to the office of the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Monday, faced protests from Booth Level Officers (BLO) who have been sitting on a dharna outside the office since last Wednesday demanding compensation for deceased BLOs and seeking to defer the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls for two months.On facing protests, the BJP MLAs too began shouting slogans against the BLOs, even as Trinamool Congress (TMC) members supported them.

The police set up a barricade on the road in front of the EC's office to avoid untoward incidents. They also tried to stop BLOs who approached the BJP MLAs with slogans. Soon, an altercation broke out between BLOs, the police and the BJP MLAs. After around 20 minutes, the police were able to make a safe passage for the MLAs who had arrived to meet special SIR observer IAS (retired) Subrata Gupta.A protesting BLO said the poll panel should extend the deadline for SIR. “What will happen to the families of those who lost their lives? Compensation should be paid to them.” The headmistress of a school said, “The work is being done by removing teachers from schools. How will the schools run? They are working without any plan.”A teacher who was among the protesters said, “I have joined the protest against the BJP's torture using the Election Commission as a tool. The time has been extended for seven days. It is not possible to complete the work of two years in two months like



this. I have come here seeking to extend the time by two months.”

After entering the poll panel's office, Adhikari said, “We will eliminate ghost voters from the electoral list. We will turn the current chief minister (Mamata Banerjee) into the state's former chief minister.”Later, the BJP delegation led by Suwendu Adhikari, Shishir Bajoria, MLA Shankar Ghosh and others met CEO Manoj Agarwal and Additional CEO Dibyendu Das. Following this, a three-member BJP delegation was scheduled to meet special observer Subrata Gupta.On Saturday, the ECI-deputed special observers started working with the SIR process. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal and other officials convened a meeting with the newly appointed officers.

Bride, lover planned her grandmother's murder to stall wedding and elope — land in jail

Ruby (23) was to be married on November 18. It was a match arranged by her family, one she was dead against as she was in love with someone else.Police said she and her partner, Ravi Shankar (25), allegedly hatched a plan to kill Ruby's grandmother to delay the wedding so they could elope.The elderly woman, Chandrawati (62), was shot dead on November 11. The wedding, however, was not delayed. Ruby got married.

Twenty two days later, on Sunday, Ruby and Ravi were arrested by the police at Chandokha village, in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh.“Both accused — Ruby and Ravi Shankar — have been arrested in the case and have admitted to the crime,” said Circle Officer, Aligarh, Shivam Singh.Police said they have recovered the weapon, a gun, allegedly used in the murder.Police said Ruby belongs to a backward class while Ravi is from a Scheduled Caste. He ran a motorcycle repair shop owned by Ruby's family in the village, which he had taken on rent.According to police, the two knew Ruby's family would never approve of their relationship so they kept it hidden from everyone. Even after her marriage was fixed, they were unable to disclose their relationship to her family.“The two decided to carry out the murder so that the wedding would be postponed and they could use the time to elope,” said Yogendra Singh, Station House Officer (SHO) of Jawan police station.

He added that the two accused also suspected that Chandrawati had come to know about their relationship and feared she might disclose it. The two planned the murder to eliminate Chandrawati, killing two birds with one stone.On November 11, police received information that the body of a woman was found with a bullet injury near a field in Chandokha.A police team rushed to the spot and the victim, later identified as Chandrawati, was taken to a hospital, where she died during treatment. Police said the medical



report confirmed that she had been shot in the head. A case was subsequently registered at Jawan police station against unidentified persons.Despite the death in the family, Ruby's wedding went ahead as planned. The police investigation, meanwhile, continued simultaneously.SHO Singh said that during their probe, police noticed that Ruby kept changing her statements, which raised suspicion.Officers then began gathering background information on her. They also examined call detail records of her mobile phone, which showed she had been in frequent contact with a particular number. When police spoke to local residents, they learned that Ruby had been in a relationship with Ravi.Police then detained Ravi and during sustained questioning, he admitted to the murder. Police said he told investigators that he had killed the victim as part of a conspiracy hatched with Ruby, with whom he had been in a long-term relationship.Police said the accused told them that Ruby often accompanied her grandmother to graze their goats and buffaloes in the fields.As part of the plan, on November 11, police said Ruby left to secure a goat in a hut nearby and informed Ravi that her grandmother was alone in the fields.

iBomma, piracy and the myth of modern-day Robin Hood

GNS News Agency, Dec 1
The recent arrest of iBomma founder Immadi Ravi has done more than just shut down a notorious piracy hub; it has exposed uncomfortable truths about modern-day youth, digital culture, and society at large. iBomma, along with its counterparts like Movierulz and Bappam, became a household name, ironically, not for innovation, but for stealing creativity and selling it back as free entertainment.During the COVID-19 lockdown, the platform exploded in popularity. From teenagers to senior citizens, everyone flocked to these sites for instant access to the latest movies, no ticket prices, no waiting period, no guilt... or so they believed. But behind every “free” movie was a filmmaker's investment worth crores, ripped and uploaded within hours, sometimes even before the theatrical release.

The Business of Stealing, And the Audience That Enabled iWhile pirates profited from ad clicks, betting-site pop-ups, and shady data-sharing networks, it was the common

viewer who quietly fueled the ecosystem. That's the irony: piracy thrives not because of the criminals who upload, but because of the millions who consume.What's more troubling is the reaction to Ravi's arrest. Many youngsters took to social media, hailing him as a “Robin Hood of Cinema”, a man who stole from rich producers to give free movies to the “poor.” But let's be real: the viewers weren't impoverished villagers. They were film lovers who could afford OTT subscriptions, theatre visits, and smartphones, yet chose to take the unethical shortcut in the name of “free entertainment.”Yes, multiplex prices are high. Yes, popcorn sometimes costs more than the ticket. But choosing a pirated copy is not a protest; it's participation in theft. One can always skip the overpriced snacks or wait for OTT releases. But the lure of immediate gratification, and “free” proved too tempting.And so, when iBomma got blocked, the outrage wasn't about freedom or fairness. It was about losing an entitlement that was never theirs to begin with.The other side of the blame game:

‘BJP always uses regional parties to consolidate itself and then finish them politically’: VBA president Prakash Ambedkar

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Ahead of the December 2 local body elections in Maharashtra, The Indian Express’s Shubhangi Khapre interviewed Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) president Prakash Ambedkar to know his views on the divisions in the ruling and Opposition camps, the ‘Maharashtra vs Gujarat’ plank, and other issues. Excerpts from the interview:

Why have local body elections become so bitter and noisy in Maharashtra?

Prakash Ambedkar: The reason is the BJP’s politics. They have altered the political template. There is an aggressive campaign, candidates are being purchased, and voters are being bribed. They are banking on the Hindutva formula to polarise society and consolidate their vote bank. And they have made it clear they want absolute power at any cost, which is a cause of serious concern. The central and state leadership of the party believe they have to grab all political space from the panchayat to the Parliament.

What’s wrong with it? The BJP admits it works 24x7 to win elections.

Ambedkar: When any political party gets the public mandate, it has to be respected. But when a party in power misuses the power and autonomous institutions to its advantage or against political rivals, then questions are bound to be raised. The BJP is adopting the wrong means. The money power displayed in the present polls is shocking. Ruling party leaders are openly wooing voters with funds. They are not allowing fair play. The politics pursued by the BJP shows they are out to finish all political parties. To achieve their target, they have unleashed central agencies on rivals. The role of the Election Commission is also debatable.

Why did the Opposition’s ‘Vote Chori’ allegation fail in successive elections?

Ambedkar: ‘Vote Chori’ cannot become the central issue in any poll. Whether it is central, state or local body elections in Maharashtra, you cannot go to the polls with this single agenda of vote fraud. When people are not deprived of exercising their vote, why will they believe in vote fraud? The issue here is that a certain party is cleverly adding votes to its advantage. This is a subject that needs to be taken up in court and with the Election Commission. We had filed a writ petition over the issue after the Lok Sabha polls. The Opposition parties did not support Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi. With the Congress deciding to go solo in the forthcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, a split in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) appears evident. Ambedkar: Whether it is the INDIA front or the MVA, unity is a big question. When the Shiv Sena (UBT) joined hands with the MNS, they did not consult the Congress.



Now, when the Congress has taken a decision to contest independently, there are no reasons why Uddhav Thackeray or Sharad Pawar should sulk. In the case of NCP (SP), Sharad Pawar has always changed stands to serve his own agenda. The Opposition is weakest in Maharashtra. Nobody wants to speak against the BJP. The reason is obvious: fear of central agencies. Now, being in politics, there are skeletons in every cupboard. So, the choice before the Opposition leaders is freedom or prison. The majority have chosen freedom over jail.

What is the VBA’s political stand in local body polls?

Ambedkar: Fortunately, I have always pursued politics, which is not driven by electoral outcome or power. Therefore, we have stood our ground and survived with our support base intact. Unlike others, I have never hesitated to speak against the RSS or the BJP. I am neither afraid of losing freedom nor going to prison. Ideally, the VBA is ready to join like-minded parties that will fight the RSS and the BJP.

Will the ‘Maharashtra versus Gujarat’ plank raised by the Opposition work in polls?

Ambedkar: I have been consistently voicing the issue – why is the Centre taking everything from sports to industrial projects to Gujarat? From the Cricket World Cup final to the Commonwealth Games, Gujarat has become the most favoured destination. As a result, Narendra Modi has earned the tag of ‘PM of Gujarat’. He is the first PM who is blatantly focused on his home state instead of India.

What’s your view on conflict within the ruling Mahayuti?

Ambedkar: There are sharp differences within Mahayuti constituents. After the landslide victory in the Assembly polls, the BJP seems to be downsizing its alliance partners – Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the NCP led by Ajit Pawar. What has happened to Shinde and Ajit Pawar was expected. The BJP has always used regional parties to consolidate itself and then finish them politically. It is not surprising. This is the model of their ideological mentor, RSS.

Temperatures drop by 6 degrees as Mumbai wakes up to coldest November day in over a decade

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Mumbai woke up to its coldest November day in over a decade on Sunday morning as the minimum temperature dipped to 15.7 degrees Celsius in the suburbs, marking a drop of six degrees in a single day. This is the first time in at least 11 years that minimum temperatures have dipped below 16 degrees Celsius in the city in November. Data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) showed that on Sunday morning, while the Colaba observatory recorded 20.5 degrees Celsius, the Santacruz observatory in the suburbs clocked in 15.7 degrees Celsius, which is 4.4 degrees below normal. A day prior, the Santacruz observatory logged a significantly higher minimum temperature of 21.8 degrees Celsius. Mumbai has not recorded temperatures below 16 degrees Celsius in over a decade. The drop in temperature came close on the heels of the Santacruz observatory shattering the record for coldest November day in a decade, registering 16.2 degrees Celsius on November 19. In what has been an unusually cold November, the city also logged its lowest daytime temperature for November in a decade when the maximum temperatures dropped to 27 degrees Celsius in the island city division and 29 degrees Celsius in Mumbai’s suburbs. The dip in temperatures, early in November, was spurred by unseasonal showers between November 1 and November 3—making it the city’s wettest November in six years. “While there is no strong western disturbance, the winds are predominantly north easterly. These northeasterly winds have brought down temperatures in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. So the cold and dry winds are coming in from the north, which



has effectively led to a drop in temperatures in Mumbai. This drop was also felt across North Konkan and central Maharashtra, with several parts recording below normal temperatures,” said Mahesh Palawat from Skymet Weather Services. On Sunday, the lowest minimum temperature in Maharashtra was recorded at Jeur in Solapur district at 8 degrees Celsius, which is four degrees below normal.

According to Palawat, the ongoing spell of below-normal temperatures is brief, with temperatures likely to spike in the coming days. “Another western disturbance is expected in the first week of December, which can lead to another drop in temperatures in Mumbai around December 10-11,” he added. In its forecast bulletin, the IMD has stated that Mumbai’s minimum temperatures are likely to hover around 15 degrees Celsius for the next 48 hours, while the maximum temperatures may soar up to 31 degrees Celsius.

Over 2.75 lakh consumers hit as Vadodara piped gas supply disrupted due to damage in main pipeline

The outage triggered a rush at restaurants as repair teams worked through the day to restore the line. A damaged VGL pipeline during VMC’s drainage work cut gas supply to 2.75 lakh Vadodara consumers on Sunday. Close to 2.75 lakh consumers of Vadodara Gas Limited (VGL) – a joint venture of GAIL Gas Limited and Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) to provide piped gas to the city – went without gas connection for the entire day on Sunday due to a major damage reported in the main steel pipeline near the Golden Chowkdi area of the city. Officials of VGL and the fire department visited the spot on Sunday morning in order to assess the damage and carry out the repairs to restore the connections.

A senior VGL official told this newspaper that the main gas pipeline suffered damage owing to an error of judgment during the laying of a new VMC drainage pipeline on Sunday morning. He further said, “The reamer of the drainage network being laid by the VMC damaged the main steel pipeline of VGL that comes from Amaliyara to Vadodara and provides piped gas across the city. ... It was a new pipeline that the VMC was laying, and it was going over the gas pipeline. The immediate gas leakage alerted the VMC officials about the damage caused to the pipeline.” The official added that the work on assessing the damage and repairing the breach is ongoing. He said, “We have closed the gas supply until the damage is repaired. We are opening up the damaged section, and the part will be replaced.” As a result of the interruption in the piped gas supply, restaurants and halls serving thalis for lunch saw a rush of customers on Sunday. Nirali Patel, a resident of Manjalpur, said,



“We had planned a family lunch and had a few guests over, but we could not cook this morning, and so we decided to head out for lunch. ... We had to wait for a table for almost an hour, which is more than the expected wait time at thali halls.” An owner of a Gujarati thali restaurant in Karelibaug told The Indian Express, “Usually, we stop serving thalis at 3 pm, and the last guest is taken in by 2.45 pm. But given the rush today, we decided to continue serving beyond the closing time. Anticipating the rush, we had also asked our cooks to be prepared for a second round of preparing dishes. We prepared some different dishes after 2 pm to ensure that the customers do not have to be turned away due to not having enough food to serve. ... We did run out of our Sunday special sweet dish as we could not make that in a hurry, so we prepared some additional kheer instead.” Later in the day, the VMC issued a statement stating that the gas supply would remain closed until Sunday midnight owing to the repair work.

‘AQI will be brought to 40-60 in 5 years’: Mumbai Congress promises ‘right to clean air’ in BMC polls manifesto

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

"Large AQI display boards will be installed in every ward, major intersection, bus station, railway station, and metro station," the manifesto read. "Large AQI display boards will be installed in every ward, major intersection, bus station, railway station, and metro station," the manifesto read. Ahead of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections, the Mumbai unit of the Congress on Sunday published a "clean air action plan manifesto" promising that if voted to power, the party will make clean air a "fundamental right" of every resident of the city. "Around 5,100 Mumbaikars die every year because the government looks the other way. This is a health emergency, and the Congress is the only party with a plan. We do not want excuses; we want clean air. Therefore, we have launched the clean air action plan manifesto," said Mumbai Congress chief and Lok Sabha MP Varsha Gaikwad.

Apart from the "right to clean air", the Congress has promised that the infrastructure for monitoring air quality will be strengthened by 24x7 monitoring in pollution hotspots. "Within the next five years, Mumbai's Air Quality Index (AQI) will be brought to a safe level of 40-60. Large AQI display boards will be installed in every ward, major intersection, bus station, railway station, and metro station. Hourly AQI updates will be available online and via mobile apps. Mal-functioning sensors will be repaired within 24 hours," the manifesto read. The Congress added that pollution sources would be publicly listed online, ward by ward, adding that



every construction site must have fogging guns, green nets, wheel-wash systems, and anti-dust mechanisms, with strict fines in place for violations. Along with a "name and shame" list of non-compliant builders to be made public, the party has promised biannual emission audits and expansion of BEST electric buses, with air filters mandatory for all diesel buses. The Congress has set a target of planting 1 million new trees across the city over the next five years, with protection for mangroves, coastal greenery, and the Aarey forest. A Mumbai Clean Air War Room will be established along with an Air Quality Management Department, the Congress said, adding that ward officers would be directly accountable for dust control. The BMC's annual report will include AQI targets, and monthly review meetings with NGOs and citizen groups will be held, as per the manifesto.

As Opposition frowns move to ‘downgrade’ Aadhaar cards, Maharashtra govt says tag along other document proofs



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Even as the Congress denounced the Maharashtra government’s move to cancel all birth and death certificates issued merely on the strength of an Aadhaar card, the government Saturday made it clear that other document proofs carrying personal details are necessary for procuring birth and death certificates. "Even if the citizen seeking birth and death certificates submits an Aadhaar card to the government office, they will have to tag along copies of school leaving certificate, electricity bill or ration card, which carry their personal details like name, address, age and the like," said officials in the Revenue Department Saturday.

On Thursday, Revenue Minister Chandrashekhra Bawankule, in a significant step to curb the menace of fraudulent birth and death certificates being used for illegal purposes, ordered the immediate cancellation of all suspicious certificates issued merely on the strength of an Aadhaar card and directed authorities to lodge police complaints without delay. The minister also announced a special investigation drive in 14 locations, including Sambhajnagar, Amravati, and Latur. The Revenue Department issued a comprehensive 16-point verification guideline to all tehsildars, sub-divisional officers, district collectors and divisional commissioners. The circular, issued following a high-level meeting chaired by the additional chief secretaries of the Home and Revenue Departments, stated that Aadhaar cards cannot be accepted as standalone proof of date of birth or place of birth, in line with Central Government guidelines. Reacting to the minister’s directive, Maharashtra Congress Atul Londhe said, "This means that

the Aadhaar card’s legal sanctity has ended. The minister should now clarify which identity proof will remain a concrete proof. The minister should himself tell the people which is the proof that every citizen, farm labourers, the poor, people without homes, have and will be acceptable to the government."

AAP spokesperson Mukund Kirdat said, "The BJP government has been promoting and laying emphasis on Aadhaar cards and their importance since coming to power. And now the minister is trying to reduce the significance of Aadhaar. This is going to create problems, especially in rural areas." Kirdat said, "If the government feels that it was fraudulently procured, then it is a problem of their governance. They have to improve their system to ensure that Aadhaar cards are issued in a foolproof manner and serve as solid proof, reducing reliance on other documentary proof. Among the directives issued by Minister Bawankule are: • All birth/death registration orders issued by Nayab Tehsildars after the amendment of August 11, 2023, are to be withdrawn and cancelled forthwith. • Certificates issued taking only the Aadhaar card as proof are treated as defective and cancelled. • Discrepancy between application details and Aadhaar date of birth will invite immediate FIR against the applicant. • Beneficiaries who fail to surrender original bogus certificates or cannot be traced will be declared 'absconding', and FIRs will be registered against them. • District collectors and divisional commissioners conduct special verification camps under their direct supervision. As many as 14 districts identified as 'hotspots' for such malpractices have been put under strict scrutiny. They are Amravati, Akola, Sillod, Sambhajnagar (Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar) city, Latur, Anjangaon Surji, Achalpur, Pusad, Parbhani, Beed, Gevrai, Jalna, Ardhapur and Parli. "Forged birth and death certificates are being misused to grab government benefits, encroach on land and even threaten national security. We will not tolerate such racketeering. Strict action will be taken against such beneficiaries," Bawankule said in a press release issued Thursday. "Birth certificates obtained solely based on Aadhaar card will be cancelled. There will be a direct police complaint if a discrepancy is found in the date of birth. Beneficiaries who obtained fake certificates and have absconded will be declared 'fugitives'," he said.

Why Punjab’s kilometre scheme has sparked a major transport strike

Bus services across Punjab remain partially halted as employees of Punjab Roadways, PUNBUS and PRTC continue their indefinite strike against the government’s kilometre scheme from November 28 onwards. The stand-off intensified after the state terminated the employment of 152 employees and issued notices to several others following clashes during protests. As the confrontation deepens, here is a look at what the kilometre scheme is, why it was introduced, and why employees are vehemently opposing it.

The kilometre scheme is a model under which the state transport undertakings (Pepsu Road Transport Corporation — (PRTC), Punjab Roadways and PUNBUS contract out bus operations to private operators. Under this scheme, a private person supplies (or buys) the bus and hires the driver and handles maintenance; the state issues the route permit, assigns the route, provides (in many cases) the conductor and fuel, and pays the private operator a fixed amount per kilometre travelled. In effect, the bus remains under a state-run permit/route, but the bus ownership and primary operations are with the private operator. The government avoids the upfront cost of buying new buses, the maintenance burden, and the driver-salary liability.

When and why was the kilometre scheme introduced in Punjab?

According to previous reports, the kilometre scheme in Punjab was first introduced around 1998. The main reason is to ease the financial and capital burden on the state. The state transport department often lacks sufficient funds to buy new buses; through the kilometre scheme, buses can be added quickly without requiring a large capital investment from the government. So far, around 217 buses are already running under the kilometre scheme in PRTC by signing a six-year contract. Of these, the contract for 140 buses is about to expire. In PUNBUS, the scheme was introduced in 2007-2008 during the SAD-BJP government. Still, after persistent employee protests, in 2013, the government decided not to procure any more buses for PUNBUS under the kilometre scheme. Still, now the AAP government is again all set to hire around buses under the kilometre scheme in PUNBUS as well as PRTC due to

which we went on strike from November 28 onwards," said Yudh Singh, state general secretary of Punjab roadways, PUNBUS and PRTC contract staff union. In Punjab, as of now, nearly 2300 buses are under the state government, and not more than 1600 employees are on regular rolls, while nearly 7500 employees are on contract and outsourced collectively, revealed union members. The number of regular employees has been declining over the years, as new hires are mostly contract staff, he added. According to Bikram Singh Shergill, MD, PRTC, the kilometre scheme is being run in other states as well, and Punjab is not the lone state. Rather, in Punjab, not more than 18 per cent of the fleet is under the kilometre scheme, while in many states, it ranges from 24-27 per cent as well."

Why are employees protesting against the kilometre scheme?

Employees (contractual or outsourced staff) and their unions have several grievances against the scheme and how it is being implemented. They claim the kilometre scheme undermines job security: by outsourcing buses to private operators, the number of state-run buses (and thus state-employed staff) is reduced. Many longstanding contractual/outsourced workers feel their chances of regularisation (permanent employment) are being bypassed. "The bus operator under the kilometre scheme gets a regular payout from the government based on the kilometres he runs through buses on the routes given by the government." The government is thus paying lakhs to these bus operators only to save employees' salaries, and after 5 or 6 years, when his contract ends, the bus is retained by the private owner. So this is a loss-making venture," said Yudh Singh. The chronology of the events of striking employees: Employees have been protesting against the kilometre scheme for months. However, on November 1, Contract staff staged a protest in Ludhiana against the planned induction of 142 AC buses and 19 Volvo buses under the kilometre scheme by Punjab Roadways. And over 100 PRTC buses as well. Union representatives warned this would further threaten jobs. The government postponed the tender for hiring these buses at that time to November 17 following the protest.

Thousands protest in Philippines against flood control fraud



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Thousands massed in the Philippine capital demanding accountability over a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure scandal that has seen scores of officials, lawmakers and construction firm owners accused of corruption.Rage over so-called ghost flood-control projects has been mounting for months in the archipelago country of 116 million, where entire towns have been buried in floodwaters driven by powerful typhoons in recent months.President Ferdinand Marcos has seen friend and foe alike, including a congressman cousin, swept up by the spiraling scandal since he first put the issue centre stage in a July national address.

Over 80% nations got loans from China in the last two decades

China lent more than \$2 trillion in loans and grants to over 80% of countries and regions in the world between 2000 and 2023. The U.S. was the biggest beneficiary, according to data released by AidData, a research institute at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.Over the years, Chinese state-owned entities have lent about \$200 billion for nearly 2,500 projects and initiatives — more than 9% of the total amount lent by China — to American companies. Over 95% of this amount was lent by Chinese state-owned banks, enterprises, and the central bank, while the rest was lent by non-state players.

The below map shows the amounts lent by China to various countries between 2000 and 2023. Across the world, during that period, 179 out of 217 countries and territories received at least one loan from a Chinese state-owned creditor. China was the world's largest creditor and debt collector in 2023, lending \$140 billion to various countries.Entities in Russia and Australia were the second and the third biggest beneficiaries in the last two decades, receiving \$172 billion and \$130 billion, respectively, in the period. Firms in the 27 member states of the European Union received \$161 billion for 1,800 projects and activities.

The below chart shows the 20 countries that received the highest loan commitments between 2000 and 2023, along with the income bracket under which they fall. Of the countries shown in the chart, six are considered "high-income" countries, which together received more than 20% of the total amount lent by China in the period. About \$943 billion was lent to high-income countries overall.Beijing is moving away from its role as an aid provider to relatively poorer nations, as its focus has shifted towards commercial lending for developed countries. For instance, more than 75% of Chinese loan transactions with U.S. companies were "commercial" in nature, while only about 7% were for "developmental" intents, as per the data. China had lent about \$320 million to the U.S. in 2000; this surged to about \$19 billion in 2023, which hints at the "commercial" turn the investments took.China's initial focus was on infrastructural

India helps Sri Lanka in rescue efforts as death toll crosses 200

Sri Lanka continued relief and rescue efforts on Sunday with India's assistance in the aftermath of catastrophic floods, landslides and devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah that killed over 200 people.According to the latest figures released by Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Centre(DMC) at 4 pm on Sunday, 212 people have been killed, with 218 missing since Thursday.A whopping 9,98,918 people from 2,73,606 families were affected by the extreme weather, DMC said. Meanwhile, India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, along with the Indian Air Force(IAF), continue to assist Sri Lankan authorities to save precious lives on a war footing. "@NDRFHQ personnel, in close coordination with local authorities, continue to undertake relief operations in Sri Lanka," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar posted on social media. India sent two urban search and rescue teams comprising 80 National Disaster Response Force personnel to the Island nation under Operation Sagar Bandhu, reaffirming the spirit of 'Neighbourhood First.' In a daring operation, IAF helicopters undertook a hybrid rescue mission to extricate stranded passengers, including Indians, from a restricted zone.

"A Garud commando was winched down to guide the group through a cross-country route to a pre-briefed helipad at Kotmale, from where 24 passengers — including Indians, foreign nationals and Sri Lankans — were evacuated to Colombo," the Indian Air Force posted on social media on Sunday. In a parallel effort, three critical casualties were airlifted to Colombo for immediate medical attention, it said. The IAF team also airlifted "five teams of Sri Lankan Army personnel (40 troops)" from Diyathalawa Army Camp to the landslide-affected Kotmale region to support relief operations.Two Chetak helicopters on board the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant also joined the rescue efforts.In an extraordinary display of courage and grit, a family of four stranded on a rooftop was rescued by a Chetak team on Saturday.

"A family of four stranded on a rooftop was rescued by a Chetak helicopter from @IN_R11Vikrant on 29 November 2025. They were safely airlifted and brought to a secure location. #OperationSagarBandhu continues as India stands with the people of Sri Lanka," the Indian High Commission in Colombo posted on social media. The IAF has also positioned Mi-17 V5 helicopters in Colombo for swift Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations. "IAF transport aircraft are earmarked for large-scale evacuation of Indian nationals, with multiple missions planned from Trivandrum and Hindan," the IAF said. Alongside evacuation, essential relief material, including Bhishm cubes and medical supplies, is also being airlifted to support affected communities, it added. Two transport aircraft of the IAF — C-130J and IL-76 — delivered nearly 21 tonnes of relief material in Colombo on Saturday as part of India's

"Put them in jail now!" protesters chanted as they marched down the Manila thoroughfare known as EDSA, site of the People Power Movement that helped oust Mr. Marcos's father from power in 1986.Demonstrators in the capital's Luneta Park, a short distance from the presidential palace, held crocodile-shaped signs calling for an end to systemic corruption."There (are) people who died because of the corruption that is happening," 20-year-old drag performer Jessie Wanaluvmi J told AFP before her scheduled performance.The first arrests in connection with the scandal— eight members of the country's Department of Public Works and Highways— were announced only days ago, with the government promising "big fish are coming soon".But Mervin Toquero of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines told AFP he was dissatisfied."It's impossible that that corruption happened without the knowledge of the higher officials," the 54-year-old said. "(They) must be accountable too."Azon Tobiano, 68, who brought her granddaughter with her, said she had traveled to the park after seeing a call to action on social media."I really hope that justice will be served. I hope the President will be resolute to put in jail those accountable, whether it's his relatives or senators," she said.The Philippines has a long history of scandals involving public funds, in which high-ranking politicians found guilty of corruption have typically escaped serious jail time.



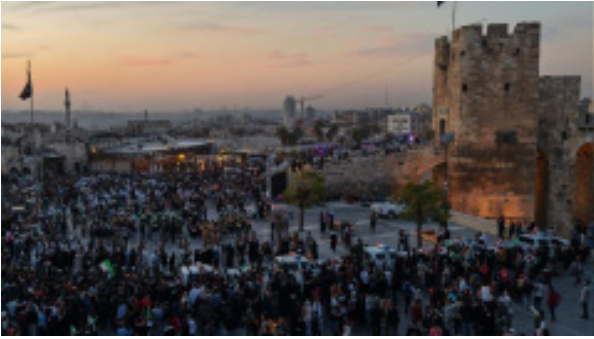
development projects in economically disadvantaged nations. Chinese President Xi Jinping launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, which helped develop energy, infrastructure, and connectivity projects in Europe and Asia. The Aiddata report details how China has scaled back on its lending to such projects; where BRI once made up 75% of China's lending operations, it now makes up about 25%.The below chart shows the share of high-income and low-income countries in China's portfolio. The report finds that in a typical year, China spent about \$5.7 billion on what can be classified as aid for official development assistance. However, in 2023, China's global official development assistance commitments fell to \$1.9 billion.According to the report, China has an 80% success rate for getting overseas mergers and acquisitions approved. This is because of the relatively weak screening mechanisms for foreign capital inflow in most countries that China invested in. The report also alleges that China managed this by channelling funds through off-shore shell companies and international bank syndicates.As of 2023, Indian entities have borrowed or were granted \$11.1 billion from China, with a large amount of this dedicated to the energy sector and banking and financial services. Most of the funds were borrowed with a mix of commercial and developmental intent.



A whopping 9,68,304 people from 2,66,114 families were affected by the extreme weather, DMC said

humanitarian assistance extended to Sri Lanka under Operation Sagar Bandhu.Also, INS Sukanya, carrying more humanitarian aid, has left Visakhapatnam and is expected to reach Sri Lanka soon, officials said on Saturday. According to an official gazette released by the Sri Lankan government dated Friday and released on Saturday, the state of emergency has been declared throughout the island.With the state of emergency, the government has moved to provide the district secretaries with discretion of expenditure up to 50 million Sri Lankan rupees.Flood alerts have been issued for most of the eastern suburbs in Sri Lanka's capital, with people warned to evacuate the region and move to safer locations. Colombo District Secretary Prasanna Ginige said the alerts were issued due to the River Kelani rising to dangerous levels. He said schools in the danger areas are being used as relief centres for the flood-displaced.he Indian High Commission in Colombo is also assisting the stranded Indian passengers here. "@Indiainsl is facilitating the swift return home of the Indian passengers stranded in. Evacuation flights by @IAF_MCC and commercial airlines being facilitated today. Every stranded Indian will reach home at the earliest," it said. Any distressed Indian citizen at the airports or any part of Sri Lanka in need of assistance may reach out to the emergency No +94 773727832. (For WhatsApp also), it said.

International rights group chief says Syria's reforms are promising but democracy is still lacking



The secretary general of Amnesty International said Saturday that the new authorities in Syria have taken steps to show commitment to reform, transitional justice and reconciliation but says democracy is still lacking.A year after the fall of President Bashar Assad's government, Agnes Callamard, who visited Damascus this week, said that having legal reform plans before parliament, committees for transitional justice and welcoming international rights groups and other experts were signs that change is happening in Syria."All of those things are very good signs but they are not very deep," Ms. Callamard said in an interview with The Associated Press.Messages left with Syrian officials seeking comment Saturday (November 29, 2025) were not immediately returned.

After the fall of Assad in an offensive led by the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham of interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, Syria remains unstable. Forces loyal to the government were blamed for taking part this year in sectarian violence against members of the country's Druze and Alawite minorities in the coastal region and the southern province of Sweida that left hundreds dead.The state has formed committees to investigate atrocities against Druze in Sweida and the trial of those suspected of involvement in the violence along the coast in March began last week.

Over the past year, scores of Assad-era officials have been detained and are expected to be put on trial in the near

future to face charges for human rights violations committed over decades in the Arab country.Ms. Callamard said she was told by Syrian officials, including the minister of justice, that hundreds of detainees are being held in "relation to abuses by the former regime.""There is seemingly a process whereby charges will be drafted very soon," she said, asking what are the grounds for their arrest and who is going to try them. Ms. Callamard added that the legal framework needs urgent reform "because some of the most gruesome crimes under international law have not been domesticated."Ms. Callamard said that she held talks with members of the National Commission on Transitional Justice and the National Commission for the Missing, on the process of collecting evidence from Assad-era prisons, adding that the process is ongoing and "will be a long process and slow."She said that unlike Ukraine, where some European countries established teams of experts to support Ukrainian authorities in their investigation into atrocities "nothing like that is happening in Syria. Nothing. So that needs to change."

"We really need to see the international community doing a bit more of a leap of faith, hearing the cries for change of the Syrian people," Ms. Callamard said. She added that despite lack of movement by international community, several small civil society organisations are the one providing all that kind of evidence in Syria."My impression after that very short visit, arguably, is that for the international community, Syria is a problem that must be contained," she said. "It seems to me that very few countries are prepared to to do the leap of faith into that and frankly.""Without that support, I don't know whether what's happening right now will be sustainable," she said.Last month, Syria held its first parliamentary elections since Assad's fall but there was no direct popular vote in the elections. Two-thirds of the 210-member assembly seats were elected through province-based electoral colleges, with seats distributed by population, while one-third will be appointed directly by al-Sharaa. The new parliament will serve a 30-month term while preparing for future elections.

Indonesia's Sumatra residents loot for food, water after deadly floods

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Some residents of the flood-hit island of Sumatra resorted to looting, seeking food and water to survive, authorities said on Sunday (November 30, 2025).The floods, which hit nearly a week ago, have killed 303 people — with the number expected to rise as more bodies are recovered — and displaced thousands. The deluges triggered landslides, damaged roads, cut off parts of the island, and downed communication lines.The challenging weather conditions and the lack of heavy equipment also hampered rescue efforts. Aid has been slow to reach the hardest-hit city of Sibolga and the Central Tapanuli district in North Sumatra.

Videos on social media showed looters scrambling past crumbling barricades, flooded roads and broken glass to get their hands on food, medicine and gas. Some even waded through waist-deep floodwaters to reach damaged convenience stores.North Sumatra Police first reported looting incidents on Saturday evening, said police spokesperson Ferry Walintukan, adding that regional police had been deployed to restore order."The looting happened before logistical aid arrived," he said. "[Residents] didn't know that aid would come and were worried they would starve."Eleven helicopters were deployed from Jakarta to the affected areas the day after the disaster for ongoing logistics distribution operations, especially to the deepest areas and areas



where land access was cut off, Cabinet Secretary Teddy Indra Wijaya said on Sunday, "but unpredictable weather often hampers aid operations." The Cabinet Secretariat released footage of the military aid dropping supplies on the affected areas. In the dusty village of North Tapanuli, survivors waved frantically to the helicopters carrying aid. Meanwhile, four navy ships docked at a port to support aid distribution.Indonesia, home to more than 280 million people, is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis due to its location on the "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. Seasonal rains also frequently cause flooding and landslides.

Pope to wrap up Turkiye trip before heading to Lebanon

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Pope Leo XIV wraps up a four-day trip to Turkiye on Sunday (November 30, 2025) after a warm welcome by its tiny Christian community, before heading to Lebanon with a message of peace for the crisis-mired nation.On his first overseas trip since being elected leader of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, Pope Leo met President Recep Tayyip Erdogan before travelling to Iznik for a celebration marking 1,700 years since the First Council of Nicaea, one of the early Church's most important gatherings.

On Saturday (November 29, 2025), the American Pope hosted thousands of worshippers who battled the rain to attend a public mass in Istanbul, with many travelling from across Turkiye to join the multilingual service, which left many moved by its beautiful and haunting choral interludes.On his final morning, Pope Leo was expected to attend a prayer service at the Armenian cathedral then lead a divine liturgy — the Orthodox equivalent of mass — at the Patriarchal Church of St. George before a final blessing.He will have lunch with Patriarch Bartholomew I, the leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, a day after they signed a joint declaration in which they pledged to take "new and courageous steps on the path towards unity".

Despite doctrinal differences that led to the Great Schism of 1054, resulting in a split between the Roman Catholic Church in the West and the Eastern Orthodox Church, the two sides maintain dialogue and hold joint celebrations.They also agreed to continue their efforts to establish a common date for Easter, which is currently celebrated by Catholics and Orthodox Christians on different days.The Pope's trip comes as the Orthodox world appears more fragmented than ever, with Russia's invasion of



Ukraine accelerating the split between the Moscow and Constantinople patriarchates.Pope Leo is the fifth pontiff to visit Turkiye, after Pope Paul VI in 1967, Pope John Paul II in 1979, Pope Benedict XVI in 2006 and Pope Francis in 2014.He is expected to leave Istanbul 1145 GMT and fly to Beirut for a visit lasting until Tuesday (December 2, 2025).The six-day two-nation trip is the first major international test for the first Pope from the United States, who was elected head of the Catholic Church in May and whose understated style contrasts with that of his charismatic and impulsive predecessor, Pope Francis.Although Pope Leo's visit drew little attention in Turkiye, a Muslim-majority nation of 86 million whose Christian community numbers only around 1,00,000, it is eagerly awaited in Lebanon, a religiously diverse country of 5.8 million inhabitants.Since 2019 Lebanon has been ravaged by crises, including an economic collapse, a devastating port blast in Beirut in 2020 and the recent war with Israel.

India rout Oman 17-0 in Junior Hockey World Cup, three players score hat-tricks

Chennai: The Indian Junior Men's Hockey Team continued their fine show in the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup Tamil Nadu 2025 with a scintillating 17-0 win in their Pool B encounter against Oman.

In their previous outing, India had convincingly beaten Chile 7-0 and today their attacking hockey was on full display with Manmeet Singh (17', 26', 36'), Arshdeep Singh (4', 33', 40') and Dilraj Singh (29', 32', 58') scoring hat-tricks, while Anmol Ekka (29'), Ajeet Yadav (34', 47'), Gurjot Singh (39', 45'), Ingalemba Thounaojam Luwang (43', 50') and Sarda Nand Tiwari (55') also contributed to the scoreline.

With this win, India are on top of the points table with

24 goals, ahead of Switzerland. The opening quarter was a contrast, with Oman defending well despite allowing an early fourth-minute goal. Arshdeep Singh opened the scorecard for India with a fine field goal, but Oman managed to slow down India's attacking pace for a while.

After the quarter break, India came back strongly and within three minutes of the second quarter, Manmeet Singh scored again. India netted three goals in this quarter, setting the momentum for their high-scoring game. By half-time, India led 5-0.India was in absolute command in the third quarter, drilling four goals in five minutes, with Manmeet completing his hat-trick. Dilraj and Arshdeep added two goals each, while Gurjot and Luwang also struck.

Delay in getting syntactic foam from France hits India’s Samudrayaan mission



A crucial set of tests on the Samudrayaan, India’s first manned-submersible dive into the ocean, is likely only mid-next year following a delay in the procurement of syntactic foam cladding from France. The Samudrayaan consists of a sphere capable of plunging to a depth of 6,000 metres into the ocean. Only a handful of countries have dived to comparable depths. A crew of three will man this submersible, which will descend to the ocean floor, scour it, and collect soil and rock samples. The mission is deemed as pivotal to India’s future exploration plans to mine precious metals from the high seas.

As a prelude to this, scientists from the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai, who are leading the project, have built a steel replica of the submersible

Hong Kong blaze: Why buildings have disastrous fires and how they can be prevented

On November 26, a fire started on scaffolding at the Wang Fuk Court housing complex in Tai Po in Hong Kong and spread rapidly across multiple high-rise blocks wrapped in bamboo and other flammable external materials. At least 44 people had died as of 7 am IST (November 27) while hundreds were missing. The local police had reportedly arrested three construction executives even as investigators were looking into how renovation work on the structure had allowed the fire to spread vertically so fast.

Why do buildings burn?

Buildings burn when three things come together and keep feeding each other: heat, fuel, and oxygen. Potential ignition sources include short circuits, welding sparks or a kitchen flame but also any fireworks inside or nearby. The heat from these sources heats nearby material until it decomposes and releases flammable gases. Those gases can mix with air and burn, releasing even more heat, which then warms other materials. In a building filled with plastics, fabrics, paper, and synthetic foams, this positive feedback loop can quickly avalanche into a big fire. Once a room’s surfaces all get hot enough, the space can reach a point called flashover, when almost everything ignites within seconds and the fire becomes very hard to control or survive. Many large fires since 2000 have started off as localised blazes that the structures’ geometry and construction materials fanned into building-scale disasters. Architects and engineers have known that external scaffolding, cladding systems, and cavities on the façade can act like open chimneys that allow hot gases to race upwards, pulling in fresh air from below and warming up the higher levels.

How are occupants put at risk?

In Hong Kong, based on an early assessment by investigators, bamboo poles and plastic mesh that surrounded the towers gave the first fire a continuous and combustible path up the towers’ exterior. Similarly, in Shanghai in 2010, sparks from welding had ignited nylon netting and bamboo scaffolding, and the resulting fire spread into a 28-store apartment building under renovation. In London’s Grenfell Tower in 2017, an electrical fault in a fridge started a small flat fire, but flammable cladding and insulation on the façade plus a ventilated gap behind the panels created a powerful artificial chimney that carried flames rapidly up the tower, killing 72 people. A similar sort of external cladding contributed to repeated fires at Dubai’s Torch Tower in 2015 and 2017.

Inside buildings, the way a fire grows is shaped by the fire load (i.e. the quantity of materials that can burn), compartmentation, and escape routes. Hospitals, nightclubs, offices, and factories in particular are known to have a dense fire load, including beds, medical plastics, sound-proofing foam, paper files, stored chemicals, and textiles. When ignition occurs in a poorly compartmented space, flames and smoke can spread through stairwells and ceiling voids. The 2011 AMRI Hospital fire in Kolkata began with an electrical fault in the basement, where hospital administrators had stored flammable materials. The smoke and heat moved upwards even as alarms and attempts at evacuation failed, and eventually 89 people died. In the Station nightclub fire in the US in 2003, pyrotechnics ignited polyurethane foam around the stage. Within minutes, the foam and ceiling were burning, and smoke and overcrowding together led to the death of 100 people, compounded by a lack of sprinklers. A similar story played out in 2016 at the Ghost Ship warehouse fire in California, where 36 people died during a party in a cluttered and illegally converted warehouse with no sprinklers or alarms. More than 250 workers died in the Ali Enterprises garment factory fire in Karachi in 2012 because the company’s owners and managers had barred the windows and locked the exits, so the workers couldn’t outrun the smoke and heat, even though the structure itself didn’t collapse immediately. In Dhaka’s FR Tower fire in 2019, office workers were trapped in a high-rise building that had few usable exits and no sprinklers, again allowing an ordinary fire to become lethal. Twenty-five people were killed.

How can buildings collapse?

The structure of a building also determines how long it can stand when it’s on fire. While steel is strong, it loses much of that virtue when it’s exposed to temperatures of 500° to 600° C. Without proper fireproofing, then, a building’s beams and columns can start sagging, pulling other elements out of alignment. In Madrid’s Windsor Tower in 2005, the concrete core and some protected elements withstood the heat but unprotected steel perimeter members failed, leading to a partial collapse of the structure. In 2017, Tehran’s Plasco Building — a high-rise with a steel frame and a significant fire load — the absence of sprinklers and low compartmentation allowed a fire to burn for long enough to cause a floor to collapse, which led to more failures around the building that eventually pulled the whole structure down. In 2001, at New York’s World Trade Centre, the aircrafts’ collisions with the Twin Towers stripped them of fireproofing, and large, multi-floor fires heated the floor trusses and columns until they buckled. The tragic result was the complete collapse of the towers despite their modern design.

In most of these examples, the ignition was usually in

that is to be used as a simulator for all the tests required prior to the final mission. Though simulations have been conducted on this sphere to depths of 100 metres, a final set of trials — that involves sending the submersible down to 500 metres — is on the anvil. It was originally scheduled for December 2024. “Before the 500-metre dive, the (steel) submersible has to be fitted with syntactic foam, which is what gives the submersible buoyancy and allows it to float. This is developed in France and being tested in Norway and after that will be fitted onto our submersible,” M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, told The Hindu. The Ministry is the parent body of NIOT. “Hopefully, it should be delivered by the end of the year.” Once these tests are done, the final titanium hull — that will be the one to make the final 6,000-metre dive — will be sent to Russia where it will be tested, in a laboratory, for its ability to withstand the pressure of the ocean at 6,000 metres. “We have, of course, already accounted for this but this test is required,” he added. The same syntactic foam will be fitted onto the titanium sphere. The Indian Space Research Organisation is making two titanium hulls for NIOT. “Once these tests are done, we hope to conduct the 500-metre dive by April next year,” Mr. Ravichandran added. He was speaking on the sidelines of a press conference to announce the India International Science Festival (IISF), an annual event organised by India’s science ministries to educate the youth about science and inspire them to take up science as a career.



the form of routine activity such as electrical faults, hot work, fireworks, cooking, etc. The main killers were subsequently the fast spread of the fire and smoke rather than exotic fuels. The rapid spread was facilitated by combustible façades, scaffolding, insulation, and materials indoors, which together created continuous fuel beds and chimneys.

How can building fires be prevented?

When they design and construct a (reasonably well-funded) building, engineers and architects generally assume that small fires will occur, so much of the design is already invested in keeping an accidental fire in one place for a set period of time, thus allowing the occupants to leave before the conditions become lethal. The central idea is, once again, to have compartments. The floors, walls, and ceilings are arranged to create fire compartments with a specific fire-resistance rating. To do that, builders build them with concrete, fire-resistant masonry and/or protected steel (which is steel that’s been given a fire-resistant coating or encasement that slows the transfer of heat). Fire doors and fire-resisting glazing are also used to close openings between compartments. The ultimate desired effect is for each such compartment to resist the spread of a fire for 60 minutes, 120 minutes or so on.

Modern building codes also attempt to prevent fires from racing upwards or across the outside of a building by restricting the use of combustible cladding and balcony materials and by forcing designers to break up continuous air gaps behind façades with interruptions. Architects and engineers may also select materials that prevent structural collapse in exchange for being damaged themselves. After the Grenfell Tower fire, for instance, the UK banned certain combustible materials in the external walls of high-rise housing and later extended this to hotels, hospitals, and other buildings. In fact there’s now a move to ban metal composite panels with a polyethylene core on many buildings altogether. Building codes in many countries, including India, also specify minimum separation distances between buildings and impose limits on the floor area per compartment to reduce the chances of an external fire spreading from one part of a city block to another.

What can passive protection look like?

Designers also consider methods to passively protect a building’s occupants, starting by considering how long a given structure can stand and how long its various escape routes remain usable. Structural components that would otherwise be vulnerable to heat — such as steel beams and columns — are thus encased in concrete or coated with intumescent materials. These coatings swell when heated, forming an insulating char that slows the rise in the steel’s temperature and helps the frame retain its load-bearing capacity for longer during a fire. Lift lobbies and firefighting shafts are similarly enclosed in fire-resistant construction, often with pressurisation systems that maintain higher air pressure in the stairs so that smoke is pushed away from people’s escape paths. In many high-rise designs, buildings also provide ‘refuge floors’ and ‘refuge areas’ at regular intervals that together form protected spaces where people who can’t descend quickly can wait in comparatively cool and smokeless conditions.

Sircilla Congress leader quits party over Indiramma housing denial

Rajanna-Sircilla: A senior Congress leader from the district, Maddela Rajanarsu, resigned from the party after he was denied an Indiramma house despite working for the organisation for three decades.

A native of Gambhiraopet mandal, Rajanarsu had served the party in various roles, from NSUI mandal president to SC cell secretary of the erstwhile Karimnagar district. In his resignation letter, he stated that there was no recognition for his long association with the party. His house was damaged ten years ago and, since he owned a house site, he applied for an Indiramma house. However, the sanction did not materialise. Saying that even a poor party worker was not sanctioned a house under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy’s regime, he said he had decided to step down.

China's Baidu starts layoffs after reporting third-quarter loss, say sources



China’s Baidu started layoffs this week that will hit multiple business units, six sources briefed on the matter said, as the company struggles with intensifying competition in artificial intelligence and declining advertising revenue. The move by the company, which runs China’s largest search engine, comes shortly after it reported a third-quarter loss on November 18. The sources added that the layoffs were expected to run until the end of this year. Reuters was not able to establish the companywide number of jobs being cut but the sources said it was internally perceived to be large-scale. The layoff numbers varied by business unit and performance ratings and could reach as high as 40% for some teams, two of the people said. The mobile ecosystem group will bear the brunt of the cuts, two sources said.

However, roles tied to AI and cloud computing will largely be protected, said four of the people. One of the sources said more resources would be directed to AI. The sources declined to be named as the information is

How educational institutions can build a strong cybersecurity culture

With the rise of digital transformation, higher education institutions have increasingly moved their teaching, administration, and research activities to online platforms. While this shift has broadened access to education and enabled global academic collaboration, it has also opened the door to a host of cybersecurity threats. Universities and colleges today must guard against a variety of cyber risks, including ransomware, data leaks, identity theft, and intellectual property breaches — challenges that require robust security solutions. To protect their digital infrastructure, many institutions now implement cutting-edge cybersecurity frameworks. A leading strategy is the Zero Trust Architecture, which mandates continuous authentication of users and devices, ensuring that access is restricted at every point. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) assist in identifying suspicious behavior on networks, forecasting potential attacks, and automating protective measures. Additionally, blockchain is being used more frequently to maintain transparency and integrity in academic records, research findings, and institutional data.

Ensuring data privacy depends on stringent protective mechanisms. Tools like multi-factor authentication (MFA) and advanced encryption algorithms are essential for safeguarding sensitive information. As cloud adoption grows within the academic sector, securing these cloud-based environments becomes even more critical to institutional resilience. Cybersecurity education must be a continuous effort targeting students, faculty, and administrative staff alike. A one-time seminar is insufficient; instead, dynamic learning methods including interactive simulations, scenario-based training, and gamified assessments help reinforce awareness and comprehension. Effective training should be tailored to accommodate the varying levels of technical knowledge across campus populations. While general awareness programmes might cover basics like password hygiene, specialised modules can focus on in-depth topics for IT professionals. Fostering open dialogue around security concerns allows for a supportive learning environment. Building a strong cybersecurity culture requires shared responsibility. Consistent messaging through digital newsletters, awareness drives, and cyber committees helps maintain a security-first mindset. Rewarding proactive behaviours and enabling anonymous reporting mechanisms encourage broader participation and accountability.

Embedding cybersecurity practices into daily routines transforms them from mandatory policies into shared values embraced by the community. This collective approach



fosters vigilance, reduces potential threats, and promotes the development of informed digital citizens. Hands-on learning plays a vital role in preparing for real-world cyber incidents. Virtual labs and simulation platforms offer learners the chance to identify and mitigate threats in lifelike scenarios. Competitions like Capture The Flag (CTF) and gamified exercises enhance competencies in fields like cryptography, threat detection, and system defence. Many universities have incorporated professional certifications such as CompTIA Security+ and CISSP into their curriculum, empowering students for cybersecurity careers. The establishment of Security Operations Centers (SOCs) on campuses provides real-time threat monitoring and rapid response capabilities. Programmes like hackathons, industry collaborations, and apprenticeships further strengthen practical skills and innovation in the field.

These concerted efforts collectively contribute to building strong cyber resilience in academic environments, where all members, from students to senior leaders, play an active role in maintaining digital security. Continuous learning and close industry collaboration further reinforce this ecosystem, ensuring sustained trust and protection. Faculty members also gain from Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and role-specific training on topics such as data privacy regulations and incident response. Engaging with cyber clubs, professional associations, and policymaking initiatives helps strengthen institutional readiness. In essence, securing the future of academia extends beyond deploying advanced technologies; it depends on cultivating a well-informed, proactive, and security-conscious campus community. With consistent education, hands-on training, and strategic partnerships, universities can effectively defend their digital landscapes, preserve academic excellence, and thrive in a globally connected environment.

The structure is withering while the skeleton exists

While the basic structure of the Constitution still resonates with the principles of democracy, federalism and secularism, the warning given by Ambedkar in a speech in the Constituent Assembly seems to become more and more relevant today. Our Constitution has been amended 105 times within 75 years of its adoption. Since the verdict of the apex court in the Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala case (1973), the power of Parliament has been limited. The Supreme Court in this landmark decision clarified that Parliament has no power to make amendments that touch the basic structure of the Constitution. Interestingly, the restriction placed on Parliament to amend the Constitution through this judgment is the most disturbing factor for the rulers of the day.

The Constitution stands as a stumbling block for them to implement their hidden agendas. It is even more pertinent that the judgment came from a 13-member Constitution Bench, which indirectly means that the overruling of this larger Bench decision cannot be expected in the near future. This can be inferred as the precise reason why the government is using its administrative tools and institutional mechanisms to change the basic structure of the Constitution and of the country from a secular, democratic, federal republic to an authoritarian Hindu Rashtra. In fact, such a situation was foreseen even by the Constitution framers, which is quite visible when one attempts to traverse the Constituent Assembly Debates.

The debates and conflicts within the Constituent Assembly primarily revolved around two different cultural streams. On the one hand, there were representatives advocating for a secular and pluralistic India, which encompassed its diverse cultural aspects and historical heritage. On the other hand, the Hindutva faction asserted that Indian culture is fundamentally rooted in religion. These two contrasting perspectives highlighted a fundamental ideological divide regarding the nature and identity of the Indian state. While proponents of secularism and pluralism emphasised

The debates and the outcome of the Constituent Assembly are a clear indicator that secularism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and determines the character of the country. However, the attempt to turn India into a religious country is continuing and strengthening. People with affiliations towards the communist ideologies argued that secularism shouldn’t be included in the Preamble, as it was voted out initially and was only included later.

But, the fact is that an amendment to include secularism alone was never introduced in the Assembly. The amendment introduced by Brajeswar Prasad from Bihar proposed the inclusion of secularism among many other terms. In fact, Prasad suggested these words: “to constitute India into a secular, cooperative commonwealth to establish a socialist order and to secure to all its citizens”.

Despite the Assembly’s stance on its impracticality, the acceptance of secularism as a fundamental principle was clear. Kamath, who fought against it himself and opposed secularism, later acknowledged during the discussion on freedom of religion that, “Of course, we accept India as a secular state. But it is neither a Godless state nor a non-religious state.” Members, including Kamath, were resistant to the idea of an entirely religion-free state even when the word “secularism” was accepted in the discussions. In effect, they accepted the word secularism, but misinterpreted the idea behind it entirely. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, while highlighting the purpose of the Constitution, emphasised that “Modern states are built upon the foundation of secularism rather than religion. The era of religious states had come to an end and it was the time for nationalism”. The idea that, rather than strengthening the religious identity, the identity as a citizen must be strengthened arose in that period itself. Different perspectives were shared in the discussions surrounding religion and secularism, which have since been debated extensively. This includes various dimensions, like whether secularism implies a secular state or the absence of a relationship between the government and the state. I

A new lease of life under the sun for death row prisoners



As the seasons passed, Kailash's body, too, became a battleground. A kidney ailment left him incontinent and in constant pain. But when his son returned home following his acquittal, after more than 11 years in incarceration, Kailash finally underwent the surgery he had long deferred. Kailash's daughter, Sangeeta, 35, who tended to him through nights of agony, recalls those years with a shudder. "My father would scream until dawn," she says. "We were helpless. He finally got relief when my brother returned and made sure the surgery happened." The family's lives came undone on a cold December morning more than 11 years ago when their sole breadwinner, Rakesh, then in his 20s, was arrested and accused by the police of murdering his wife and two infant sons. "He was not at home when the murder happened," his sister says. Yet, a trial court sentenced him to death, and the High Court later affirmed this. In July, the Supreme Court acquitted him of all charges and ordered his immediate release. In a scathing indictment of the prosecution, the Court found the case marred by grave investigative lapses and a poorly conducted trial. It flagged glaring inconsistencies in witness testimonies and noted that even the process of collecting evidence had been compromised. Rakesh's acquittal is part of a disconcerting pattern. For the third consecutive year, the Supreme Court has not confirmed a single death sentence. This year alone, it has acquitted nine prisoners on death row, commuted five death sentences to life imprisonment, and remanded two cases to the trial courts for fresh consideration, while repeatedly flagging grave investigative and evidentiary lapses. It has also remitted one case to the trial court for the re-examination of a witness. Winter is coming a few hundred kilometres away, in a town in Uttar Pradesh, Krishna, 55, sits on a pavement. There hangs the smell of snacks frying, vegetables rotting, and fumes in the air. At his feet lies a thin blanket that another beggar pressed into his hands two nights ago. "Winter is coming," he says, pulling it to his chest. "I am dreading it." He picks at the dry skin on his palms, a habit that he has carried from prison into the world outside. His voice drops as his eyes sweep the line of men huddled along the pavement. "I never mention it," he murmurs. "If they learn I was on death row, they will keep their distance. Out here, you survive only if people stay close. Nights can turn dangerous." Krishna spent 12 years, eight months, and nine days under the cold shadow of the gallows. His nightmare began 15 years ago, he says, when masked men burst into his two-room mud-brick house and slaughtered his wife and two young children. "I can still hear their screams when I close my eyes. My wife died trying to shield our children," he says. A single blow to his head left

him with an injury so severe that he still feels pain whenever he steps into the sun. "Blood was pouring into my eyes. I thought I would die." Yet, he somehow managed to scramble over the boundary wall with his 10-year-old son — the only other life spared that night. "I don't know how we made it out alive," he says. Days later, the police accused him of murdering his family. "They told me the jeep was taking me to a hospital," he recalls. "I was bleeding; everything felt blurry. I believed them. But instead of a doctor, it was a prison cell that greeted me." In 2022, the Supreme Court set him free, observing that the prosecution's case, which it said was built entirely on an uncorroborated extrajudicial confession, had collapsed under the weight of serious evidentiary lapses. However grave or heinous the offence, a death sentence cannot be sustained without cogent and unimpeachable proof, the Court said. Krishna's son was brought up by a neighbour, he says. His son is working now but doesn't financially support or keep in touch with his father. A night that changed everything In a quiet residential neighbourhood in a Madhya Pradesh town, 30-year-old Manoj sits outside his modest single-storey home. "I was 18 when I was arrested," he says. He was accused, along with his father and uncle, of kidnapping and killing a 13-year-old neighbour for ransom. One evening in 2013, barely a fortnight after the boy had gone missing, the police arrived. "They took us away just like that," he says, snapping his fingers. "No explanation. No evidence shown. In a single night, the only three earning members of my family were gone." Left behind were his younger siblings — a 13-year-old brother and a 14-year-old sister. "There was no one left to earn after that," he says quietly. "My family went days without food." The teenagers were forced to drop out of school soon after. His sister began working as a household help while his brother took up shifts at a nearby construction site. "That is my biggest regret," Manoj says. "That they had to abandon their studies because of me." Manoj spent 10 years behind bars. While his father was sentenced to life imprisonment, he and his uncle were sent to death row. In 2023, the Supreme Court acquitted all three, pointing to glaring investigative lapses, including the police's failure to examine the original owner of the SIM card allegedly used for the ransom call. The court stressed the urgent need for an investigative code that could prevent prosecutions from collapsing under the weight of policing errors.

Botched investigations Anup Surendranath, executive director of The Square Circle Clinic at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, which has represented six of the death-row prisoners acquitted this year, says, "Courts are finally paying closer attention to crucial details in death penalty cases." Most death-row prisoners, he notes, hail from marginalised backgrounds and lack effective legal representation, making rigorous appellate scrutiny indispensable. "It is deeply worrying that investigating agencies continue to commit grave procedural violations in the collection of evidence — a pattern the Supreme Court has had to flag time and again," he adds. Earlier this month, the Supreme Court acquitted Surendra Koli, the prime accused in the 2006 Nithari killings, in the last remaining case where his conviction and life sentence had remained in force. To set him free after nearly two decades, the Court invoked its extraordinary curative jurisdiction to overturn its own earlier ruling. This is a remedy reserved for exceptional situations involv-

ing grave procedural lapses or denial of natural justice. The judges called the probe "botched" and noted, among other lapses, that investigators had ignored the possibility of an organ-trade angle flagged earlier by a committee set up by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Yug Chaudhry, a Mumbai-based senior advocate who specialises in death penalty litigation and who represented Koli, says the case is a cautionary tale about the perils of a justice system vulnerable to media trials and is a compelling indictment of the death penalty itself. "It shows how easily, in heinous offences built on circumstantial evidence, investigations can be manipulated to construct a narrative that evades judicial scrutiny," he says. "Koli spent 19 years in custody for crimes he did not commit. He was sentenced to death and twice taken to the gallows for execution, only to be saved in the nick of time."

"The consequences of this kind of injustice are devastating," Yug adds. "He was branded a cannibal. His wife left him. His children grew up, too ashamed to acknowledge their parentage. His brothers were frightened to visit him, lest they be tainted by association. And all of this, for what crime? For the worst crime a person can commit in this country. He was born poor." Manoj, who spent the entirety of his 20s behind bars, still shivers when his fingers trace the deep scars along his elbows and the side of his neck. "The police hit us brutally in custody," he says. "My father and uncle, too, were humiliated and assaulted. We kept saying we were innocent, but it felt like speaking into an abyss." "One day, the police slid a stack of blank sheets across the table and told us to sign," he says. "They said the torture would get worse if we refused." His gaze drops, the words thinning to a whisper. "So we signed out of fear. Only later did I understand that those blank pages would be filled in and turned into evidence against us." "The courts demand exceptionally strong evidence before they agree to send someone to the gallows. But the police often fall short," says Sulkhan Singh, former Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh. "In many cases, the handling of evidence is not properly recorded. Every movement of a piece of evidence, from the moment it is collected to when it is presented in court, has to be documented. If this trail breaks anywhere, the evidence loses credibility. This is where the police struggle." He also points to the Supreme Court's 2006 ruling in Prakash Singh v. Union of India, which prescribed sweeping police reforms, from separating law-and-order duties from investigation to establishing independent oversight bodies insulated from executive interference. "It has been almost 20 years, yet most of these reforms remain only on paper," he says. When legal aid is out of reach Like Manoj, Rakesh too found himself weathering an unforgiving system alone. Arrested while his father watched helplessly, he says he did not even know for the longest time that the police had charged him with killing his own family. "I only learned much later what they had accused me of," he says. Although a legal-aid lawyer had been formally appointed, Rakesh recalls that the counsel failed to appear for several crucial hearings during the trial. Left without any effective representation, his family stepped in. "My father and sister sold whatever we had, jewellery, small pieces of land, to find a lawyer who would actually take up my case," he says. "After that, nearly everything we owned was gone." Then came the blow that, he says, "broke something

inside" him. His elder brother, a daily-wage labourer, collapsed and died of a heart attack. "All I wanted was to see his face one last time," Rakesh says. He asked fellow inmates how he might seek temporary release for the funeral rites, and then approached the jail authorities in desperation. "I even went to the jail superintendents, but they refused. They said I would have to move the High Court for it," he recalls. "I didn't even know how to begin." Experiences like his lay bare the chronic lack of accountability within legal-aid institutions, says Anup. "Unfortunately, the prevailing attitude is that simply providing legal aid is enough. It is not. We need mechanisms to review performance and clear quality standards that ensure competent representation. To me, this is an institutional failure," he adds. For Rakesh, the first time he did not feel invisibilised by the rigours of the system came years after his arrest — during the mitigation process, which documents the life history of the accused to help courts assess their capacity for reformation and determine the appropriate sentence. "The investigators sat with me for hours," he recalls. "They spoke to my family, to people who had known me since I was a child. . . It was the first time in years that anyone seemed interested in who I was, beyond the allegations stamped against my name." Komal, a mitigation investigator with The Square Circle Clinic, recalls preparing Rakesh's report. "I realised how deeply his faith anchored him, how it helped him endure years of wrongful incarceration," she says. "He held a steady belief that God would protect him from injustice, and that he had to live a conscientious life in return." But the work, she adds, comes with profound ethical challenges. "It requires the accused and their families to revisit their lives in painful detail. Often, what they share is deeply private and distressing," she says. "We are sometimes conflicted, because parts of those disclosures may have to be placed before the court and made public." Rebuilding lives Krishna says his survival rests on the small generosity of strangers. "Some days, I don't eat at all," he admits. After his release, he tried working at a construction site, hoping to stitch together some semblance of a life. But his old head injury stood in the way. "I couldn't lift anything," he says. He pulls his blanket tighter around himself. "In prison, I at least had two meals and a roof." Now back in his village, Rakesh is still learning how to inhabit freedom. "Sometimes it is hard to believe that I am free," he says. "I can feel the sunshine again. There are no curfews. No one tells me when I can speak to my family." His home is a single-storey structure with a roof that has slowly caved in after years of neglect. A straw cot lies in the courtyard for his father. One section of the outer wall has crumbled. "Now that I have a second chance at life, I want to rebuild that wall," Rakesh says. "I hardly spend on myself. I save every rupee". Soon after his release, he found work as a daily-wage labourer. "Compensation should be given to people like us so that we can begin rebuilding our lives," he says. "The years won't come back, the humiliation won't disappear. But compensation can soften the blow a little and remind the police that throwing someone behind bars cannot come without consequences." India has no statute recognising a right to compensation for wrongful convictions. In October, the Supreme Court sought the Centre's response to three petitions filed by former death-row prisoners who spent decades in incarceration before being acquitted earlier this year. Citing a violation of constitutional guarantees.

Higher education regulation: Refining the HECI bill 2025 for NEP 2020 implementation

In the winter session of Parliament, beginning December 1, 2025, the Union Government plans to introduce the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill, 2025, as a flagship reform to create a single overarching higher education regulator, replacing the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the sectoral councils, excluding medical and legal education. The HECI is expected to be a robust framework, designed to ensure quality, accountability, and institutional autonomy in higher education and translate the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's vision into clear norms on curriculum reforms, better academic delivery, and promote research culture. This article examines the draft HECI Bill 2018 in the context of the vision of NEP 2020 and the backdrop of the global developments in higher education in the last seven years and suggests improvements that would be required for the new HECI Bill 2025 to deliver on its transformative promise.

The 2018 draft HECI Bill: feedback and suggestions from public consultations Efforts to create a unified regulator in higher education began with the 2018 draft Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) bill, which was placed in the public domain for stakeholder feedback. It is reported to have garnered over 7,500 suggestions from parliamentarians, State governments, academics, students, teacher unions, and industry associations. While the draft bill was applauded for recognising the need to separate regulation from funding, several viewpoints emerged from various stakeholders.

Several stakeholders, particularly from the States, raised concerns over a potentially "Central government-heavy composition" of HECI, arguing that the limited representation from the States could undermine the concurrent status of education and fail to account for regional diversity and also adversely affect the public institutions in rural areas, which often operate with limited infrastructure and faculty. Teacher unions and student groups pointed out the absence of guaranteed representation for faculty and students on the HECI and its advisory bodies. It was also felt that the draft bill continued a 'command-and-control' regulatory philosophy, replacing the UGC with an equally intrusive inspectorate, including stringent approval and de-recognition powers that could disproportionately affect smaller and rural institutions. The draft bill also did not adequately articulate how the existing specialist regulators, such as AICTE and NCTE, would be integrated into a coherent architecture. A large share of submissions from academic associations and civil society organisations were reported to have argued that the draft did not sufficiently safeguard institutional autonomy and collegial governance. In response to this feedback from the public consultations, the 2018 draft was not tabled in the Parliament, and the government signalled that the proposed bill would be re-worked in light of NEP 2020.

NEP 2020 and the envisaged HECI architecture NEP 2020 emphasises transparency, public self-disclosure by institutions, minimisation of human interface through technology, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest between these four functions. It also underscores institutional autonomy, graded on accreditation outcomes, and encourages multi-disciplinary universities with strong internal quality assurance systems.

The HECI, proposed by NEP 2020, envisages four independent verticals: National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), National Accreditation Council (NAC), General Education Council (GEC) and Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) to address the functions of compliance, quality assurance, setting up academic stan-

dards and funding, respectively. The proposed HECI bill, therefore, has to move beyond the narrow academic-standards focus of the 2018 draft and codify the four-pillar architecture, with adequate checks and balances, including a robust role for the States and the academic peers, in the governance processes. Global developments in higher education since 2018 The seven years since the first HECI draft have witnessed profound changes in the global higher education landscape. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered the largest disruption in the history of education, forcing institutions to shift to online and blended modes of delivery rapidly. Thereafter, the online learning delivery model created opportunities for working professionals to learn without leaving their current jobs. Due to the unprecedented acceleration in the deployment of technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) in industry, skills emerged as a higher priority over knowledge for employment, leading to a dramatic rise in micro-credential skill development courses and stackable learning pathways, to supplement classroom learning. Dr. Radhakrishnan Committee report on accreditation reforms

An overarching committee, constituted by the Government of India, chaired by Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, proposed transformative reforms to strengthen assessment, accreditation and ranking of higher education institutions, to expand coverage of accreditation, and to align existing bodies such as NAAC, NBA and NIRF, with the proposed NAC, under HECI. It also recommended a One Nation One Data (ONOD) IT architecture to capture data needed from the institutions for governance, ratings and ranking and maintain the integrity of the same to enable transparent, technology-empowered evaluation and ranking. Stakeholder expectations from the HECI Bill, 2025

Against this backdrop, different stakeholders look forward to distinctive and sometimes competing expectations from the HECI bill 2025. The State governments expect commensurate representation within HECI's governance structures, clear articulation of the division of regulatory responsibilities, and protection of their constitutional roles in higher education. The Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) hope for predictable, time-bound approvals; simplified, fully online compliance processes; rationalised inspection and reporting burdens; and a credible pathway to graded autonomy, based on transparent accreditation criteria. Smaller institutions, especially in the rural areas, are likely to press for capacity-building support rather than punitive enforcement. The industry expects a push for regulatory flexibility to recognise new-age programmes, micro-credentials for skilling, and international joint degrees in emerging areas, while expecting HECI to protect minimum standards. If the proposed bill is to enjoy broad legitimacy, it must be seen to credibly address the expectations of each of these constituencies. With over 70% of the universities falling under the States' acts and 94% of the students enrolled in State or private universities, leaving about 6% students in Centrally funded universities, there is a need for better coordination between the Central government and the States and their integration into the governance design, for achieving tangible results. While the vision is ambitious, India faces several structural and systemic challenges that the new bill must anticipate and address. Most of the institutions, particularly the State-funded ones in urban and rural areas, lack digital infrastructure, qualified faculty, and quality assurance systems and need massive capacity-building to move to self-disclosure-based, technology-enabled regulation. NEP mandates universal accreditation by 2035, but current accreditation coverage remains below 40% and the delayed binary accreditation needs to be sped up by a drastic expansion of assessment capacity.

Column by Saba Mahjoor | When Phuphee made room to breathe



On a warm afternoon, we were sitting in Phuphee's kitchen toasting makkai (corn) to make soatt (ground corn). Phuphee would make large batches of makkai soatt around late August when the last of the corn is harvested. We were chatting, when someone ran in shouting. It was a lady from the village and she begged Phuphee to come straight away as someone's noashe (daughter-in-law) had been possessed by a jinn. Phuphee grabbed her keep (top part of the Kashmiri burqa) and the three of us ran into the village where everyone was gathered around Dar Sahab's house. Even from a distance we could see the youngest daughter-in-law looking wild, her hair flying around her. She kept screaming at her mother-in-law who looked visibly scared. As soon as the mother-in-law saw Phuphee, she started weeping and asking her to cure the girl of the jinn. The daughter-in-law, whose name was Shama, continued screaming, repeating the same thing over and over again: 'Baeti ches insaan [I am also human]'. Phuphee went over to Shama and held her hands in her own until she started to calm down. Phuphee then took off her keep and wrapped it around Shama and led her into the house. She asked the mother-in-law to make a cup of nun chai with a dollop of ghee. From her pocket, she handed her a small packet with makkai soatt and instructed her to put it in the tea. Phuphee and Shama went upstairs and an hour later, Phuphee emerged on her own. 'She is sleeping now. Do not disturb her. Let her rest', Phuphee instructed them. She took the mother-in-law into the kitchen. Ten minutes later she came out, and we left. As we walked back home, I asked Phuphee what had happened to Shama. She motioned for us to sit under a chinar tree. She took a couple of cigarettes from her pheran pocket and lit them. After she had smoked for a couple of minutes, she said, 'Shama has a very serious illness. She has to have treatment for a long time. The treatment is long and difficult, and the cure isn't guaranteed. She is unable to do anything at home now. She cannot look after the house or the children or even herself for that matter.' Phuphee went quiet and smoked her cigarettes. It seemed like she was trying to solve something in her mind. When she had finished, we got up and went home. Once she got back, she asked one of the helpers to bring us nun chai and soatt. I

asked her if she had given the mother-in-law a taaveez for Shama. She smiled as she mixed spoonfuls of soatt into the nun chai for me. 'When I mix the soatt with the tea, it seems to disappear, but it is still there. It is the same with words,' she said. Phuphee explained that Shama's mother-in-law had two sons. Both were married. Shama was the eldest daughter-in-law. When the younger son got married, his wife had become very unwell for a number of years. Though she had recovered and lived a normal life, she was constantly reminded of the time when she had been riddled with illnesses. Now, Shama had become unwell. And it had transpired that the mother-in-law went around telling everyone about how 'goednyeth aes laktiyis sakhti, waen che baedyis [first the youngest son had a difficult life and now the eldest]'. Someone in the village had relayed this information to Shama. Upon hearing these words, Shama had felt a fire take hold of her heart. What had particularly angered her was that her mother-in-law had made no comments about how awful it was for Shama to be in this situation. Shama had asked Phuphee, 'Why when I am the one who is ill, is my discomfort secondary to everyone else's? How has it become about the discomfort of others?' 'Yes I did, but it was not for Shama. I told her the jinn had not possessed Shama. It had possessed her [mother-in-law] and the only way to kill it was through abstinence of speech. She must limit what she says to the absolute minimum and she must never speak more than two words in front of Shama because that would especially strengthen the jinn,' Phuphee said. She then got up, gave me a kiss on my forehead, and said, 'Never, forget this. There is a special place in hell for women who deprive other women of their autonomy. Men make the shackles, but it is often other women who throw away the key.' And she walked out to grind the rest of the corn. I sat there, overwhelmed. Many years later, I understood why she had shut the mother-in-law's mouth. It was an act that seemed insignificant, but it gave Shama a little space. In a world designed by men and propagated by many women, a world where women have no ownership over anything, not even their pain or discomfort in illness, Phuphee had managed to lift the mother-in-law's foot off Shama's neck long enough for her to breathe.

Vietnam’s VinFast to launch electric 2-wheelers in India in 2026, feasibility studies underway



The company will also look to launch its ride-hailing service in the country, and electric buses, for which it is currently in discussions with multiple state governments. The company will also look to launch its ride-hailing service in the country, and electric buses, for which it is currently in discussions with multiple state governments. Vietnam’s major automaker VinFast, which debuted two electric cars in India earlier this year, will also launch electric two-wheelers in the Indian market in 2026, and is currently undertaking feasibility studies, a top executive of the company said. Down the line, the company will also look to launch its ride-hailing service in the country, and electric buses, for which it is currently in discussions with multiple state governments.

The automaker has a lineup of at least six electric scooters, with varying degrees of battery capacity and claimed range, and could start by launching two of them in the Indian market, which is currently dominated by offerings from legacy manufacturers Bajaj and TVS, along with start-ups like Ather and Ola Electric. “We are working with partners to understand the requirements for the Indian market before the launch. A feasibility study is currently underway, and our dealer network has also shown keen interest

in the two-wheelers,” Pham Sanh Chau, CEO of VinFast Asia, told reporters.

In September, the company had officially launched two electric cars in India – the VF 6 and VF 7 – and plans to launch a new model every six months in the country, Chau said, adding that the next model will be launched in February. In the first quarter of 2026, VinFast will also launch its ride hailing operations in India, looking to translate the service’s success in its home country of Vietnam, where it offers its electric cars to a ride hailing fleet operated by GSM.Beyond passenger mobility, the company is also in talks with states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, among others, to launch electric buses in the country. Chau said that Vingroup – one of Vietnam’s largest conglomerates, of which VinFast is a part – is exploring bringing its entire ecosystem to India, spanning from mobility to education and healthcare to hospitality. In Vietnam, the company has businesses in residential townships, schools, universities, hospitals, resorts, and transportation, among others. In India, VinFast is betting big on the nascent, but growing EV market with its recently inaugurated assembly plant in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, marking the start of a phased investment of up to Rs 16,000 crore. Here, the company’s strategy to domestically manufacture in India has been different from that of Tesla’s, which is currently only looking at the country as a sales market. Chau said that VinFast sees India as a crucial market for its global expansion ambitions, and will also serve as an export hub for the company. To serve its electric cars, the company has tied up with partners to offer charging solutions to its customers, but Chau said that the company was open to the possibility of building its own charging infrastructure, something it has already done at scale in Vietnam. He added that VinFast was open to multiple financing options to make its cars more lucrative for prospective buyers.

SIM binding mandatory for online messaging platforms: Dept of Telecom

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed online messaging platforms to bar users from accessing their services without the SIM card used to register for the application. This direction would impact companies like WhatsApp, and could pose challenges for users travelling abroad. It is could also act as a potential hurdle in using such services across multiple devices, industry executives said. “...it has come to the notice of Central Government that some of the app based communication services that are utilising mobile number for identification of its customers... allow users to consume their services without availability of the underlying SIM within the device... posing challenge to telecom cyber security as it is being misused from outside the country to commit cyber-frauds,” the DoT learnt to have said in its notice to communication companies such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Arattai, Snapchat, Sharechat, Jiochat, and Josh.

These platforms must now ensure that within 90 days, their services are “continuously” linked to the SIM card used to register with them. They must also disallow access if the SIM is not there in the device. In technical terms, this is called SIM binding. Associated web services of these platforms (like WhatsApp Web) “shall be logged out periodically” — not later than 6 hours. The Centre is drawing powers from the Telecommunication Cybersecurity Amendment Rules, 2025, that were notified in October, to introduce the concept of Telecommunication Identifier User Entity (TIUE) under the scope of telecom regulations. As per the rules, a TIUE (who is not a licensee like telecom operators) uses telecommunication identifiers — such as mobile numbers — to identify its users. Platforms will have to send to the DoT a compliance report within the next four months. A senior industry executive said that these directions could pose a challenge to users who travel abroad and frequently use SIM cards from those countries to access communication services. “So far, when you use a new SIM card abroad, you can continue using services like WhatsApp without any additional registration. Now with these directives, that would



no longer be possible,” they said.

Another person said the directive to log out from companion web instances of the messaging platforms every 6 hours could disrupt workflows, especially in professional setups. “Many people use services like WhatsApp on their computers when they’re at work. Some also have to use them without their phones around in some instances. There will now be a lot of added friction in that use case,” this executive said. There are also some questions around how effective these directives could be, since many people who use such services to carry out frauds and scams use SIM cards procured through illegal means, such as using forged, or mule identity cards. However, when the telecom cybersecurity rules were proposed earlier this year, the cybercom industry had supported the need for SIM binding. “Presently, the binding process between a subscriber’s app-based communication services and their mobile SIM card occurs only once during the initial installation and verification phase, after which the application continues to function independently on the device even if the SIM card is later removed, replaced or deactivated,” the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), which represents all three private telcos, had said in a statement at the time.

Exports to US fall: Marine, auto, jewellery find new markets



AS STEEP 50 per cent US tariffs effective August 27 begin to weigh on Indian goods exports, several product categories such as shrimps, gems and jewellery, auto components and electric machinery have managed to redirect some of that output into other Asian and European markets. Analysis of data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed that while gems and jewellery exports to the US plummeted 76 per cent in September compared with last year, total gems and jewellery exports registered only a marginal 1.5 per cent dip. Shipments to the United Arab Emirates jumped 79 per cent, to Hong Kong 11 per cent and Belgium 8 per cent, the data showed. A similar pattern was visible in auto components, whose exports to the US dropped 12 per cent in September, but shipments to Germany, the UAE, and Thailand, helped total auto component exports grow 8 per cent. Marine products grew 25 per cent in September and 11 per cent in October, largely due to higher exports to China (up almost 60 per cent), Japan (37 per cent), Thailand (about 70 per cent) and the European Union. This reinforces the view that leveraging India’s trade linkages with other parts of the world, including in different parts of the Asian region, could help somewhat mitigate the blow if a trade deal with Washington DC does not fructify soon. However, low-margin, labour-intensive product segments such as cotton garments, sports goods, carpets, and leather footwear, which face stiff competition from China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) countries, are struggling to diversify their shipments, indicating that the long-term impact of US tariffs could be uneven, hitting small units operating across the

country more. The low-margin products are typically more susceptible to trade-related shocks due to working capital stress and unable to set up units abroad.

Sports goods, with 40 per cent exports go to the US, have not yet found alternate markets, and hence higher tariffs have dragged down overall exports 6 per cent in October. The cotton garment sector, where Indian products have large competitors such as Vietnam and Bangladesh, too struggled in its diversification efforts. After a 25 per cent decline in exports to the US, shipments to the UAE, Spain, Italy and Saudi Arabia went up, but the category exports slipped 6 per cent in September. Similarly, leather footwear exports also registered a 10 per cent overall decline after a sharp dip in exports to the US. With high US tariffs, the government has been pushing for diversification, particularly in the case of labour-intensive items such as marine products. Since the imposition of the US tariffs, the total number of marine product units that have secured approvals from the European Union has risen 25 per cent, with 102 additional units getting clearance to supply to the bloc, India’s second-largest seafood export destination. Before these clearances, a total of 502 Indian units were listed as eligible to export to the EU. A number of these permissions had been pending for over five years.

Gold prices jump over 1 pc on festive demand

Mumbai: Gold prices saw a strong rise on Tuesday as expectations of a US Federal Reserve rate cut and festive season demand boosted sentiment. In early trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures for December delivery were up 1 per cent at Rs 1,25,106 per 10 grams around 9:47 am. Silver prices also moved higher. MCX Silver December contracts were trading 1.34 per cent higher at Rs 1,56,551 per kg during the same time. “In INR gold has support at Rs 1,23,150-1,22,580 while resistance at Rs 1,24,650-1,25,200,” analysts said. “Silver has support at Rs 1,53,650-1,52,800 while resistance at Rs 1,56,140, 1,57,000,” they added. The sharp move in the domestic market followed a strong rally in global prices.

India’s GDP projected at USD 7.3 trillion as it aims to be third-largest economy by 2030



New Delhi: Already the world’s fourth largest economy, the nation is charting a confident course towards becoming the third largest one by 2030 — with GDP projected at \$7.3 trillion, according to an official statement. India’s economic ascent continues to capture global attention, and the current growth phase reflects the strength of decisive policymaking, structural reforms, and India’s deepening global integration, the statement added. As per the latest data, the real GDP of India, adjusted for inflation, is estimated to grow by 8.2 per cent in Q2 of FY 2025-26 against the growth rate of 5.6 per cent during Q2 of FY 2024-25.

The GDP in Q1 of FY 2025-26 grew at 7.8 per cent against the growth rate of 6.5 per cent during Q1 of FY 2024-25. Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 8.7 per cent in Q2 of FY 2025-26. Each sector of the economy is

What happens to the body when you have bread-omelette combo daily for breakfast?

For many people, bread-omelette is their ultimate, go-to breakfast. Not only is it extremely easy and quick to make, but it also scores high in nutrition. The toastiness of the bread perfectly combines with the velvety egg texture, adding to the brownie points. But what happens when this innocent food becomes your breakfast staple? “It is absolutely normal and healthy for the body to consume a bread omelette for breakfast every day,” assures Dr Rohini Patil, nutritionist, founder and CEO of Nutracy Lifestyle, given that the “ingredients and portion size” are balanced.

Your bread makes all the difference

Patil explains that eggs are a nutrition powerhouse, rich in high-quality protein, Vitamin B, choline, and essential amino acids, which support muscle building, metabolism, and cognitive function. The main defining factor for a bread-omelette’s nutrition quotient, thus, depends on the type of bread and the cooking method used. Here’s how the variety of bread changes the omelette’s nutrient profile: White bread: Highly refined, low in fibre, fast-digesting, as it causes quick blood sugar spikes and leads to hunger sooner. Brown bread: Often just white bread with added caramel colour; not necessarily healthier unless it lists whole wheat as the first ingredient.

Whole wheat bread: Higher in fibre and micronutrients; slows digestion, supports gut health, and keeps you full longer. This is the one you should look for at the grocery store.

Multigrain bread: Beneficial only if it’s whole-grain multigrain. Many commercial versions are still refined flour-based with sprinkled seeds. omelette People with diabetes, familial hypercholesterolemia, or existing heart disease should take personalised advice, but even in these groups, eggs in moderation can fit into a balanced diet. (Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons) The nutritionist advises against using excessive oil, butter or white bread, which are not only high in calories but also cause blood sugar spikes. “In order to break monotony, you can try and switch up the ingredients every now and then to increase fibre, antioxidants, and micronutrients,” the nutritionist advises. One can also try adding more veggies to the omelette and choosing whole-grain bread, to make it healthier. Patil further urges to go for



home-made omelettes over street-side or canteen-bought omelettes. “They are often prepared with refined oils reused multiple times, generous amounts of butter or margarine, low-quality bread, and minimal vegetables. The calorie load and trans-fat exposure can be significantly higher,” Patil cautions.

Can it lead to weight gain? The nutritionist clarifies that eggs are weight-management friendly as they offer high-quality protein that boosts satiety, stabilises blood sugar, and helps reduce mid-morning cravings. “For healthy individuals, one egg per day is generally safe. However, the impact on weight management depends on the composition, ingredients and preparation of the bread-omelette. The bread and the cooking fat are the variables,” Patil says. He explains: Whole-grain bread + controlled oil? better satiety, improved insulin response, and easier weight maintenance. Thus, if balanced well, a bread omelette can actually support weight control. “The key is portion sizes, oil usage, and including fiber (like vegetables or a side of fruit) to round out the meal,” the nutritionist concludes. DISCLAIMER: This article is based on information from the public domain and/or the experts we spoke to. Always consult your health practitioner before starting any routine.

Tripti Dimri’s cheat meal includes these two Chinese fast food items. Can you guess?



Tripti Dimri has a reputation for a magazine-perfect physique and has never been shy about sharing glimpses of her fitness routines. From yoga to strength workouts, Dimri leaves no stone unturned in hitting her fitness goals. While the Animal actress follows a strictly regulated diet, when asked about her ideal cheat meal at The Ranveer Show Podcast, she couldn’t resist sharing her love for the popular Chinese fast foods, noodles and momo. To be specific, she is a fan of paneer momos “A lot of people don’t like it, but I love it”. Dimri sometimes even credits the snack as her workout motivation, on her fitness posts. But is Dimri’s dream cheat meal, nutritionist-approved? Let’s find out.

Dr Aditi Prasad Apte, senior clinical nutritionist, Aster RV Hospital, explains that Chinese fast food on cheat days can have immediate “short-term” effects, such as spiked blood sugar levels, which are even more pronounced when the noodles are made with refined flour. “These foods are high on refined carbs, salt, unhealthy fat, and other additives,” explains Dr Apte. The body starts holding more water because of the high sodium content, medically described as “water retention”. This may lead to other discomforting symptoms such as bloating, puffiness, acidity, and temporary weight gain the next day. MSG, a frequently used food additive in Chinese fast food, can further increase thirst, cause headaches, or lead to dizziness.

Dr Apte assures that cheat days with Chinese meals are completely normal, given that one is mindful of the portion size, these foods are rich in refined carbohydrates. “Balance is the key. If most of the meals (80–90% of them) are healthy—packed with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein—the body compensates for the rare treat.” For momo, the nutritionist recommends sticking to 4–6 pieces, and for noodles, “one bowl or about 1½ cups” is non-problematic as it provides sufficient carbs and “doesn’t burden

your body with a heavy calorie load.” Dr Apte stresses that portion control holds great significance since these types of food are mainly prepared with refined flour, excess oil, and high sodium, which can lead to slowness in the digestive process and bloating if consumed in large quantities.

“Slowly eating, using a smaller plate, and consuming cheat foods along with water or pairing it with a protein source can help eliminate the risk of overeating,” the nutritionist advises. Nutritionist tips “Have your cheat meal guilt-free,” advises Dr Apte, backing her advice with research, which suggests that “eating food with guilt can mess up your metabolism.” For Momo lovers, steamed momos are a better option than fried ones in every way possible. “A meal that is complemented with a side of vegetables or protein (e.g., grilled chicken or paneer) can not only keep blood sugar levels from rising too high but also make the meal more nutritious.” Lastly, Dr Apte advises avoiding eating junk food at night as it can lead to bloating and gastric issues, messing up the sleep cycle. “Eating at a slow pace helps the brain to acknowledge the feeling of fullness sooner, which will prevent overeating,” the nutritionist concludes.

Harmanpreet joins Pink Marathon as brand ambassador

Hyderabad: The 10th edition of the Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon (VPCHM) concluded today in Jaipur, showcasing an extraordinary display of community spirit and determination. Almost 15,000 runners participated in support of Vedanta’s #RunForZeroHunger movement, raising 1 lakh Poshan Packs for children at Nand Ghars, the company’s flagship social impact project working to ensure a nourished and healthy future for children by transforming anganwadis across India. Supported by Vedanta, the country’s leading energy transition metals, oil and gas, critical minerals, power and technology conglomerate, and organised by AnyBody Can Run (ABCR), this year’s marathon was flagged off in Jaipur by Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd and Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc Ltd, and Harmanpreet Kaur, Captain of the Indian Women’s Cricket Team and International Brand Ambassador for VPCHM 2025. Priya Agarwal Hebbar said, “The Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon is not just a sporting event; it has evolved into a people’s movement for a healthier India. What makes today truly special is that every step taken by every runner helps nourish a child.

Goalkeepers Pawan, Mohith shine but India beaten by Belgium 1-0 in Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

In a rotated senior squad, with an eye on expanding India's bench strength ahead of a hectic 2026, Craig Fulton picked two goalkeepers, presumably Nos. 3 and 4 in the pecking order post PR Sreejesh's retirement. And it was Mohith HS and Pawan Malik who emerged as the big positives in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final in Ipoh, Malaysia, even as India lost 0-1 to Belgium in a tight final. Belgium, with some of their stalwarts in the squad, dominated the attacking stats while India, without a few of their big-name players like Harmanpreet Singh and Manpreet Singh, simply didn't create enough going forward. It was the European powerhouses who were dictating play in the early stages. India won their first penalty corner in the 10th minute when Sukhjeet Singh cleverly stepped away from a bobbling ball that ended up landing on a defender's foot. But Jugraj Singh's effort went wide of the right post. Sanjay's side would win only two more penalty corners on the night, and on both occasions, the injection wasn't even trapped. With just over

90 seconds left in the first quarter, Tom Boon created a sensational chance for himself as he controlled an aerial down the right, beat a defender and unleashed a shot from close range, but Mohith closed it down sharply. Pawan took his place between the posts for the second quarter and was called into action multiple times as Belgium turned on the heat on the Indian defence. India were camped deep into their own territory at this stage. The stats at the interval told a story as Belgium had nine attempts, compared to India's two (none on target), while circle penetrations stood at 15 to 4. Immediately at the start of the second half, Karthi Selvam finally made Vincent Vanasch work, his shot from the edge of the circle kept out by Belgium's legendary shot-stopper. It seemed like India came out with better attacking purpose but the defensive resolve would soon be breached. Nicolas de Kerpel drove along the right byline, leaving a lunging Sanjay behind him, and played an inch-perfect pass to the far post, where Belgium had an overload. Thibaut Stockbroeckx made no mistake from close range. India had Mohith to thank again for keeping it 0-1 after an attacking PC led to a blistering counterattack from Belgium, which was thwarted by the goalkeeper. In the final quarter, India went into full-blown attack mode and left plenty of space for Belgium to exploit on the counterattack. Pawan came up with a stunning save low down to his right from a bullet of a drag-flick by Boon. A few minutes later, he saved twice from back-to-back PCs to keep Alexander Hendrickx at bay. At this point, it was only India's goalkeeping that was keeping this a contest and when Pawan walked off the pitch with just under three minutes to go, it gave India a slim chance of finding an equaliser with 11 outfield players. But it never came to pass.

Mo Salah left out of Liverpool team for Premier League clash with West Ham

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Liverpool coach Arne Slot has raised a few eyebrows with his decision to leave out talismanic star Mo Salah from the starting lineup to play West Ham on Sunday. While Salah's form this season has been topsy-turvy at best, Salah has established himself as a legend at Anfield. Only last season, he was the club's leading goalscorer as Liverpool managed to seal a record-equaling 20th English league title. With Salah named on the bench for Sunday's clash, Slot picked a forward line of Alexander Isak, Florian Wirtz and Cody Gakpo for the game at the London Stadium. Salah's form in recent games has seen him failing to score in his last four games and managed only four goals in the league all season.

Liverpool's season has spiraled so far, the club is currently on a run of nine losses in 12 games in all competitions. It has lost six of its last seven in the league. After Liverpool slumped to a 4-1 defeat to PSV Eindhoven in the Champions League earlier this week, coach Slot had spoken about the additional pressure that the club was under. "There's a lot of pressure if you work or play at a top club and even more so if you start losing more games than this club, or these players or this manager, is used to. So



then there's always pressure," said the Liverpool coach. "But there was a lot of pressure last season as well for us to win the league and now it's a different kind of pressure because we've lost so many games." What has also added to the pressure on Liverpool has been that right after winning the title last season, they forked out around \$500 million (377 million pounds) in the offseason on star players like Alexander Isak and Florian Wirtz. "We fight on and we try to improve. That's what we all try," Slot said. "In the end it's about doing what this club is about, keep fighting and no matter how difficult it is, we have to fight together."

Sunil Gavaskar declares Virat Kohli as ODI G.O.A.T: 'When you pass the great Sachin Tendulkar...'



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

On a day that Virat Kohli scored his 52nd century in the One-Day International format — scoring 135 runs off 120 balls in the first ODI at Ranchi — and went past the legendary Sachin Tendulkar for most centuries in a single international format, another Indian cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar had no qualms in declaring that Kohli was the G.O.A.T (Greatest Of All Time) in the ODI format. Kohli had overhauled Tendulkar's ODI century tally (49) during India's 2023 ODI World Cup semi-final at the Wankhede Stadium. Kohli's ton was also his 25th ODI century at home, thus making him the first player to reach the landmark in the 50-over format.

When Gavaskar was asked at the end of India's innings if he would say that Kohli is the G.O.A.T in the ODI

format, the Indian cricket legend replied: "I don't think there's any doubt about that. I mean, it's not just me. I think those who have played with him and against him, they all agree that he is the greatest in the one-day format. Look, you scored 52 hundreds. That actually sets you up right up there in stratosphere, so to speak. I just heard that Ricky Ponting said that Kohli's the best that he's seen in one-day cricket. I mean, when an Australian captain says that — and everyone will agree that it is rare, very rare to get praise from an Australian — that Kohli was the best, then I don't think there's any argument with that. I'm also, you know, Sachin has been absolutely right up there with 51 hundreds. But when you pass the great Sachin Tendulkar, then you know where you stand," Gavaskar said on JioHotstar. "He understands his game very well, that's the key. I think as a batter sometimes you see other players and you think, look I can bat like him. But no, he's got a different pickup, different way of bringing the bat speed down. You've got to know what is your strength as a batter."

This is my strength, I know this is what I can do well and you stick to that. And that's what Kohli does. You see that he does not, even when the off-spinner was bowling, he wasn't looking, Rohit Sharma hit him mid-wicket. But Kohli hit it straight towards long on, straight bat. He didn't try to do like Sharma did. That is the key, knowing his strength, sticking to it, because he knows he's got how many runs in that. He's got 51 centuries and now 52nd. So he knows the way he plays is best suited for him," Gavaskar said.

Harmanpreet joins Pink Marathon as brand ambassador

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Hyderabad: The 10th edition of the Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon (VPCHM) concluded today in Jaipur, showcasing an extraordinary display of community spirit and determination. Almost 15,000 runners participated in support of Vedanta's #RunForZeroHunger movement, raising 1 lakh Poshan Packs for children at Nand Ghars, the company's flagship social impact project working to ensure a nourished and healthy future for children by transforming anganwadis across India. Supported by Vedanta, the country's leading energy transition metals, oil and gas, critical minerals, power and technology conglomerate, and organised by AnyBody Can Run (ABCR), this year's marathon was flagged off in Jaipur by Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd and Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc Ltd, and Harmanpreet Kaur, Captain of the Indian Women's Cricket Team and International Brand Ambassador for VPCHM 2025.

Priya Agarwal Hebbar said, "The Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon is not just a sporting event; it has evolved into a people's movement for a healthier India. What makes

today truly special is that every step taken by every runner helps nourish a child. With over 10,000 Nand Ghars already serving children and women across 16 states, we are deeply committed to our vision of transforming all 13.7 lakh anganwadis in the country. Our mission is to ensure that every child and every woman in India has access to nutrition, education and opportunity." Harmanpreet Kaur added, "It's inspiring to see thousands run not only for fitness, but for a purpose that touches the lives of children at Nand Ghars across India. When sport is used as a force for good, it becomes even more powerful. I am proud to be part of the Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon and support the #RunForZeroHunger movement." The marathon featured three categories: the 21 km Half Marathon for professional athletes, 10 km Cool Run for intermediate athletes, and 5 km Dream Run for beginners and families. The winners also expressed their gratitude and pride upon completing the race with remarkable timings. Bablu Sisodiya (Winner – 21 km Male Category), Ujaala (Winner – 21 km Female Category), Pawan Kumar (Winner – 10 km Male Category) and Saloni (Winner – 10 km Female Category) shared that running the Vedanta Pink

How Rohit Sharma became the batsman with most sixes in ODIs



GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Even as Virat Kohli dazzled with three sixes that rolled back the years, Rohit Sharma smashed three maximums, the last of which anointed him as the batsman with most ODI sixes. He first went past Pakistan's Shahid Afridi with his second six, before blasting the next, six no 352. Powered by Kohli's statement-making 135, Rohit's 57 and some end-overs scrambling, albeit a touch slow, India set a target of 350 to South Africa. It's Rohit's greatest achievement that he now perched on top with his six-game that oozes grace, timing, style, and a remarkable sense of effortless-

ness. It's a good time as any to pause and admire his six-hitting prowess. A look at the list of the other four in the top five roster is revealing. Afridi, Chris Gayle (331), Sanath Jayasuriya (270), and MS Dhoni (229). There would be absolutely no surprise with any of the names there. If they didn't loot sixes, then who would? When they bludgeoned the sixes, an atavistic thrill would shoot up the spine. They were the modern players, but with an old-age hitting feel to them. It's easy to imagine Afridi, the adventurous Pathan, holding the record for sixes. He would throw his entire being into the big hits — zany uninhibited fun. Gayle was the hulk who seemed born to pulp that small round thing. Jayasuriya was the marauder who would fist the ball into orbit with an admirable combo of power and timing. Dhoni was the muscled hacker, the batsman with the full unadulterated bat-swing in that list. Rohit doesn't have the beefed body tone of a hitter. He doesn't seemingly flex his biceps when hitting. He is the star of the modern age of six-hitting that remarkably lacks that brutality and is nonviolently-violent. Can one look all serene when the mind is buzzing with aggressive thought, adrenaline is pumping through the

Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand retain Syed Modi crown with 17-21, 21-13, 21-15 win over Osawa-Tanabe

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

One of the consistent traits of the Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand combine on the international Tour, had been their ability to bounce back from early stutters, and not allowing opponents, save the Top 3 pairings, to run away with leads. The quality to tug at the pace, control the rally and shrug off mistakes to move on to next point, came in handy on Sunday Finals Day at the Syed Modi International Super 300. Playing Japanese Kaho Osawa and Mai Tanabe, the Indians fell back 17-21 in the opening set but rebounded calmly to claim the next two 21-13, 21-15. The Indians attempted to keep a 4-point buffer, after they'd dropped the first set. And while the Japanese made the decider a 2-point at 12-14 hauling back the derailed initiative from 9-14 down, Treesa-Gayatri coolly pulled away once more, to wrap up a controlled win in 74 minutes defending their title from last year, and crucially ranking points.

The key at that juncture of 12-14 when the Japanese had significantly increased their pace and were defending stoutly, and threatened to flip the lead, was Treesa taking the tiniest of breathes after breaking her racquet strings to regroup. Treesa-Gayatri had been waltzing till then, leading by a good 5 points in the third set. The mid-set revival had been pretty clinical too, with Treesa displaying agility by planting herself in a squat and controlling overheads with round the head parallel racquet swats and leaning back for a forehand arc on body parries. Gayatri would charge the net for the explosive tap down, and the Indians achieved parity quite comfortably to push a decider. But after riding that momentum, the Japanese were beginning to draw out errors from Treesa's back court drops into the net. The break to change racquet proved decisive.

But what eventually led the Indians through those finishing stages of the third set, were quick snappy putdowns to rallies that took them from 15-12 to 19-13. The Indians tend to control pace of rallies by playing push drops on the

body, and manage to look ever so cool? Rohit does. It's a sight to see him stand still in the crease, awaiting the bowlers, especially the pacers. There is an easy vibe to it, a nonchalance that belies the fact that he is standing in a cauldron of screaming people with a fast bowler rushing towards him. There have been a few like him, Mark Waugh comes to mind as far as the body language while in-stance, awaiting a bowler. It would seem as if the junior Waugh was standing on a beach front, all casual and cool; no unnecessary tensed muscle twitch, a bewitching elegance as if he were leaning on a bar counter, waiting for his drink. Rohit's mannerisms are tending towards that. But there is one difference — the six-hitting prowess. The three sixes on a packed Ranchi stadium wasn't quite in that stunningly graceful level, but each meant something good. The first six was a down-on-his-knee slog-swept six off the spinner Prenalal Subrayen, who bowled a lot of tripe. And that shot wasn't quite timed well, and it wasn't surprising either as a slog-swept six is one stroke that Rohit doesn't quite always get it as cleanly as the rest. But that took him on par with Afridi. The next six was the same shot against the same bowler, but this one whistled into the crowd. It was one of his better slog-swept sixes where the body shape, the timing, the bat-swing everything was in sync.

The six that took him to top of the list came against Marco Jansen, and it was a pull. It's his calling card, his most expansive shot. So the surprise wasn't that he pulled a six, but of late, especially before he lost weight and became fit, the shot wasn't coming as easy to him as it did before. It's to do with the way he hits it. Unlike Ricky Ponting, whose pull was a dare as he would lunge towards the ball before yanking back to gloriously send it up and over, Rohit's is softer, silkier. He transfers his weight from the front foot to the back with a tiny hop almost, settles into a position, and almost cradles the ball up and over, using the pace. Especially those pulls that go behind square-leg. For a short while, recently, the hop wasn't quite working as smoothly as he would like, and hence the timing and resultant power at times went awry. In that regard, the six against Jansen was a good sign that his fitness regime is working. Ranchi crowd didn't get to see the most delightful six-stroke of Rohit — that elegant lofted straight six off pacers. The way his hands would go through the line of the ball, in an elegant smooth arc would feel like a movement of a father throwing up his little daughter in the air to catch. Perhaps, that would come in Raipur.



backhand with a diagonal stance. It helps them keep the shuttle airborne for a long time as they suck out pace from returns while giving the shuttle elevation. Gayatri has always been good at it. But Treesa has increasingly shown skills to don the playmakers role at the net. Known for her smashes kills, it's been a sobering realisation that most of the hits will get retrieved. It's why the lobs to the back and the drops and half smashes have nuanced her scythes, and injected patience into her game. Patience with aggression however, is a heady cocktail and Treesa's stint at mixed doubles has given her the confidence that she can trip up opponents with more than her full blooded smashes. The Japanese, proficient in defense, however found the repeated drops to the forecourt after the Indians pinned them back with well constructed patterns, rather tough, and lost points in a clump. What had bothered the Indians returning from a break owing to Gayatri's injury, was doubts over whether they would strike seamless coordination in pressure situations. It was the tentativeness from a less helpful drifty side that had seen the Indians lose the opening set. Ironically, the winning point for the Indians had their racquets clashing, but the clang synchronised in both going for the same smash that happily landed on the Japanese court.

After match-winning Ashes century, Travis Head ready to keep opening the batting

GNS News Agency, Dec 1

Regular opener Usman Khawaja has retained his spot for the day-night Ashes Test, despite not being able to bat in his customary position in Perth, but Travis Head is ready to keep doing the job after his match-winning century in the series opener. Back spasms forced Khawaja, who turns 39 very soon, to spend a lot of time off the field in Perth, and couldn't open the batting in either inning. Marnus Labuschagne was pushed up the order in the first essay while Head played a swashbuckling hand as Australia chased down 205 in a little more than 28 overs in the fourth innings, leaving England skipper Ben Stokes "shell-shocked".

Head has had a lot of success in Tests at No.5 but opens in white-ball cricket. Khawaja has said that he "should be right" to play in the second Test starting on Thursday, but has not been given any assurance about his spot in the playing XI. He averages 31.84 over the last two years with a solitary century. Head, meanwhile, is open to a place at the top of the order. "I'm happy. If that's what is needed to win a Test match, I'm fine with it," he told reporters as the Australian squad assembled for its first training session ahead of the Brisbane pink-ball Test. "I'm preparing for anything at this stage... There's a fair bit to work through. I've just got here. We haven't really had many conversations over the last week. It's been about just spending some time out of the game as much as you can. You don't get much time to chill out in a massive series like this, where it's pretty full-on every single day." Head argued that batting orders were "slightly overrated". "We've seen it in red-ball [Tests] but particularly probably pink-ball [Tests] as well. Non-traditional stuff, with double nightwatchmen, how you use orders, and how you use players in certain situations. It's ever-evolving, and we'll see where we get to," the left-hander



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said. "I think you could use this order and these players in a range of different ways and whatever ways that is to win games of cricket." "All options are on the table and have been for a long period of time about where this team can potentially get better, and where there's opportunities to potentially win games of cricket in moments," McDonald had said after the Perth Test.

Mohanlal, Priyadarshan made a pan-Indian film for Rs 2.5 crore, completed shoot in 60 days; but couldn't recoup its massive budget



Although the Malayalam film industry has witnessed several iconic actor-director duos over the decades, not many have matched the fame and success of the Mohanlal-Priyadarshan team. From Poochakkoru Mookkuthi, Boeing Boeing, Aram + Aram = Kinnaram, Mazha Peyyunnu Maddalam Kottunnu, and Thalavattam to Vellanakalude Nadu, Chithram, Vandanam, Kilukkam, Abhimanyu, Adwaitam, Midhunam, Thenmavin Kombath, Minnaram, Chandralekha and Kakkakuyil, the two have gifted the audience with several ever-memorable works. Though most of their movies emerged as blockbusters, setting box-office records, a few underperformed, much to the disappointment of the two and their fans. Nonetheless, even these titles have earned a cult following over the years, and among them, the most notable is the epic historical drama Kaalapani (1996).

Don't Miss | Eko: Dinjith Ayyathan, Bahul Ramesh pull off a KG George; use ecofeminism to show how men restrict women under the guise of protection Widely regarded as one of the most technically accomplished and visually rich Malayalam movies of all time, Kaalapani's screenplay was written by T Damodaran and Priyadarshan based on a story developed by the latter. Bankrolled jointly by Mohanlal's Pranavam Arts and R Mohan's Shogun Films, it was the costliest Malayalam film until then. Primarily set in 1915, the film chronicled the lives of those incarcerated in the Cellular Jail (Kaalapani) at Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for their connection with or participation in the Indian independence movement. Mounted on a massive budget of Rs 2.5 crore, according to a 1995 report by India Today, at a time when most Malayalam movies cost around Rs 1 crore, Priyadarshan did not compromise on any of its aspects. The Mohanlal-starrer featured some of Indian cinema's biggest names. While its music

was crafted by "Isaignani" Ilaiyaraaja, its cinematography and editing were handled by Santosh Sivan and N Gopalakrishnan, respectively. The film also boasted art direction by Sabu Cyril, special effects by ST Venky, and audiography by Deepan Chatterji. The cast, apart from Mohanlal, included some of the biggest names in the entertainment world, such as Tabu, Prabhu, Amrith Puri, Alex Draper, John Kolvenbach, Sreenivasan, Cochin Haneefa, Delhi Ganesh, Sankaradi, Vineeth, Annu Kapoor, Nedumudi Venu, Maniyanpilla Raju, and Tinnu Anand. And needless to say, all of them contributed significantly to Kaalapani's technical and artistic grandeur. Although a period movie that required immense work and featured so many artistes, including hundreds of background actors, Priyadarshan reportedly completed Kaalapani's shooting in just about 60 days. While some portions were filmed in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the makers also constructed the sets of the Cellular Jail on 1.5 acres at the Murugulaya Studio in Madras (now Chennai) for Rs 12 lakh.

Reportedly, the costumes alone cost about Rs 25-30 lakh. The movie's post-production work, meanwhile, took four months to complete. The Mohanlal-starrer eventually hit the screens on April 6, 1996. Besides Malayalam, Kaalapani was also dubbed and released in Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu languages, making it the first proper pan-Indian Malayalam film, before the term even found its way into our vocabulary. Interestingly, the movie's Hindi dubbing rights were bought by Amitabh Bachchan Corporation Limited (ABCL). Kaalapani was reportedly the first Malayalam film to be recorded in Dolby Stereo, and according to Manorama Online, many A-class theatres in Kerala upgraded their sound systems for its release to ensure it was presented as the makers envisioned it to be, offering audiences the best experience possible. Despite raking in big bucks and emerging as one of 1996's biggest grossers in Malayalam, Kaalapani's overall performance couldn't match its hefty budget. Thus, the movie reportedly became a box office failure. Nonetheless, the Mohanlal-starrer swept both the National and Kerala State Film Awards. While Kaalapani earned Sabu Cyril, Santosh Sivan, Deepan Chatterji, and ST Venky the National Film Awards for their contributions in the respective departments, it also won the Second Best Film at the Kerala State Film Awards, besides earning Mohanlal his third Kerala State Film Award for Best Actor. The movie won four more trophies at the Kerala State Film Awards, thus dominating that edition of the ceremony. Although the movie underperformed at the box office, Kaalapani is regarded as one of the finest works of nearly everyone involved in it, both in front of and behind the camera.

Is Mammooty the villain in Kalamkaval? What's the film's connection to Cyanide Mohan? Megastar answers burning questions



With just days remaining for the release of Kalamkaval, the makers of the movie have shifted into top gear with its promotions, and cineastes are eagerly waiting to see what Mammooty has in store this time. The megastar's first release since his comeback following a short hiatus due to a health scare, Kalamkaval is one of the most anticipated Malayalam movies at the moment, and the recently released trailer has only increased the hype. Now, Mammooty himself has shared some intriguing details about the film, further fueling the buzz. During a conversation with actor-screenwriter Santhi Mayadevi, the actor was asked if he was playing the hero or the villain in the movie, as rumours suggest that Kalamkaval features him as an antagonist. "Even other (non-lead) characters can show heroism, right? At the same time, villains can also be major characters. If we start categorising roles, we may end up losing good ones. Had I asked for another role in Bramayugam (2024), they might have agreed. But this (Kodumon Potti) turned out to be even better. Once you graduate to senior roles, you get to choose from a much wider range of options," he said. About his character in Kalamkaval, the actor observed, "He is not a good soul." Ever since the movie's announcement, many have been wondering what the term Kalamkaval means. During the conversation, Santhi and Mammooty decoded it, revealing its connection to a ritualistic performing art popular in southern Kerala. When asked if it was linked to the battle between Goddess Bhadrakali and the asura Darika, the megastar confirmed this and noted, "It's a ritual organised during a festival (Kaliyoottu). On this occasion, the person dressed as Bhadrakali runs around searching for Darika. This ritual is popular in only a few temples in the southern districts of Kerala. Our movie also features a symbolic Bhadrakali in search of a Darika." Reacting to speculations that his character in Kalamkaval is inspired by notorious serial killer Cyanide Mohan, Mammooty stated that there is no direct connection between the two. Mammooty in Kalamkaval. (Credit: Facebook/@mammoottykampanyofficial) Is Mammooty's character inspired by Cyanide Mohan? Reacting to speculations that his character is inspired by notorious serial killer Mohan Kumar alias Cyanide Mohan, Mammooty stated that there is no direct connection between the two. The actor, however, mentioned, "The character does use cyanide, yes. Though there's no connection to Cyanide Mohan's life, one could say that Kalamkaval is based on one such person. Many similar people have been caught over the years. Every movie is a mix of real incidents and fiction, right? So, the makers of Kalamkaval may have also been inspired by certain real-life incidents." Considering that Mammooty

has been leading by example in choosing challenging roles, thus consistently pushing his boundaries as an actor and inspiring both his contemporaries and successors to shed their inhibitions, Santhi also asked him how he cultivated such levels of bravery that has helped him swim against the tide. Mentioning that one won't land remarkable and unconventional roles without showing courage, the megastar maintained that his primary aim has always been to satisfy the actor within him. Kalamkaval trailer and release date "I don't think I do them out of courage alone, but desire. I don't want to ignore the actor in me. I want to ensure he earns a position and is properly fed. I want to satisfy him. It's the actor in me that I give the most importance to. The rest (superstardom) came afterwards. Though I don't have any disrespect to any of that, my ultimate preference is the actor in me," he added. Also starring Vinayakan in a key role, Kalamkaval is directed by debutant Jithin K Jose. Bankrolled by Mammooty Kampany, its story and screenplay have been crafted by director Jithin along with Jishnu Sreekumar. The movie features cinematography by Faisal Ali, music by Mubeeb Majeed, editing by Praveen Prabhakar, and production design by Shajie Naduvil. Kalamkaval will hit the screens on Friday, December 5.

Suneel Darshan recalls producers calling Akshay Kumar 'kachra', putting Dhadkan, Hera Pheri on hold: 'He was in tears...'

Akshay Kumar is one of the most bankable actors in the industry today; however, there was a phase early in his career when he was not a favourite among film producers. In a recent conversation with Bollywood Thikana, director Suneel Darshan revealed that during a period of consecutive flops, producers turned him down, some even going as far as to call him kachra (garbage).

Recalling the time from the Jaanwar shoot when Akshay and Suneel grew closer, the director said, "During Jaanwar, Akshay had grown very close to me. He had a phase where he was rejected and ridiculed. Big filmmakers of today held on to a opinion that time that Akshay was kachra or rubbish. He was not looked up to. That time Dhadkan was put on hold, Hera Pheri had gotten shelved, and I presume none of his films were doing well. So the films were not moving forward." Suneel Darshan also recalled a time when Akshay Kumar was in tears after a producer misbehaved with him. He said, "There was a film that came before us. One day, Akshay came to my office, and he was very upset. He was in tears and confessed that he went to the producer, the film was supposed to release on Friday, and not a single poster was up for it. The producer spoke very rudely to him and said heartbreaking things.

Shah Rukh Khan faces harsh desert sun as he launches eyewear collection from Aryan Khan's brand



Shah Rukh Khan and his son Aryan Khan are going from strength to strength, whether it's with their Bollywood projects or with the luxury brand D'YAVOL. After launching alcohol and streetwear verticals, the brand has now unveiled its eyewear collection. SRK made the announcement through a promo that he, Aryan, and D'YAVOL shared on their social media handles on Sunday. In the promo, Shah Rukh walks into a desert, wearing a white ganji and blue denims. As he sits on a rock and stares at the brazen sun, a bead of sweat drops from his face onto the sand. The sand shakes, revealing a pair of sunglasses underneath. Shah Rukh picks them up, brushes off the sand, and admires them. As he wears the sunglasses and declares, "And now, it's time," a life-sized pair of sunglasses emerge

out of nowhere to provide coolth and protection from the sunlight to Shah Rukh in the middle of the desert. He smiles and rests on the rock.

"Step into the light with the inaugural D'YAVOL X eyewear collection. Inspired by my journey, each piece is handcrafted in Japan with precision-milled titanium, polished acetate, and custom-engineered components," wrote Shah Rukh Khan along with the promo. In an interview with Vogue, Aryan Khan revealed that Shah Rukh Khan had been persuading him to launch an eyewear collection under the D'YAVOL brand, particularly since sunglasses is his favourite accessory. "He has been the biggest fan of glasses for as long as I can remember. From the start, he kept saying to make eyewear. It took time because we wanted the pieces handmade in Japan by the right people," said Aryan.

Aryan also revealed how Shah Rukh's testing of the product really helped the brand since the actor is used to wearing sunglasses at a stretch for a long period of time, even sometimes for "10 hours straight." "He was very clear that the metal had to be titanium because it is so light. Otherwise it starts hurting your nose," said Aryan, adding, "His feedback saved us a few rounds of mistakes." D'YAVOL also found an interesting product placement in Aryan Khan's directorial debut, The Ba***ds of Bollywood, which dropped on Netflix in September. The show, produced by Shah Rukh Khan and wife Gauri Khan's banner Red Chillies Entertainment, had a key Bollywood party in the opening episode, which was "sponsored by D'YAVOL." The show, starring Lakshya, Sahher Bamma, Bobby Deol, Mona Singh, Raghav Juyal, Manoj Pahwa, Karan Johar, Manish Chaudhari, Arshad Warsi, Gautami Kapoor, and Anya Singh, revolves around an outsider from Delhi who becomes the new, emerging face of Bollywood. It's co-written by Aryan, Bilal Siddiqi, and Manav Chauhan.

Jaya Bachchan slam paparazzi 'in ganda, tight pants'; how she's social media's 'most hated': 'I don't give a damn'



Veteran actor Jaya Bachchan is known for firmly confronting paparazzi when they crowd her for photos. In a recent conversation with Barkha Dutt on #WeTheWomen, Jaya said that while she shares a good relationship with the media, she does not feel the same way about the paparazzi. She even referred to them as "rats" who can invade anyone's privacy with just a mobile phone. The actor also criticised the trend of celebrities calling paparazzi to the airport to be photographed inten-

tionally.

Talking about about her relationship with the media paparazzi, Jaya said, My relationship with media is fantastic, I am the product of media. But my relationship with paparazzi is zero. Who are these people? Are they trained to be representing the people of this country? You call them media? I come from media, my father was a journalist. I have immense, tremendous respect for such people. "The veteran actor added, "But yeh jo bahar gande, tight pant pehnke, hath mein mobile leke (they were cheap tight pants and have a mobile in their hand), they think just because they have a mobile, they can take your picture and say what they want. And, the kind of comments they pass! What kind of people are these people? Kahan se aate hain, kis tarah ka education hai? Kya background hai? They will represent us? Just because they can get through to YouTube or whatever social platform?"

Recalling how a staff member once told her about the hate she receives on social media, Jaya Bachchan shared, "It's very interesting – one of my staff in Delhi said that she doesn't use any social network because I am the most hated person on social media. I said that I don't care, I don't give a damn. You hate me, it's your opinion. My opinion is that I dislike you immensely. You think that you can be like a chuha (rat) who can get into somebody's house with a mobile camera." Several young actors today enjoy a massive social media following and are frequently seen in paparazzi videos. However, Jaya Bachchan does not approve of the practice of celebrities calling them to the airport just to get photographed. "I don't know them. I don't know whoever you are talking about. My grandson (Agastya Bachchan) is also young, but he is not on any social network. If you have to call people to take your photos at the airport, what kind of celebrity are you?" she questioned. On the work front, Jaya Bachchan was last seen in Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahani in 2023. She will next star in Vikas Bahl's Dil Ka Darwaaza Khol Na Darling.

When Farah Khan said Karan Johar was the best tarot reader, told her to marry Shirish & release Om Shanti Om with Saawariya

Farah Khan says Karan Johar is the best tarot card reader she's ever been to. Farah Khan says Karan Johar is the best tarot card reader she's ever been to. Farah Khan and Karan Johar's friendship goes a long way back, all the way to Aditya Chopra's 1995 seminal directorial debut Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, in which the former choreographed a song and the latter was an actor as well as an Assistant Director. They went on to collaborate on several of Karan's blockbuster directorials and production ventures.

But it's a lesser known fact that one thing that Farah would approach Karan for in the early 2000s is to read her tarot cards. "He was the best tarot card reader I ever went to. He's also my very good friend. I didn't tell him that I'm seeing Shirish," recalled Farah. She dated editor Shirish Kunder, who's seven years younger than her, before tying the knot with him in 2004. "Karan opened my cards and said, 'B'tch! You haven't told me you're seeing somebody.' I said, 'Really?' He said, 'Listen, this person is very good for you. Look at this card. Just marry this person.' He's fabulous," said Farah Khan in an old interview on ZEE Cafe. Farah and Shirish have now been married for 21 years and are parents to triplets.

Farah Khan also revealed that after reading her tarot cards, Karan Johar strongly suggested she release her 2007 reincarnation saga Om Shanti Om on Diwali, even though Sanjay Leela Bhansali's romantic drama Saawariya was already slated for a release that day. "I asked him, 'Should we come on that date or not?' He said, 'Don't let this date go,'" recalled Farah. Om Shanti Om, which reunited director Farah with Shah Rukh Khan three years after their 2004 blockbuster Main Hoon Na, turned out to be an even bigger hit. It earned over Rs 90 crore at the domestic box office, thus becoming the biggest hit in the history of Indian cinema till then. Meanwhile, Saawariya bombed at the box of-



fice despite Bhansali's track record. Before Saawariya, Sanjay Leela Bhansali had delivered a hat-trick of hits with Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam in 1999, Devdas (starring Shah Rukh Khan) in 2002, and Black in 2005. Saawariya marked the launchpad of future stars Ranbir Kapoor and Sonam Kapoor, and also featured Salman Khan and Rani Mukerji in extended cameos, but it earned only Rs 22 crore at the domestic box office. The clash between Om Shanti Om and Saawariya also escalated to a point that it caused a fallout between both makers. Farah recalled she made up with Bhansali when they met at a kids' birthday party. He even offered Farah her maiden acting role in his sister Bela Segal's 2012 romantic comedy Shirin Farhad Ki Toh Nikal Padi, which also bombed at the box office. "So, he took revenge on me after that actually, by offering me that film," Farah quipped.