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Telangana: Sankranti holidays likely from 10-16 January

The School Education Department has announced holidays for the Sankranti festival for seven days in Telangana, i.e. from January 10th to 16th. Initially, holidays were scheduled for January 11th to 15th, but the government has confirmed January 14th as Bhogi, January 15th as Sankranti, and January 16th as Kanuma. With January 10th falling on a second Saturday, the holidays have been revised accordingly. Schools are set to reopen on Saturday, January 17th. An official announcement from the Education Department is expected to be released shortly.

Chief Secretaries Talks Insightful, Says PM Modi



New Delhi, Dec 27

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday chaired the fifth national conference of chief secretaries, where he had insightful discussions on various issues relating to governance and reforms, officials said. The conference marked another important milestone in strengthening the Centre-state partnership through structured and sustained dialogue on national development priorities.

"Had insightful discussions on various issues relating to governance and reforms during the National Conference of Chief Secretaries being held in Delhi," the Prime Minister posted on X.

The event was attended by principal secretaries to the Prime Minister P.K. Mishra and Shaktikanta Das, Cabinet secretary T.V. Somanathan, members of the Niti Aayog, and chief secretaries of all the states and Union territories.

Based on the extensive deliberations between the Central ministries, departments, Niti Aayog, states and UTs and domain experts, the conference will deliberate on the theme "Human Capital for Viksit Bharat", covering

the best practices and strategies for the states and UTs to follow, over the weekend.

Special emphasis is being placed on five key areas — early childhood education, schooling, skilling, higher education, sports and extracurricular activities.

According to the schedule of the conference, six special sessions will be held over the weekend on deregulation in states; technology in governance: opportunities, risks and mitigation; agristack for smart supply chain and market linkages; one state, one world-class tourist destination; Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Swadeshi and plans for a Left Wing Extremism future.

Besides, focused deliberations will be held on heritage and manuscript preservation and digitisation and "Ayush for All - Integrating Knowledge in Primary Healthcare Delivery".

Anchored in the Prime Minister's vision of cooperative federalism, the conference serves as the forum where the Centre and the states collaborate, designing a unified roadmap to maximise India's human capital potential and accelerate inclusive, future-ready growth.

Congress Leaders Call for United Effort to Strengthen Party, Deliver Welfare Schemes



"Taj Khan, Kagaznagar, December 27 (Indian Chronicle)" "Senior Congress leaders have called upon party leaders, workers and supporters to work with greater enthusiasm to strengthen the Congress party and ensure that welfare schemes reach the people effectively." State Library Chairman and District Observer

Dr. Riyaz, District Congress Committee (DCC) President Atram Sugunakka, and Adilabad MLC Dande Vithal made the appeal while addressing the District Congress Party executive committee expansion meeting held at the MLC's residence in the town on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the leaders said that those who work hard with discipline and dedication within the party would be given due recognition. They urged party cadres to play an active role in ensuring that the welfare programmes being implemented by the Congress government under the leadership of the Chief Minister reach every eligible beneficiary. Later, applications were received from interested leaders for various posts in the district executive committee. Party leaders, workers, supporters and public representatives from across the district participated in the meeting, which witnessed an enthusiastic response.

Medchal-Malkajgiri Munnur Kapu Association New Committee Takes Oath at Keesaragutta



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE)" "The oath-taking ceremony of the newly constituted Medchal-Malkajgiri District Munnur Kapu Association committee was held in a grand manner on Saturday at Keesaragutta. On this occasion, the complete district-level committee was formally announced. Newly elected district president Velpula Srinivas Patel, general secretary Chatlapalli Nursing Rao Patel, along with vice presidents, secretaries, joint secretaries, executive secretaries, publicity secretaries, chief advisors, advisors, and executive committee members took oath of office. State president Sardar Putam Purushottam Rao Patel attended the event as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, he said that members should dedicate time not only to their families but also to their community and society. He stressed the need to grow as a collective force rather than as individuals and stated that those who work for the community should be recognised with responsibilities. He noted that the united Ranga Reddy district committee had served as a role model. He announced that new committee elections would be conducted soon and named Mamindla Srinivas Patel as the election in-charge. He called upon Munnur Kapu leaders working in different political parties to remain united and urged that, during elections, only one candidate from

Crime rates declined, policing efficiency improved in '25: Police

Gadwal: The District Superintendent of Police Srinivasa Rao on Friday released the Annual Police Report 2025 in a press meet held in the morning at the district police office.

The latest comparative crime and policing performance data for 2024 and 2025 revealed a mixed but largely progressive picture of law and order, highlighting improved efficiency in policing, crime detection, and judicial outcomes, while also pointing to areas that require focused attention.



Charge Sheet Filed in Pushpa 2 Stampede Incident

Hyderabad, Dec 27

The Chikkadpally police have officially filed a charge sheet regarding the tragic stampede at the premiere screening of Pushpa 2, which occurred in December 2024.

The charge sheet identifies 23 individuals as accused, attributing the incident predominantly to the negligence of Sandhya Theatre's management. Among those named, the lead actor of Pushpa 2, Allu Arjun, is referred to as A11, while the theatre management has been designated as A1. Additionally, three theatre managers and eight bouncers have been included in the document. The

police have also noted four eyewitnesses as part of their findings.

The stampede took place on the night of December 3rd, during the film's premiere screenings at Sandhya Theatre. Tragically, a local resident named Revathi lost her life in the chaos, while her son Sritej sustained serious injuries and was rushed to hospital for treatment.

In relation to this incident, Allu Arjun had previously been arrested and spent time in custody. The case remains under investigation as authorities continue to address the circumstances surrounding the unfortunate event.

Cold wave grips AP, Telangana as temperatures drop



Hyderabad, Dec 27

The cold weather is making residents in the Telugu states shiver, with temperatures falling day by day. Many districts in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are experiencing single-digit readings, leading to a reluctance among people to venture outdoors. The Meteorological Department has indicated that this severe cold snap is expected to persist until December 31. Following that, a rise in temperatures is anticipated, signalling a respite from the cold.

Weather experts predict a normal winter at the start of January, although colder conditions are expected to

return around Sankranti. After that, temperatures are forecasted to decrease again during the last week of the month. The Hyderabad Meteorological Centre has alerted that temperatures across Telangana may be 3 to 4 degrees below normal in the coming four to five days.

Telangana Weather Analysis and Warnings for the Next Three Days:

The Hyderabad Meteorological Centre reports that lower-level winds in Telangana are predominantly blowing from the east and southeast. This shift is likely to exacerbate the cold over the next three days, with dry weather forecasted for Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. Minimum temperatures in certain areas of the state are predicted to drop by 2°C to 3°C below the seasonal average.

Andhra Pradesh Weather Update

Conditions in Andhra Pradesh are also trending towards cooler temperatures, with dry weather expected. The forecast suggests that temperatures will remain 2 to 3 degrees lower than normal over the next few days. Notably, intense cold continues to affect the Paderu agency area of Alluri district, where temperatures have been recorded at 5 degrees Celsius in Minumuluru, 6 degrees in Araku, and 9 degrees in Paderu. The meteorological department has warned that further declines in temperature may be forthcoming.

Puppala Bhaskar Participates in Sandal Garvi Programme in Suraram Division



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE)" "BRS Division President Puppala Bhaskar participated as the chief guest in the Sandal Garvi programme organised under the leadership of Irfan at Sonia Gandhi Nagar in Suraram Division of the Kothbullaupuram constituency. On the occasion, special prayers were offered. Speaking at the programme, Puppala Bhaskar said that India is a country of unity in diversity and a symbol of communal harmony. He stated that Hindus and Muslims have been living together like brothers for generations, reflecting the spirit of Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb. He emphasised that peace and development in society are possible only when mutual respect and harmony among different religions are maintained. He added that such programmes play an important role in strengthening brotherhood and social unity, and called upon people to move forward together in harmony. Several local leaders and residents, including Asif, Asra, Rani, Nagesh, Jandin, Ravikumar and others, were present at the programme.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, CHINTHAM SANTENNA, formerly known as CHINTHAL SANTI, resident of H.No. 5-209, near water tank of village BOATH, mandal Boath District Adilabad, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from CHINTHAL SANTI to CHINTHAM SANTENNA for all purposes. Henceforth, I shall be known and called by my new name CHINTHAM SANTENNA for all official and personal records.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

India's labour reforms with caveats

The objective behind the long-awaited labour codes is no doubt laudable, as they promise minimum wages, enhanced social security and safety net for employees and easing regulations and compliance norms for employers, but several areas of concern need to be addressed with fairness and sensitivity. Among the issues flagged by the labour unions is the freedom given to the employers to fire employees at will and convert permanent jobs into fixed-term contract work. The working hours in factories have been increased from 9 to 12 hours, and in shops and establishments from 9 to 10 hours. Trade unions will lose their relevance, as their membership base will be depleted due to workers being employed on contract. There is a strong justification for labour reforms in the country to reflect the new realities of the industry. As India aspires to become a global economic powerhouse, it needs to shed the baggage of archaic laws originally meant to protect the interests of the colonial masters. A new beginning has been made with the replacement of 29 central laws with four labour codes, covering wages, industrial relations, social security and occupational safety and working conditions. The move is being projected by the government as a historic reform that will simplify compliance, extend social security and strengthen worker protections. The rollout promises timely wages, formal appointment letters, minimum-wage guarantees and annual health check-ups for employees. Recognition of gig and platform workers within the social-security architecture is perhaps.

Congress Leaders Extend Courteous Greetings to Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta

““KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):“Senior leaders of the Uppal Assem-



bly Constituency Congress Party paid a courtesy visit to Radhika Gupta, who has recently assumed charge as the Zonal Commissioner at the newly established Uppal Zonal Office, and extended their warm congratulations by presenting a floral bouquet. Those who conveyed their greetings included senior Congress leaders Janampally Venkateshwar Reddy, former Uppal Circle Municipal Chairman Mekala Shiva Reddy, senior Congress leader Gaddam Ravikumar, former Councillor Kondal Reddy, and others. On this occasion, the Congress leaders brought to the notice of the Zonal Commissioner several issues related to the Uppal Circle and requested her to give due attention to addressing them.

Congress Leader Janampally Venkateshwara Reddy Resolves Drainage Problem in Maheshwari Nagar

““KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):“Residents of Maheshwari Nagar Colony in Habsiguda Division brought to the notice of senior Congress leader Janampally Venkateshwara Reddy that drainage water was overflowing and causing severe inconvenience in the area. Responding immediately, Venkateshwara Reddy took up the issue with



the Sewerage and Hyderabadi Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HWSSB) officials. Acting on his request, the Water Board deputed DE staff to the locality and resolved the drainage problem. The residents, who had been facing hardships due to the drainage issue for several days, expressed their gratitude to Janampally Venkateshwara Reddy for his prompt intervention and effective resolution of the problem.

CC Road Construction Worth Rs1.25 Crore in Uppal New Bharat Nagar: Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Inspects Development Works



this initiative, the corporator extensively toured Surya Nagar and New Bharat Nagar areas in Uppal. She inspected the CC road construction works worth ?1.25 crore along with Assistant Engineer Raj Kumar and local residents. “Speaking on the occasion, Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy stated that CC road construction works in New Bharat Nagar Colony will commence shortly, aiming to improve road infrastructure and provide better connectivity for residents. “Several colony representatives and local leaders participated in the inspection, including Honorary President Poosa Mallesham, Vice President Mettu Kanaka Reddy, Bandi Malla Reddy, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, General Secretary Kappari Yelles Kumar, temple committee members and vice presidents Vemula Durga Reddy, Sugamanji Choudamma, Gundlapalli Malathi, Tungala Venkatamma, along with Annapureddy Venkata Reddy, Panga Narasimha Reddy, Domakonda Narsimlu, Poola Ligam, Ravi Yadav, Mishri Lal Gonde, K. Venkata Subba Rao, and several New Bharat Nagar colony residents.

Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatrao Participates in Ayyappa Swamy Pujas



““KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):“Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatrao participated in the 19th Maha Ayyappa Swamy Maha Padi Puja, organized under the leadership of Division Yuva Morcha General Secretary Masireddy Prabhakar Reddy at Indranagar in the Ramanthapur Division. Speaking on the occasion, the Corporator said that Lord Ayyappa is a deity of immense spiritual power and that devotees who worship Him with faith and devotion will be blessed with

all auspiciousness. She advised devotees to worship the Lord by strictly following discipline and religious observances. “Later, Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatrao also participated in the Irumudi procession held at the Sri Rama Sahita Satyanarayana Swamy Temple, organized under the guidance of Narayana Guru Swamy. Several devotees and local leaders, including Vemula Tirupathaiah, Pentam Shailender, and Alladi Niranjan, among others, took part in the religious programmes.

KTR Congratulates Dal Singh and Lakkini



““Bhadradri kothagudem, December 27, Indian Chronicle:“Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao (KTR) congratulated Bhukya Dal Singh Naik, a Congress leader from the Yellandu constituency, and Lakkini Surender, former Chairman of the Tekulapally Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, who recently joined the BRS party in the wake of the ongoing Gram Panchayat elections. “During KTR’s visit to Mahabubabad district on Saturday, Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandran introduced Dal Singh Naik and Lakkini Surender to him. On the occasion, the two leaders met KTR formally and presented him with a shawl and laddu prasadam brought specially from the Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple at Bhadrachalam. “Speaking on the occasion, KTR said that the joining of Dal Singh Naik and Lakkini Surender would further strengthen the BRS party. He advised the leaders to work collectively to strengthen the party at the grassroots level and address public issues effectively. KTR expressed confidence that with united efforts, BRS would emerge as a strong and decisive political force in the Yellandu constituency in the coming days. “Former Yellandu MLA Banoth Haripriya Naik, former Library Corporation Chairman Dindigala Rajender, along with BRS district and mandal-level leaders and party workers, were present at the programme.

Spiritual Aura at Kota Educational Institutions Jeeyar Swami’s Blessings at Kota Public School & Kota Junior College – Bhagavad Gita Orientation for Students



““Chittimalla Mahendar, Karimnagar Correspondent, December 27, Indian Chronicle:“Karimnagar witnessed a spiritually enriching atmosphere on Saturday at Kota Public School and Kota Junior College. Sri Sri Tridandi Devanatha Ramanuja Jeeyar Swami, along with Government Whip and Vemulawada MLA Aadi Srinivas and Yadagiri Shekhar Rao (TRSMA President), visited the institutions and extended their blessings to the Kota family. “On this occasion, special orientation sessions were conducted for students, focusing on the life values enshrined in the Bhagavad Gita. The sessions highlighted key aspects such as sense of duty, discipline, ethics, and moral values. Addressing the students, Jeeyar Swami emphasized that inculcating spiritual values from a young age helps students grow into individuals with strong character and higher ideals. “As the chief guest, Sri Sri Tridandi Devanatha Ramanuja Jeeyar Swami stated, “The Bhagavad Gita is not merely a scripture; it is a guide to life. The principles of Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Jnana Yoga

Spurthi Group Felicitates Bommagani Rukkaiah on Receiving Lifetime Achievement Award in Glass Blowing Technology

““NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“The Telangana Praja Samkruthika Kendra – Spurthi Group felicitated senior Spurthi Group leader Bommagani Rukkaiah on Friday in recognition of his achievement in receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award in Glass Blowing Technology. The felicitation programme was held at the Spurthi Group office at 11:00 AM. The programme was presided over by Godugu Yadagiri Rao, in-charge of the Spurthi Group. Speaking on the occasion, Yadagiri Rao said that Bommagani Rukkaiah served for several years in the Glass Blowing Division related to Science and Technology at Osmania University. During his tenure, he made significant contributions by designing and manufacturing a wide range of glass-blowing instruments that supported numerous scientific research projects. He further stated that Rukkaiah maintained close association with the Andhra Pradesh



chapter and contributed extensively at the All India level. In recognition of his lifelong service and dedication, he was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the All India Chapter Convention held at IIT Madras on November 28, 2025. He said it was a matter of pride that such a distinguished personality is associated with the Spurthi Group. “Yadagiri Rao also highlighted Rukkaiah’s multifaceted talents, noting that he acted in more than 300 stage plays, showcasing his remarkable acting skills. In addition, he has served as a yoga instructor, training many individuals in yoga practices. He also contributed articles regularly to publications brought out by the Spurthi Group, proving himself to be a versatile and multi-talented personality. “On the occasion, speakers including Komati Ravi and Mallesham addressed the gathering. Prominent social movement leader Mallesham honoured Bommagani Rukkaiah by presenting him with handloom garments as a mark of respect. Responding after the felicitation, Bommagani Rukkaiah expressed his happiness and said he felt proud to have contributed to scientific research while working in the Glass Blowing Division at Osmania University. He stated that glass blowing technology plays a crucial role in various scientific and technological research fields. He also acknowledged that his association with the Spurthi Group and participation in its activities contributed significantly to his personal and professional growth. He assured that he would continue to extend his support and services to future programmes organized by the Spurthi Group and thanked all members for the honour bestowed upon him. Several members including Krishnamacharyulu, Abdul Raheem, Shivannarayana, Jayaraj, Srinivasa Rao, Gousia, Girish, Gummadi Hariprasad, M. Bhaskara Rao, Venkaiah, Komati Ravi, Mallesham, and Uma Maheswara Rao, among others, were present at the programme.

shown in the Gita lead students on the right path. Along with education, cultural and moral values are equally essential. “Government Whip and Vemulawada MLA Aadi Srinivas lauded Kota educational institutions for giving equal importance to moral values along with academics. He said such programs boost students’ self-confidence and shape them into responsible and socially committed citizens. “TRSMA President Yadagiri Shekhar Rao remarked that true holistic development is possible only when spirituality is integrated with modern education. He appreciated the efforts of Kota institutions and suggested organizing more such value-based programs in the future. “Speaking on the occasion, Kota Educational Institutions Chairman Dr. D. Anji Reddy said that the vision of the Kota institutions is to nurture students into well-rounded individuals excelling in all fields. “The management of Kota Educational Institutions extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests. Principals, students, teachers, and parents participated in large numbers, making the program a grand success. The event concluded on a spiritually uplifting note with Jeeyar Swami offering special blessings to the Kota family.

Boduppal Circle Gets New Deputy Commissioner



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"A. Shailaja assumed charge as the Deputy Commissioner of Boduppal Circle on Thursday. Following the merger of Peerzadiguda Circle with Boduppal Circle, all files related to Peerzadiguda Circle were formally handed over to the Boduppal Circle administration. The files were transferred by outgoing Deputy Commissioner T.V.S.N. Trileshwar Rao as part of the administrative transition process. The handover marked the official integration of Peerzadiguda Circle into Boduppal Circle, aimed at streamlining civic administration and improving service delivery. AMC Engineer Shyam Sundar Rao, Manager Praveen Kumar, Kranti, and other staff members were present during the occasion.



(Mandava Srisailam... Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... December 27):- On the occasion of Bharatiya Janata Party State General Secretary and Supreme Court Advocate Vemula Ashok being appointed as a Senior Panel Counsel for the Central Government, he was felicitated at the Hyderabad High Court. High Court Advocate Vandana Padakanti and others participated in the event.

Rs.50 Lakh Underground Drainage Project Launched at Vampuguda Gaurinadhapuram



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy on Saturday assured residents that he would make all-out efforts for the overall development of colonies across the constituency. He stated that providing basic civic infrastructure was essential for improving the quality of life of people. The MLA laid the foundation stone for underground drainage (UGD) works estimated at Rs.50 lakh at Vampuguda Gaurinadhapuram in Kapra Division. Addressing the gathering, he said that the UGD project would help resolve long-standing drainage and sanitation issues in the area and prevent health hazards during the monsoon season. He emphasized that the state government was giving priority to strengthening civic amenities such as drainage systems, internal roads, drinking water supply, and street lighting in residential areas. He also assured residents that developmental works would be taken up in a planned and transparent manner, based on public needs. Bandari Lakshma Reddy further stated that public cooperation was essential for the successful implementation of development projects and urged residents to bring local issues to the notice of public representatives for timely resolution. BRS Kapra Division President Bairi Naveen Goud, along with party leaders, activists, and local residents, attended the programme.

Ayyappa Swamy Temple Annual Festival Celebrated with Grandeur



rituals were conducted from early morning. The celebrations began at 4 a.m. with Ganapati Homam, followed by Abhishekam, Kalashabhishekam, procession, Pushparpana, and Mahapadi Puja. Priests Shivakarthik and Vinith performed the rituals in a traditional and elaborate manner. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, Meerpeta HB Colony Corporator Prabhudas, former corporators Vajuri Pavan Reddy, Kotha Ramarao, and Golluri Ayyajayya attended the programme and offered special prayers. Later, Theertha Prasadam was distributed to devotees, followed by Annadanam. A large number of Ayyappa devotees took part in the Mahapadi Puja and other rituals. Temple office bearers including chief secretary Harinath Reddy, joint secretary Shekhar Chary, treasurer KAN Prasad, Niranjan Das, Manikantha Nayakulu, Dammaiguda ward members Vandala Yadagiri Goud, Sambanna Bolu Harigoud, Kanukula Rajinikanth Reddy, Naveen Goud, Shivakumar, Srikanth Goud, along with priests Shivakarthik, Vinith, and Siddhanta Panthulu actively participated in organising the event. The celebrations concluded with Annadanam, marking the successful completion of the annual festival amid devotional fervour."



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"The annual festival of the Sri Malai Sri Ayyappa Swamy Temple, located in Saibaba Nagar Colony of Kapra Division, was celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm on Saturday. Large numbers of devotees participated, making the event a visual and spiritual spectacle. Under the guidance of temple chairman Regalla Satish Reddy, Guruswamy, a series of religious

TWJF Urges Telangana Government to Amend Accreditation G.O. No. 252

"Taj Khan, Kaghaznagar, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):"The Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF) has urged the State government to amend Government Order No. 252, issued for the grant of accreditation cards to media journalists. A delegation of the Federation met the Special Commissioner of the Information and Public Relations Department, Ms. C.H. Priyanka, at the Information Bhavan in Hyderabad on Saturday and submitted a detailed representation highlighting the changes required in the G.O. The delegation included TWJF Founder President and State Convenor Mamidi Somaiah, Co-Conveners Pupulupu Anandam, Bandi Vijay Kumar, Tanneeru Srinivas and Kudithadi Bapura, along with leaders Raghuram, Padmanabha Rao and others. They held extensive discussions with the Commissioner on various provisions of the order. The Commissioner advised the Federation to submit specific recommendations and suggestions for appropriate amendments to the accreditation guidelines. The Federation strongly objected to the proposal of issuing different categories of accreditation cards for desk journalists and reporters. It also demanded revisions to the eligibility norms prescribed for weekly, fortnightly and



monthly publications. The representatives urged the government to withdraw the requirement mandating submission of a minimum of 45 issues for weeklies, 22 issues for fortnightlies and 11 issues for monthlies. They argued that such conditions would benefit only investors and publishing houses, while discouraging genuine journalists and forcing many out of the profession at an early stage. The Federation also opposed the clause requiring newspapers to submit certification from the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), stating that it would create unnecessary hurdles. They further sought relaxation of the stringent norms imposed on cable television channels. The representatives expressed concern that G.O. 252 appeared to impose a form of censorship on journalists. They also demanded that the requirement of 30 years of professional experience for certain eligibility criteria be reduced to 15 years.

Kuchipudi Dance Performances Enthrall at Uppal Mini Shilparamam



"KISHORE VADDEPALL, Uppal, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):"As part of the weekend cultural programs, Kuchipudi dance performances captivated the audience on Saturday evening at Uppal Mini Shilparamam. The disciples' troupe of Ayuncha Vinay Kumar presented an impressive Kuchipudi recital that drew warm appreciation from art lovers. The performances included items such as Pranamya Shirasa, Shlokanjali, Jhem Jhem, Ananda Tandavam,

Charanamule Nammiti, Ramayana Shabdam, Sarasamukhi, Himagiri Tanaye, Vinnaro Bhagymu, Mushika Vahana, and Jai Janardhana. The dancers Aradhya, Joshna, Siri Janardhana, Mithun, Lahari, Shanvi, Loukya, and others impressed the audience with their grace and expressive artistry. In addition, a Sambalpuri-Odisha folk dance performance sent by the South Zone Cultural Centre, Thanjavur, and presented by the troupe of Shashank Shankar Dubey, also enthralled the spectators and added vibrant folk flavour to the cultural evening.

Drinking water pipe line burst in Bowenpally center point



"Secunderabad Cantonment, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):"At Bowenpally center point chowrasta early morning on Saturday, the fresh water pipeline belonging to the military burst and a large amount of water was wasted. As the pipe line burst and the water was blowing up to the sky, the motorists and the pedestrians faced many problems. There was an article in Indian Chronicle that the pipeline leakage was happening in the past. The officials who responded have taken up the repair work of the pipe line leakage. However, all this is fine, but due to the poor quality of the leak repair work carried out by the authorities, the pipe line burst early on Saturday morning and the fresh water was wasted and the area turned into a pond. The local people are demanding that departmental action be taken against the concerned officials who acted negligently in the matter of pipeline repairs.

Heavy traffic jam in the morning due to night digging on the road..



"Secunderabad Cantonment, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):"At Bowenpally Bapuji Nagar chowrasta petrol station under the Cantonment Board on Friday midnight, unknown people dug big holes in the road causing huge traffic jams and many problems for the motorists in the early hours of Saturday morning. Motorists going out for various work in the morning, pedestrians especially vegetable traders suffered hell when unknown people dug big holes on the road. The locals are questioning what is the need of the people who dug holes on the road in the middle of the night to dig such big holes. However, after learning about the matter, Traffic SI Devidas, Sibandi Venkatesh, Chennaiah, Moti Lal, Huta Hutina brought the JCB and filled the potholes with the construction waste and regulated the traffic.



Venkateswara Swamy in special decoration.

“Secunderabad Cantonment, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):“ Devotees measure Sri Venkateswara Swami according to their means. In relation to Lord Venkateswara, the pujas in any temple are done in a very grand and traditional way. According to Agama Shastras, pujadikas, archanas and abhishekas are done. In this order, on the occasion of Dhanurmasam, the temple priests Pawan, Deepak and Srihari Swami decorated Sri Venkateswara Swami with 12 kg of pure butter and 14 kg of dry fruits on Saturday interestingly for Lord Venkateswara in Bowenpally New City Colony. Venkanna is worshiped here by the devotees who fulfill their wishes. A large number of devotees visited this temple. As Sri Venkateswara Swami is a lover of decoration, the Swami is decorated very beautifully on Saturday, which is the favorite day of the Swami. Especially in Dhanurmasam, it is customary to decorate the Swami with flowers and grains along with seasonal fruits given by the devotees. On this occasion, the members of the temple committee have congratulated the priests of the temple. On Tuesday, the temple will open at two o'clock on the day of Mukkoti Ekadashi and the members of the temple committee will allow the devotees to have darshan from 3 hours and 30 minutes after the special pujas.

MATHEMATICS AS A CELEBRATION OF INTELLECT AND INNOVATION.



“P.S.ASHOKAN“MEDIA TODAY BUREO“SSD Grammar High School Hosts “Math Marvel Carnival” on National Mathematics Day“On the auspicious occasion of National Mathematics Day, SSD Grammar High School, Sainagar, Allwyn Colony, commemorated the legacy of mathematics by organizing the “Math Marvel Carnival”, an engaging academic celebration aimed at fostering logical reasoning, creativity, and intellectual curiosity among students.“Addressing the gathering, the Principal of SSD Grammar High School, Smt. Surabi Tejaswini, paid rich tributes to the legendary mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, whose extraordinary intellect and timeless contributions continue to inspire generations worldwide. She observed that Ramanujan’s life stands as a shining example of how passion, perseverance, and an insatiable thirst for knowledge can overcome limitations and redefine human potential.“The Principal highlighted that, despite minimal formal education, Ramanujan’s unparalleled mathematical insight resulted in path-breaking theories that laid a strong foundation for modern mathematics. His journey, she noted, serves as a powerful reminder that true genius transcends bound-

aries of circumstance and convention.“Emphasising the importance of mathematics in everyday life, Smt. Surabi Tejaswini stated that mathematics is not merely confined to numbers and formulas, but is the language of logic, discipline, precision, and problem-solving. She added that the subject nurtures analytical thinking and equips students with essential skills to face real-world challenges with confidence and clarity.“She urged students to draw inspiration from Ramanujan’s life—to dream boldly, think deeply, and pursue excellence with dedication and integrity. She expressed confidence that the Math Marvel Carnival would rekindle curiosity, strengthen conceptual understanding, and instill a lifelong love for learning.“The event witnessed the active participation and support of Vice Principal Jayasri, Coordinators Aruna and Sunitha, along with teachers Rajani, Saipriya, and Sandhya, whose collective efforts contributed significantly to the success of the programme.“The celebration concluded on an inspiring note, reinforcing the message that National Mathematics Day should motivate every learner to explore the beauty of mathematics and strive for intellectual brilliance, innovation, and academic excellence.

Crime Rate Declines in Karimnagar Commissionerate in 2025

Overall Crime Down by 16.84%

Crimes Against Women Reduced by Over 5%

Rs 1.10 Crore Recovered in Cybercrime Cases

Karimnagar Police Commissioner Ghaus Alam



“CHITTIMALLA MAHENDAR, KARIMNAGAR CORRESPONDENT “DECEMBER 27, INDIAN CHRONICLE :“Karimnagar Police Commissionerate recorded significant progress in crime control during the year 2025, with an overall reduction in crime by 16.84 percent compared to the previous year, said Karimnagar Police Commissioner Ghaus Alam.“Releasing the Annual Police Report, the Commissioner stated that heinous crimes declined by 9.09 percent, while crimes against women were reduced by 5.18 percent. Though property offences witnessed a marginal increase of 3.73 percent, the detection rate improved by 10 percent and recovery of stolen property increased by 24 percent. Of the total stolen property worth ₹4.11 crore, property worth over ₹2.04 crore was successfully recovered.“Community policing and public cooperation played a vital role in achieving these results. Our aim is not only to reduce

crime but also to ensure justice for victims,” Commissioner Ghaus Alam said.“He further stated that major events such as Graduate MLC elections, Gram Panchayat elections, and festivals including Sri Rama Navami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Bathukamma, Dasara, Ramzan, and Bakrid were conducted peacefully without any untoward incidents.“On cybercrime, the Commissioner said that 2,437 complaints were received during 2025, out of which 280 cases were registered. Following court orders, more than ₹1.10 crore was refunded to cybercrime victims. Additionally, over 500 lost mobile phones were recovered through the CEIR portal.“Special focus was laid on the safety of women and children through SHE Teams, Bharosa Centres, and Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTU). As many as 247 awareness programmes were conducted by SHE Teams, and nine victims were rescued in human trafficking cases.“As part of enforcement activities, police seized 29 kilograms of ganja, registered 58 gambling cases, and booked 170 cases related to illegal sand transportation, seizing several vehicles. In traffic enforcement, 3.83 lakh e-challan cases were registered, while 17,491 over-speeding violations were detected using laser guns. A slight reduction in road accidents was also reported.“Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Ghaus Alam said that people-friendly policing, technology-driven initiatives, and community participation would continue to be the focus to make Karimnagar a safer commissionerate.“Additional DCPs Venkataramana and Bheemrao, ACPs Venkataswamy and Vijay Kumar, Reserve Inspector Kiran Kumar, along with several other officers and police personnel, were present during the programme.

Tribute to former DCCB Chairman Kolluri

“K Sadanand “Husnabad December 27,“ Former MLA Satish honored Kondru Ravinder Rao, former Chairman of Karimnagar District Cooperative Central Bank, DCCB and State TESCOB Chairman.“Speaking at a meeting organized at Padmanayaka function hall in the district center on Saturday, he said that Kondru Ravinder’s way of handling the duties of all the farmers without giving in to corruption while providing distinguished services in the cooperative sector for 20 years is commendable.“TRS state leaders Vamsidhar Reddy and others participated in this program.



Appeal to Allocate Permanent Land for Tarnaka Government Primary School

“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, December 27:“Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Deputy Mayor Ms. Mothe Srilatha Shobhan Reddy met Hyderabad District Collector Ms. Hari Chandana Dasari, IAS, at her office and submitted a representation regarding the issue faced by the Government Primary School functioning on the premises of Vijaya Dairy Corporation in Tarnaka.“The Deputy Mayor informed the Collector that notices have been issued by Vijaya Dairy Corporation asking the school to vacate the premises, which has caused anxiety among students and parents. She explained that the school serves as the only educational institution for children from economically weaker sections living in nearby areas such as Chintal Basti, Errakunta, Baba Nagar, Hanuman Nagar, Gokul Nagar Basti, and Arya Vatika.“She further stated that the school building is in a dilapidated condition, posing a serious threat to student safety. Issues such as small classrooms, lack of basic amenities, poor sanitation, and even incidents involving snakes were highlighted. Due to these conditions, student strength has reportedly declined from 450 to 100.“Expressing concern, the Deputy Mayor said that vacating the school in the middle of the academic year would



severely disrupt students’ education. She urged the Collector to immediately extend the time for the existing building and to allocate permanent land in Tarnaka for the construction of a Government Primary School. She appealed for a positive decision to safeguard the future of the students.

The Leadership Of Kolavaar Felicitated Sarpanch Bursa Pochaiah

““Indian Chronicle“ kumram bheem, Asifabad, District Report, Jade Srinivas. December, 27. “In the presence of the presidents, state leaders, executive members of the joint Adilabad districts of the Adivasi Kolavaar Welfare Association, Adivasi Kolavaar Rights Struggle Commit-

tee (Moogadeb), and the newly elected Sarpanch of Tandur Mandal Gopalanagar Gram Panchayat, Gatla Narsaiah, the leadership of Kolavaar felicitated Shri Bursa Pochaiah, who was recently elected as the first Sarpanch of the new Gram Panchayat of Asifabad. Rajampet. Many leaders participated in this program.”



Increased Train Fares, How Much Is It For Kagaznagar- Secunderabad?

““Indian Chronicle“ kumram bheem, Asifabad, District Report, Jade Srinivas. December, 27. “The Railways has decided to increase the fares by one paisa per kilometre for passengers travelling more than 215 kilometres. These increased fares came into effect from Friday. For example, the ticket price of the inter-city train running between Kagaznagar- Secunderabad has increased from Rs. 110 to Rs. 120, the superfast fare from Rs. 125 to Rs. 135, and the Vande Bharat Express from Rs. 785 to Rs. 810. This increase in fares has put an additional burden on the passengers.

Happiness Over Retaining Nacharam Division Colonies as They Are



“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, December 27: ““As part of the division reorganization process, BSP Uppal Constituency President Mindrala Narsingarao expressed his happiness over the decision to retain the colonies under Nacharam Division without merging them into the Tarnaka Division.“Earlier, he had submitted a memorandum with objections to the Kapra Municipal officials, requesting that the colonies within the jurisdiction of Nacharam Division—Ambedkar Nagar, Errakunta, and Karthikeya Nagar—be continued under Nacharam Division as before.“Responding to this representation, the officials decided not to change the division boundaries and retained the colonies in the old Nacharam Division. On this occasion, Narsingarao thanked the officials for considering the request and taking a positive decision.

Change Your Language, Deliver Promises: Talasani Criticizes CM

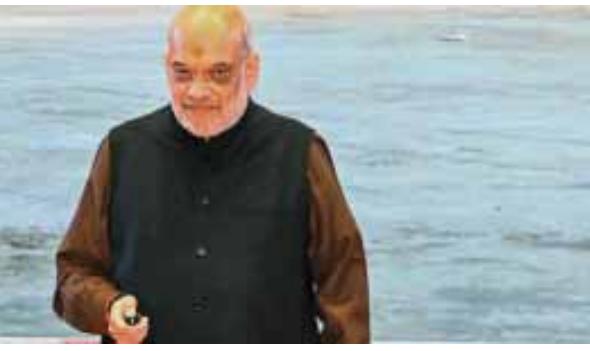


“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, December 27:“Former Minister and Sanath Nagar MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav on Saturday advised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to change his language and act with dignity befitting his office. He was speaking to the media after distributing financial assistance cheques to 19 beneficiaries under the Shaadi Mubarak (15) and Kalyana Lakshmi (4) schemes at the Tahsildar’s office in Secunderabad.“Talasani criticised the Chief Minister for making impractical promises before the elections and failing to implement them after coming to power. He pointed out that despite assurances of one tola of gold for Shaadi Mubarak and Kalyana Lakshmi beneficiaries, not a single beneficiary has received it even after two years. He also questioned the fate of the promised ₹2,500 monthly assistance to women, the enhancement of disability pensions from ₹3,000 to ₹6,000, and the



several local leaders were present.

'Assembly poll strategy, SIR' on agenda as Amit Shah to visit Bengal, hold internal BJP meetings



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The Bengal BJP is planning a 1,500-bike rally to welcome him, with the route and timing to be finalised after his itinerary is confirmed. Amit Shah will arrive in Kolkata on December 29 for closed-door BJP meetings to assess election strategy and fallout of the SIR electoral roll revision. (PTI Photo) Days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to West Bengal, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to arrive in Kolkata for a two-day visit beginning December 29, during which he will hold a series of internal Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) meetings. This will be Shah's first visit to the state after the commencement of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. According to BJP sources, Shah is scheduled to land in Kolkata late on December 29 and will hold internal meetings on December 30 and 31.

With the West Bengal Assembly elections approaching, the BJP's central leadership is expected to discuss election strategy, including issues related to the SIR process. BJP sources said that with the draft SIR list already published and several names reportedly removed—including those of a large section of the Matua community—the meetings will focus on addressing concerns of voters whose names are missing from the rolls and on countering the Trinamool Congress (TMC) over the issue. Shah is expected

to meet senior state BJP leaders on both days to take stock of the political situation following the SIR exercise, assess public perception, and review the effectiveness of the party's outreach programmes in the state, sources said.

Meanwhile, the Bengal BJP is planning a bike procession to welcome the Union Home Minister during his visit. According to party and BJP Yuva Morcha sources, Shah may travel between destinations accompanied by a bike rally, either on the night of December 29 or on the morning of December 30. Sources said ten organisational districts covering Kolkata, North and South 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly have been tasked with organising the programme. Each district has reportedly been given a target of mobilising around 500 bikes, taking the total to approximately 1,500. The final route is yet to be decided as Shah's official itinerary has not been communicated by the Union Home Ministry. However, if the procession is held on the night of December 29, it is expected to run from Kolkata airport to Newtown, accompanying Shah from the airport to his hotel. If held on the morning of December 30, the convoy is likely to travel from Newtown to the BJP office in Bidhannagar's Sector V, via Haldiram More, VIP Road, Ultadanga, Hudco More and EM Bypass. There are differing views within the party over the timing of the procession. A section of BJP leaders favours holding it on the morning of December 30, citing greater scope for public outreach during the day. Others prefer a late-night event on December 29, arguing that a large number of bikes with headlights on the airport-Newtown stretch would create a stronger visual impact. The final decision will depend on Shah's confirmed itinerary, sources said. Shah has visited West Bengal more frequently than any other senior BJP leader over the past 11 years. However, a bike procession accompanying his convoy would be a first. Since Shah's visit does not include any public meetings and is limited to organisational discussions, the proposed procession is being seen as a way to generate visibility and project organisational strength ahead of the elections, party sources said.

'Pulled 7 to safety before explosion': After close shave on highway, Karnataka bus driver recounts accident horror

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

"The Seabird Tourists bus had just overtaken mine...and within a minute, everything changed. There were 42 children on board, and I feared for their lives." It was a close shave for Sachin and the children in his bus on Thursday morning, as they narrowly escaped being hit by the container truck that rammed into a private bus in Karnataka's Chitradurga district, killing at least nine people. As the bus caught fire, Sachin emerged as an unlikely hero—steering his vehicle to safety despite a head injury, and then racing against time to pull seven passengers out of the burning vehicle before an explosion made further rescue impossible.

Speaking to the media, Sachin revealed how the accident occurred. "The container truck came and hit the middle portion of the bus. It hit the diesel tank. I tried to control my vehicle and managed to steer it to the left and stop it. The front glass broke, but nobody was injured in my vehicle," he said. The 42 children on board his bus were on a three-day school trip and were heading to Dhandeli. "I was injured on my head due to the glass, but I managed to pull some people out through the bus window. A few of us got at least seven passengers to safety, but by then, there was an explosion. It became impossible to go near the vehicle. One of the women I saved was pleading with me to save her child, who was inside the bus. Unfortunately, nobody could go towards the bus as the flames had spread rapidly," he



added. Ravikanthe Gowda, Inspector General of Police, Eastern Range, said that according to the preliminary reports, the container truck driver was among the nine dead. "We have shifted the injured to hospitals nearby. One of them who sustained burn injuries was shifted to Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru," he said. "We suspect that the container hit the diesel tank, which led to the fire. While 12 injured passengers were shifted to a Hiriyur hospital, nine were shifted to Sira, and three to Tumakuru. The patient from Sira hospital was later shifted to Victoria Hospital," he added. There were 29 passengers on board, apart from a driver and a cleaner. Many of the passengers were heading to Gokarna to enjoy the long weekend holiday due to Christmas, the police said.

'Assets 231.4% more than source of income': CBI registers case against former ED assistant director, names brother as co-accused



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered an FIR against Vishal Deep, former Assistant Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), and his brother Vikas Deep, a senior manager with Punjab National Bank, in a disproportionate assets (DA) case, alleging illicit enrichment during a short check period in 2024. The case was registered on Tuesday a month after the Supreme Court had granted bail to Vishal, who was earlier arrested by the CBI for allegedly seeking bribes from two private college administrators during a probe into the Himachal Pradesh scholarship scam. In January, he was arrested by the Panchkula police on charges of extortion from Mumbai.

According to the FIR registered by the CBI's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB), Chandigarh, the case stems from a preliminary enquiry that revealed prima facie evidence against Vishal, who was then posted in Shimla. The check period under scrutiny is from March 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024, during which the accused allegedly amassed assets far beyond his known and lawful sources of income. The FIR has been registered under Sections 12, 13(2) read with 13(1)(b) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018). The complaint was filed following the conclusion of a detailed preliminary enquiry initiated as an offshoot of earlier trap cases registered in 2024, in which substantial unaccounted cash and incriminating documents were recovered.

As per the FIR, Vishal and his brother Vikas are alleged to have acquired disproportionate assets worth approximately Rs 93.24 lakh, translating into 231.48 per cent more than their combined known sources of income during the check period. The CBI's enquiry details show that while

the assets at the beginning of the period stood at Rs 9.20 lakh, assets at the end of the period rose sharply to Rs 44.44 lakh. During the same period, the total income was assessed at Rs 40.28 lakh, whereas expenditure was pegged at Rs 98.29 lakh. The agency, in its enquiry, has also pointed to the recovery of Rs 56.41 lakh in cash, apart from trap money, during the investigation of earlier cases. Additionally, Rs 14.73 lakh in cash was reportedly recovered from a location in Gurugram, which will be verified during the ongoing probe. The FIR notes that in view of the huge cash recoveries, coupled with suspicious high-value transactions, the bank accounts of family members of the brothers, the role of family members in abetment, if any, cannot be ruled out at this stage. Hence, the role of family members may also be looked into during the course of investigation. The role of Vikas, the FIR states, emerged as that of an abettor.

At least 9 killed as bus catches fire after collision with container truck in Karnataka's Chitradurga

At least nine people were killed, and several others injured when a container truck rammed into a bus heading from Bengaluru to Gokarna on NH 48 near Hiriyur in Karnataka's Chitradurga district early on Thursday morning. The bus caught fire following the collision, and while several passengers escaped after jumping out, many others were burned to death. The incident occurred at around 1.45 am when the truck heading towards Bengaluru jumped a divider and hit the bus, a local police officer said.

Prima facie, the police believe that the container truck driver, who also died in the accident, may have fallen asleep at the wheel. Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy stated that initial reports suggested overspeeding as the cause of the crash. The bus was carrying 32 passengers, along with a driver and a cleaner, Ravikanthe Gowda, Inspector General of Police, Eastern Range, told the media. According to a police officer, the private non-AC bus belonged to Seabird Tourists, and many of the passengers were reportedly heading to Gokarna to enjoy the long weekend.

As Panchkula chokes in 'very poor' air, Chandigarh breathes easy with 'moderate' AQI



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

A sharp contrast in air quality has emerged across the Tricity region, with Panchkula recording Air Quality Index (AQI) of 305, which falls under 'very poor' category, while Chandigarh, located just a few kilometres away, reported a 'moderate' AQI of 101 on Wednesday. The AQI figures are based on data released by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) at 4 pm on December 24, 2025, calculated on the average of the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, among cities across the country witnessing 'very poor' air quality, Rohtak topped the list with an AQI of 340, followed by Talcher at 339, Visakhapatnam at 319, Panchkula at 305, and Angul at 303. In contrast, Chandigarh's air quality remained relatively stable, offering some relief to residents amid a season otherwise marked

by worsening pollution across north India. As per the five-day weather forecast for the Tricity (Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula), the region is expected to witness partly cloudy skies accompanied by dense fog from December 25 to December 29. As per experts, such conditions are known to trap pollutants closer to the ground, potentially leading to further deterioration in air quality, especially in already affected areas like Panchkula.

Weather observations recorded at the Chandigarh Weather Observatory indicate that on Wednesday, the maximum temperature stood at 22.6 degree Celsius, which is three degrees above normal, while the minimum temperature was recorded at 10.2 degree Celsius, also three degrees above normal. Relative humidity levels remained high, with maximum humidity at 95 per cent and minimum at 43 per cent, creating favourable conditions for fog formation during night and early morning hours. The forecasted temperature trend for the coming days suggests maximum temperatures hovering between 19 and 21 degree Celsius, while minimum temperatures are likely to range from 7 to 9 degree Celsius. With no significant weather system expected to bring rainfall or strong winds, pollution dispersion is likely to remain limited. Environmental experts have advised residents, particularly in Panchkula and other 'very poor' AQI cities, to limit outdoor activities, especially during early morning and late evening hours, while vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and those with respiratory ailments are urged to take extra precautions.

Central Kolkata likely to get paralyzed as Park Street carnival triggers massive diversions due to crowd gathering

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

As Christmas festivities reach its peak, major thoroughfares in Central Kolkata, particularly J.L. Nehru Road and the A.J.C. Bose Road crossing, are witnessing massive gridlock due to the influx of revelers heading toward the Park Street carnival. With Park Street, Middleton Street, and Cathedral Road completely closed to vehicles and major thoroughfares like A.J.C. Bose Road heavily restricted, it is highly advisable to avoid driving and use the Metro's extended late-night services instead.

To manage the surge, Kolkata Police has restricted goods vehicles from entering the Maidan and Park Street sectors until the early hours of December 26. Furthermore, iconic stretches like Park Street (from J.L. Nehru Road to Wood Street) and Middleton Street are completely shut to vehicular traffic to allow for a pedestrian-only arena, while Cathedral Road and parts of Russell Street remain closed or heavily restricted to ensure the safety of the crowds. To mitigate the surface-level congestion, the Kolkata Metro has stepped in with significant extra services for the Blue and Green lines. On Christmas Day, the Metro is operating a total of 224 services on the Blue Line (Dakshineswar to Kavi Subhash) and 201 services on the Green Line (Howrah Maidan to Sector V). Notably, the Blue Line has extended its operating hours, with the last trains departing from Shahid Khudiram at 10:30 PM and Dakshineswar at 10:23 PM. Park Street is a walk-only zone for pedestrians on Christmas day.

With the main festivities centered around Park Street (renamed Mother Teresa Sarani), the area will see massive



police deployment. The entire park street zone is adorned with dazzling lights, decorations. The festival includes live music performances by bands and choir groups at Allen Park, a two-hour parade for children, and numerous food stalls.

Key Locations: Besides Park Street, celebrations and events take place at Bow Barrack and around prominent churches in Kolkata (like St. Paul's Cathedral), as well as in other towns such as Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Chandannagar, and Bandel. **Special Events:** Many venues, hotels, and clubs host Christmas-themed parties, brunches, and live performances, including theatre shows and comedy events. On the other hand, BJP will be celebrating former PM Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birthday. State President of BJP Bengal Unit Samik Bhattacharya will be in NRS hospital at 9:30 AM to pay tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee. There are multiple programmes on this by BJP tomorrow.

2 women held for attempting to extort builder's son of Rs 5 cr



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The Mumbai crime branch arrested two women including a small-time actor for allegedly attempting to extort a builder's son by threatening to pursue a molestation case against him. According to police, while initially Rs 10.5 crore

was demanded from the builder, eventually they agreed to Rs 5.5 crore. It was while accepting the first instalment on Tuesday that the two women were placed under arrest, police said. An official said that the incident stems from a fight that broke out between the builder's son and the two women at a party in Andheri after the builder's son got engaged on November 14. The argument escalated into a scuffle, following which on November 23, the women approached the Amboli police where a molestation case was registered against the builder's son. An official said that later, through an associate, they approached the builder's son and demanded Rs 10.5 crore to settle the matter. Later they negotiated and reduced the amount to Rs 5.5 crore. The family, however, approached the police following which the anti-extortion cell of the crime branch was asked to probe the matter. The police said they asked the builder's son to agree to make the payment and eventually on Tuesday as they were accepting Rs 1.5 crore from the complainant, the two women were caught red-handed and placed under arrest.

'Preventable tragedy': Indian-origin man dies in Canada's Edmonton after long wait in hospital



According to a Global News report published on December 24, Prashant Sreekumar, an accountant and father of three, began experiencing acute chest pain while at work and was taken to the hospital by a client. His father Kumar Sreekumar described the pain as "15 out of 10".

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

A 44-year-old Indian-origin man died on December 22 after reportedly waiting more than eight hours in the emergency room at Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Canada's Edmonton despite complaining of severe chest pain. According to a Global News report published on December 24, Prashant Sreekumar, an accountant and fa-

ther of three, began experiencing acute chest pain while at work and was taken to the hospital by a client. His father Kumar Sreekumar described the pain as "15 out of 10".

Prashant underwent an electrocardiogram (ECG), but was told no significant issue was detected. He was given pain medication in the form of a Tylenol tablet and asked to wait, even as his condition worsened. Family members said his blood pressure was extremely high, and he repeatedly reported severe pain. When Sreekumar was finally called into the treatment area more than eight hours later, he collapsed. Medical staff attempted resuscitation, but he was pronounced dead of an apparent cardiac arrest. Sreekumar is survived by his wife and three children, aged 3, 10, and 14. Family friend Varinder Singh Bhullar described him as a respected member of the Indian community in Edmonton and called the incident "a huge loss and a preventable tragedy". Covenant Health, which operates the Grey Nuns Community Hospital, confirmed the death and said it is under review by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. The organisation offered condolences to the family but has not released further details. The incident has triggered strong reactions online, with Edmonton residents expressing concern about prolonged emergency wait times driven by seasonal pressures, staffing shortages, and high patient volumes. A June 2025 report from the Montreal Economic Institute found median ER visit lengths in Alberta at nearly four hours in 2024, with Edmonton zone waits averaging close to six hours, the highest in the province.

Pune's SPPU to hold awareness programme on antimicrobial resistance from February 3



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The Department of Microbiology at Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) will conduct a three-day awareness programme for students from February 3 on the issue of antimicrobial resistance, caused by the misuse and improper use of antibiotics. The programme will include various activities and competitions, including expert talks, science-based plays, campus awareness marches, radio podcasts, oral presentations by PhD scholars, poster presentations by postgraduate scholars, and a quiz for undergraduate scholars.

Antibiotics, a type of medicine that fights against bacteria, are essential in surgeries and used to fight deadly diseases such as tuberculosis. However, their improper use leads to the development of bacteria that are resistant to

these drugs. "For example, antibiotics like azithromycin are regularly consumed by many without a doctor's prescription in cases of common cold infection that is caused by viruses and not bacteria. Not completing the full course of antibiotics also adds to the issue," experts said. Professor Karishma Pardesi, head of the Microbiology Department at SPPU, stated that the issue in India is that there are numerous options for obtaining over-the-counter medicines, and antibiotics are readily available. "So, anyone who has a common cold or cough and they have a previous antibiotic prescription, the easy option they see is to go to a pharmacist and get the antibiotic. Or they go directly to the pharmacist and get the medicine. It may just be a viral infection where an antibiotic is never going to work. Or sometimes they take it and feel good in the first dose, so they stop taking it after that. This contributes to the growing resistance. Slowly, the available choice of antibiotics is declining, which is a major problem."

Professor Pardesi said, "Our department's research theme is to work on antimicrobial organisms and understand the alternative therapeutics other than antibiotics against them." In November, the department had conducted a similar programme for education, awareness, and responsible antimicrobial use to curb the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance as part of World Antimicrobial Awareness Week. This included a keynote lecture by Dr Archana Rath, Principal Investigator, AMR Lab, University of Mumbai. Students can register for the events at this link - http://sppudocs.unipune.ac.in/sites/news_events/Lists/

MSP revolution to 'Bharat Taxi': Shah unveils cooperative-led vision for Haryana



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Union Home Minister Amit Shah Wednesday laid out an ambitious roadmap positioning Haryana as a national model for farmer welfare, cooperative-driven growth, and administrative reform. Shah also announced a series of major initiatives ranging from infrastructure projects and digital platforms to sweeping agricultural and cooperative reforms at the cooperative conference in Panchkula, Wednesday. The event underscored the Centre and state government's shared focus on "Sahakar se Samridhi" – prosperity through cooperation – while also addressing challenges of internal security, rural livelihoods, and sustainable agriculture.

Shah digitally inaugurated multiple cooperative and agriculture-related projects, reflecting the growing emphasis on decentralised development and farmer-centric infrastructure. These included a milk chilling centre at Salempur in Bhiwani district, aimed at strengthening the dairy value chain; a HAFAED flour mill at Jatusana in Rewari district, designed to enhance food processing capacity; and a newly developed IYC (International Year of Cooperatives) portal by the Ministry of Cooperation to showcase cooperative activities nationwide. He distributed RuPay Platinum debit cards to five beneficiaries of Haryana State Cooperative Banks, highlighting efforts to deepen financial inclusion through the cooperative banking system. In another significant step, registration certificates were handed over to the presidents of two newly established multipurpose primary agricultural cooperative societies (M-PACS) set up by KRBHCO in Haryana. Shah also released an annual publication documenting activities undertaken during the International Year of Cooperatives, following the screening of a corporate film on KRBHCO's work. A major highlight of Shah's address was his strong endorsement of Saini, whom he credited with ushering in a new era of farmer-friendly governance in Haryana. Shah described Saini's leadership as decisive and courageous, stating that his policies had empowered farmers while setting benchmarks for transparency and efficiency.

Referring to Haryana's landmark decision to procure 24 crops at Minimum Support Price (MSP), Shah said that he had personally confirmed the proposal with Saini during a late-night phone call when it was first announced in the election manifesto. According to Shah, Saini had confidently assured him that the state government would take full re-

sponsibility for procurement. "Today, Haryana stands as the first state in India to guarantee MSP procurement for all 24 crops," a move Shah described as "revolutionary". Beyond procurement, Shah emphasised the state's commitment to swift payments, noting that farmers in Haryana receive payment within 48 hours of procurement – a stark contrast to delays seen elsewhere. "Despite being a relatively small state, Haryana's contributions to agriculture, dairy production, sports, and national security have been significant. While industrial growth and tax contributions are important indicators, the true measure of governance lies in the well-being of farmers. Haryana's farmers have a reason to smile," he said, adding that it is Saini's "greatest achievement". Aligning Haryana's progress with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's broader vision, Shah reiterated the mantra of "Sahakar se Samridhi," expressing confidence that the cooperative movement would further strengthen Haryana's position among India's leading states. Beyond agriculture and cooperation, Shah also addressed issues of internal security, asserting that the Modi government "stands like a rock" with the states in tackling challenges such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, cybercrime, and organised crime.

Focusing again on the cooperative sector, Shah said the government has worked systematically to make farmers prosperous by strengthening agriculture through cooperation. Speaking at the KRBHCO conference themed "Prosperity through Cooperation – Role of Cooperatives in Sustainable Agriculture," he said the new agricultural policy prioritises reduced water usage and lower chemical inputs, steering Indian farming towards sustainability. One of the most forward-looking announcements was the proposed launch of a cooperative-based ride-hailing app, 'Bharat Taxi', expected to roll out within one or two months. The digital platform will be operated by Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Ltd, a multi-state cooperative society registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. Shah described the initiative as an example of how cooperatives can expand beyond agriculture into new-age services while ensuring equitable income distribution. By integrating cooperatives with agriculture and animal husbandry, Shah said, the government can simultaneously create employment and enhance farmers' incomes. He underscored the transformative potential of cooperatives for rural women, citing the example of Amul in Gujarat, which distributes around Rs. 90,000 crore annually to 36 lakh women. From its modest beginnings of collecting just 2,000 litres of milk per day, Amul has grown into a nationwide powerhouse collecting crores of litres daily. Shah expressed confidence that India could have at least 20 Amul-like cooperatives within the next 15 years. Highlighting the scale of government investment, Shah pointed out that the agriculture budget has risen from Rs 22,000 crore in 2014 to Rs 1.27 lakh crore today, while the rural development budget has increased from Rs 80,000 crore to Rs 1.87 lakh crore. These increases, he said, have laid a strong foundation for boosting farmers' incomes and revitalising rural India.

Punjab building rules put on hold as HC flags risk of chaos, densification



The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday ordered that the operation of provisions of the Punjab Unified Building Rules, 2025, which are inconsistent with earlier rules and regulations, shall remain in abeyance, and directed that violations which were treated as violations under the previous framework "be not regularised" in the meantime.

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Appearing for the petitioners, senior advocate R.S. Bains argued that the rules were framed pursuant to the constitution of a Real Estate Advisory Committee. Appearing for the petitioners, senior advocate R.S. Bains argued that the rules were framed pursuant to the constitution of a Real Estate Advisory Committee. The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday ordered that the operation of provisions of the Punjab Unified Building Rules, 2025, which are inconsistent with earlier rules and regulations, shall remain in abeyance, and directed that violations which were treated as violations under the previous framework "be not regularised" in the meantime.

Issuing notice of motion to the Punjab government for March 13, 2026, the division bench of Justice Gurvinder Singh Gill and Justice Parmod Goyal passed the interim order on a petition challenging the notification dated December 15, 2025, by which the new building rules were notified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The petition has been filed by Harbinder Singh Sekhon, 93, and Jasindet Sekhon, who have questioned the validity of the new rules on the ground that they are inconsistent with existing laws, including the Punjab Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Act, 2004, and the National Building Code of India, 2016. Appearing for the petitioners, senior advocate R.S. Bains argued that the rules were framed pursuant to the constitution of a Real Estate Advisory Committee, which "mainly comprises of private developers, colonisers and promoters" with vested business interests, and that public interest had been ignored in the process.

The petitioners have also taken exception to provisions permitting construction up to stilt plus four floors on residential plots situated along 40-feet-wide roads, allowing ground coverage up to 100 per cent for commercial buildings in core areas, and giving plot owners abutting 60-feet or wider roads the option to build as per Table 38. According to the petition, these changes would lead to "haphazard raising of buildings". The court noted the submission that implementation of the new rules would result in "chaos and avoidable densification of residential areas", and that residents were not taken into confidence while framing such sweeping changes. It was also argued that drastic alterations to building norms could be justified in areas yet to be developed, but not in already inhabited localities where constructions had been raised under the existing rules and by-laws.

Bengaluru realtor murder case: CID cites call, cell location records to link main accused with BJP MLA Byrathi Basavaraj



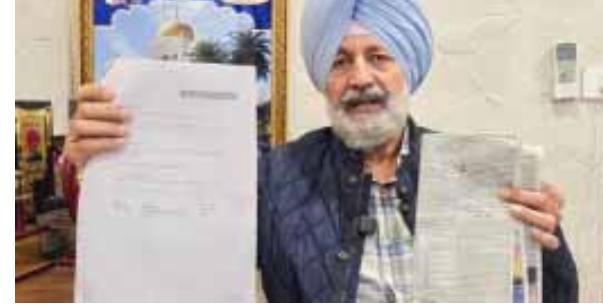
GNS News Agency, Dec 27

from the day of the murder, which has been produced by the CID police following the investigations. "That apart, it is relevant to note that as per the CDR (Call Detail Record), immediately after the incident the accused No.1 Jagadish @ Jaga had called upon the petitioner and the tower location indicates they both remained in the same place and after that the accused No.1 fled from the country and was later on deported to India from Sri Lanka," the special court said.

"All the aforesaid aspects would certainly indicate serious allegations being levelled against the petitioner herein," the special court added, rejecting Basavaraj's plea. The court also referred to the observations made by the Karnataka High Court on December 19 while withdrawing an interim protection against arrest given by the high court on August 12 to the MLA that "custodial interrogation is a legal option available to the investigating agency and there is no reason to deny such exercise of power". The special court was informed by the CID prosecutor that the conspiracy for the Bikla Shiva murder was hatched by Basavaraj, Jaga, and a close associate, Ajeeth, during a visit to Prayagraj for the Kumbh Mela in February. The development came after a land dispute between Shiva and an MLA's aide over a property in Kithaganur in east Bengaluru escalated at the time.

The CID has reported that Basavaraj travelled with the two co-accused in the Bikla Shiva murder case on the same flights to Prayagraj. The trio travelled on the same PNR number for one of the flights, which was allegedly booked by a close aide of the MLA involved in a property dispute with the murder victim, as per the CID. The CID told the special court this week that Basavaraj provided protection to the real estate operations carried out in his constituency by his associates, like Jaga, K Kiran, Vimal Raj, Madan and Ajeeth, who all have criminal backgrounds. "It is submitted that accused No.1 Jagadish @ Jaga and accused No.20 Ajeeth were in contact with accused No.5 and accused No.5 was supporting the real estate business of accused No.1 and accused No.20," the special court noted. "It is relevant to note that prior to commission of the aforesaid offence certain rivalry was persisting between deceased Shivaprakash and the present petitioner (MLA)," the court said. The court also noted that the victim had reported to the police a threat to his life from the MLA and his associates prior to the murder, following the dispute over the Kithaganur property.

Former minister slams AAP govt after advertisement did not mention reduced enhancement in price of Mohali plots



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Former health minister Balbir Singh Sidhu questioned the AAP government's intent and accountability after an advertisement published did not mention the reduction of the enhancement in price of plots of sectors 76 to 80 in Mohali. Sidhu said that "compliance with government decisions is extremely important" but added that he was deeply disappointed after seeing a recent advertisement published in newspapers, which did not consider the reduction in rates by around Rs 839 per square metre. Targeting the local MLA Kulwant Singh, Sidhu alleged that earlier "big claims were made, several meetings were held, committees were formed and people were kept hopeful, yet even after three to four years, the affected residents are still being forced to make rounds of government offices".

According to the former minister, a decision to reduce rates from Rs 3,164 per square metre to Rs 2,325 per square metre, was taken during a high-level meeting attended by the Chief Administrator of GMADA, the Principal Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Chief Secretary of Punjab, several senior IAS officers and the local MLA himself. "If a decision was taken in the presence of such senior officers, then why are people being betrayed today?"

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All must join hands to maintain law and order: BNP's Tarique Rahman after return to Bangladesh



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) acting chairman Tarique Rahman on Thursday (December 25, 2025) called on countrymen to join hands to maintain law and order, in his first address to party supporters hours after his arrival in Dhaka after a gap of 17 years. "Whatever political party we belong to, whatever religion we believe in, whether we are non-partisan individuals — all must join hands to maintain law and order," he told thousands of party supporters gathered at the July 36 Expressway in the capital, where he went straight after arriving at the airport.

Mr. Rahman's call for maintaining law and order came amid a fresh wave of unrest and political instability gripping Bangladesh following the killing of prominent youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi, who was a prominent face in last year's mass protests that forced the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina government. Mr. Rahman, the 60-year-old son of ailing

former prime minister Khaleda Zia, has emerged as a leading contender for prime ministership in the polls. Referring to a popular quote from U.S. civil rights activist Martin Luther King "I Have a dream", Mr. Rahman said, "I have a plan for the people of my country and for my country," State-owned Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha reported.

"This plan is for the interest of the people, for the development of the country, for changing the lot of the country. To implement the plan, I need the support of all the people of the country. If you stand beside us, God willing, we will be able to implement my plan," Mr. Rahman added. He said he wants to make a safe Bangladesh where people irrespective of castes, creeds and faiths can live in a peaceful environment, the report said. "We have people from the hills and the plains in this country — Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians. We want to build a safe Bangladesh, where every woman, man and child can leave home safely and return safely," he said. Mr. Rahman's call for unity came as Jamaat-e-Islami, the BNP's coalition partner during its 2001-2006 tenure in power, has emerged as its main rival in the upcoming polls after the interim government blocked Awami League's participation under the country's tough Anti-Terrorism Act. He urged people to pray for her ailing mother and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, whom he was going to meet at the Evercare hospital in Dhaka after leaving the venue. Ms. Zia, a three-time prime minister, has been undergoing treatment at the intensive care unit (ICU) at the hospital. BNP emerged as the forerunner to capture power in the February polls, as former prime minister Hasina's Awami League party has been barred from contesting the election.

Somalis vote in the first one-person, one-vote local election in decades

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Residents of Somalia's capital are set to vote Thursday (December 25, 2025) in a controversial local election that marks the country's first-ever one-person, one-vote poll since 1969. Analysts say it is a major departure from clan-based power-sharing negotiations. The voting of local council members, to be conducted across Mogadishu's 16 districts, has been organised by the country's federal government but rejected by the Opposition parties, which have called the election flawed and one-sided. Somalia has for decades selected its local council members and parliamentarians through clan-based negotiations, and it is the leaders who later elect a President. Since 2016, different administrations have promised to reintroduce one-person, one-vote elections, but insecurity and internal disputes between the government and the Opposition have delayed their implementation.

This will be the first major voting exercise overseen by the country's National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, with up to 20 political parties fielding candidates. The election will not determine the mayor of Mogadishu, who also serves as the governor of the central Banadir region. That position remains appointed, as the constitutional status of the capital is unresolved and requires a national consensus — a prospect that has grown increasingly distant amid deepening political rifts between President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the leaders of the States of Jubaland and Puntland over constitutional reforms. The central region has more than 900,000 voters registered across 523 polling stations, according to the electoral commission. Somalia has faced security challenges, with the al-Qaeda-linked al-Shabab militant group often carrying out deadly attacks in the capital.

Analysts say the Mogadishu vote represents the most concrete attempt yet to move Somalia away from its



longstanding clan-based power-sharing system. "Mogadishu has demonstrated that local elections are technically feasible," said Mohamed Husein Gaas, founding director of the Raad Peace Research Institute. By moving ahead with the vote, Mr. Gaas said the federal government was empowering citizens, strengthening accountability and moving towards a more inclusive and legitimate state. He said plans to expand direct elections to federal member States and eventually to the national level reflect a phased approach aimed at balancing security, political inclusion and development. "The process signals a commitment to building a durable Somali state grounded in democracy, public trust, national cohesion and long-term stability," Mr. Gaas said. Opposition parties, however, argue that abandoning negotiated, clan-based arrangements without agreement risks undermining Somalia's fragile federal settlement. The elections, which were postponed three times this year, have drawn sharp criticism from Opposition leaders, who accuse the government of using the process to entrench power and pave the way for extending the president's term, which is due to end in 2026 — an allegation authorities deny.

Lebanon says two dead in Israeli strike near Syria border



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Lebanon said an Israeli strike near the border with Syria killed two people on Thursday (December 25, 2025), as a deadline nears for Lebanon's army to disarm militant group Hezbollah in the country's south. Despite a November 2024 ceasefire that was supposed to end more than a year of hostilities between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah, Israel has kept up strikes on Lebanon and has also maintained troops in five southern areas it deems strategic. "An Israeli enemy strike today on a vehicle in the town of Hawsh al-Sayyed Ali in the Hermel district killed two people," the Health Ministry said, with the state-run National News

Agency (NNA) saying the raid targeted a van. The NNA also reported that a man wounded in an Israeli strike last week near Beirut had died of his injuries. It identified him as a member of Lebanon's General Security agency and said "he happened to be passing at the time of the strike as he returned from service" in Beirut. The Health Ministry had said that strike targeted a vehicle on the Shouf district's Jadra-Siblin road, around 30 kilometres (19 miles) south of the capital, killing one person and wounding five others, while an AFP photographer had seen a damaged goods truck.

On Tuesday (December 23), Lebanon's army said a soldier was among those killed in an Israeli strike a day earlier and denied the Israeli military's accusation that he was a Hezbollah operative. Under heavy U.S. pressure and fears of expanded Israeli strikes, Lebanon has committed to disarming Hezbollah, starting with the south. The army plans to complete the group's disarmament south of the Litani River — about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the border with Israel — by year's end. Lebanese army chief Rodolphe Haykal told a military meeting on Tuesday (December 23) "the army is in the process of finishing the first phase of its plan". More than 340 people have been killed by Israeli fire in Lebanon since the ceasefire, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese Health Ministry reports.

Indian student shot on University of Toronto campus in Canada

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Hyderabad: An Indian student was shot dead by unidentified gunmen on the University of Toronto Scarborough campus, according to information reaching here on Friday. The Indian consulate in Canada said a doctoral student Shivank Avasthi was killed in a fatal shooting incident near the University of Toronto Scarborough campus.

The consulate officials were in touch with the bereaved family members during this difficult time. The consulate is extending all necessary assistance in coordination with the local authorities, the consulate posted on social media platform X. Shivank Avasthi, from Toronto, was a doctoral student at the University of Toronto Scarborough and a member of the campus cheerleading team. Local media reports said police responded to reports of serious injuries around



3:34 p.m. near Highland Creek Trail and Old Kingston Road, where Avasthi was found with a gunshot wound and pronounced dead at the scene. .

'Papa, I cannot bear pain': Indian-origin man dies after 8-hour wait at Canada hospital



would check Prashant's blood pressure. "It went up, up, and up. To me, it was through the roof." More than eight hours went by before Prashant was called into the treatment area.

"After sitting maybe 10 seconds, he looked at me, he got up and put his hand on his chest and just crashed," Kumar said. Nurses called for help but it was too late. Prashant died of an apparent cardiac arrest, the report added. Prashant leaves behind his wife, and three children ages three, 10 and 14. The family loved to travel together and said Prashant was a "goofball" with his kids. "He was for his family, for his kids, he was so nice. Anybody who talked to him said, 'We don't know a better than him,'" Kumar said. Family and friends want answers over how could a man with severe chest pain could fall through the cracks in such a shocking way. Family friend Varinder Bhullar, who who would use Prashant's accounting services, said this is a huge loss for the community. He is devastated at what happened. "We expect better from the hospital and health-care system," Bhullar said. The Grey Nuns Hospital is run by Covenant Health. The organisation told Global News in an email that it wouldn't comment on the specifics surrounding patient care because of privacy, but did say the case is before the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. "We offer our sympathy to the patient's family and friends. There is nothing more important than the safety and care of our patients and staff," the statement said. As family try to remember Prashant for all the good he brought them, they say they will always be haunted by how he died in pain — in a hospital — without ever seeing a doctor.

Japan's cabinet approves record \$785 billion budget, vows to keep debt in check

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's cabinet on Friday (December 25, 2025) approved a record \$785 billion budget for the next fiscal year, aiming to strike a balance between her proactive fiscal policy and debt blowout concerns by limiting new bond issuance. Faced with rising government bond yields and a weak yen, the Takaichi administration has stepped up efforts to reassure investors that the government will not resort to irresponsible debt issuance or tax cuts.

The budget for the year starting from April, to be submitted to parliament early next year, will total a record 122.3 trillion yen (\$784.63 billion), exceeding this year's initial budget of 115.2 trillion yen. Still, new government bond issuance will increase only slightly from this year's 28.6 trillion yen to 29.6 trillion yen, with the debt dependence ratio falling to 24.2%, the lowest since 1998. Higher tax revenues, projected to rise 7.6% to a record 83.7 trillion yen, will help fund increased spending, though they will not fully offset surging debt-servicing costs, along with higher social welfare and defence outlays.

Debt-servicing costs for interest payments and debt redemption will jump 10.8% to 31.3 trillion yen, with the as-



sumed interest rate set at 3.0%, the highest level in 29 years, as the Bank of Japan exits ultra-loose monetary policy. Japan already has the highest debt burden in the developed world at more than twice the size of its economy, making it highly sensitive to rising borrowing costs and complicating Takaichi's plans to pursue aggressive fiscal stimulus measures. Takaichi intends to drop the idea of using the annual primary budget balance as Japan's fiscal consolidation goal and set a new goal that extends through several years to allow more flexible spending. (\$1 = 155.8700 yen)

U.S. launches strike against Islamic State militants in northwest Nigeria



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The United States carried out an airstrike against Islamic State militants in northwest Nigeria at the request of Nigeria's government, U.S. President Donald Trump and the U.S. military said on Thursday (December 25, 2025), claiming the group had been targeting Christians in the region. "Tonight, at my direction as Commander in Chief, the United States launched a powerful and deadly strike against ISIS Terrorist Scum in Northwest Nigeria, who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians, at levels not seen for many years, and even Centuries!," Mr. Trump said in a post on Truth Social. Nigeria's foreign ministry said on Friday (December 26, 2025) that precision air strikes by the United

States hit "terrorist targets" in the country's northwest, and added it remains engaged with Washington in "structured security cooperation."

The U.S. military's Africa Command said on X the strike was conducted at the request of Nigerian authorities and killed multiple ISIS militants. Christianity's "existential threat" in Nigeria. The strike comes after Mr. Trump, starting in late October, began warning that Christianity faces an "existential threat" in Nigeria and threatened to militarily intervene in the West African country over what he says is its failure to stop violence targeting Christian communities.

Reuters reported on Monday the U.S. had been conducting intelligence-gathering flights over large parts of Nigeria since late November. Nigeria's government has said armed groups target both Muslims and Christians, and U.S. claims that Christians face persecution do not represent a complex security situation and ignore efforts to safeguard religious freedom. But it has agreed to work with the U.S. to bolster its forces against militant groups. The country's population is split between Muslims living primarily in the north and Christians in the south. The President issued his statement on Christmas Day while he was at his Palm Beach, Florida, Mar-a-Lago Club, where he has been spending the holiday. He had no public events during the day and was last seen by the reporters traveling with him on Wednesday (December 24, 2025) night.

European Union 'strongly condemns' U.S. sanctions against five Europeans

The European Union and some member States reacted sharply Wednesday (December 24, 2025) to U.S. sanctions imposed on five European figures involved in regulating tech companies, including former European commissioner Thierry Breton.

They were responding after the U.S. state department announced Tuesday (December 23) it would deny visas to the five, accusing them of seeking to "coerce" American social media platforms into censoring viewpoints they oppose. France, Germany and Spain also condemned the news from Washington. A statement from the Commission said: "We have requested clarifications from the U.S. authorities and remain engaged. If needed, we will respond swiftly and decisively to defend our regulatory autonomy against unjustified measures. Our digital rules ensure a safe, fair, and level playing field for all companies, applied fairly and without discrimination." Mr. Breton, the former top tech regulator at the European Commission, often clashed with tycoons including Elon Musk over their obligations to follow E.U. rules. The state department has described him as the "mastermind" of the European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA), which imposes content moderation and other standards on major social media platforms operating in Europe.

The DSA stipulates that major platforms must explain content-moderation decisions, provide transparency for users and ensure researchers can carry out essential work, such as understanding how much children are exposed to

dangerous content. But the act has become a bitter rallying point for U.S. conservatives who see it as a weapon of censorship against right-wing thought in Europe and beyond, an accusation the E.U. furiously denies. The Trump Administration will no longer tolerate these egregious acts of extraterritorial censorship," U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a post on X Tuesday (December 23). "Intimidation and coercion."

French President Emmanuel Macron said on X: "France condemns the visa restriction measures taken by the United States against Thierry Breton and four other European figures." "These measures amount to intimidation and coercion aimed at undermining European digital sovereignty," he added, saying Europe would defend its "regulatory autonomy". German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul wrote in a post on X Wednesday (December 24): "The DSA was democratically adopted by the EU for the EU — it does not have extraterritorial effect. The visa bans, he added, "are not acceptable." Spain's foreign ministry also condemned the U.S. measures, saying in a statement: "A safe digital space, free from illegal content and disinformation, is a fundamental value for democracy in Europe and a responsibility for everyone." Mr. Breton himself described the latest measures as a political "witch hunt" in a post on X: "To our American friends: 'Censorship isn't where you think it is'." Mr. Breton left the commission in 2024 and Stephane Sejourne, his successor in charge of the E.U.'s internal market, said on X that "no sanction will silence the sovereignty of the European peoples".

How Arsenal have turned the previously-derided set-piece routine into a fine art and massive weapon



Arsenal's Martin Odegaard, center, celebrates with teammates after scoring his side's third goal during the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham and Arsenal at the London Stadium in London. (AP) Arsenal's Martin Odegaard, center, celebrates with teammates after scoring his side's third goal during the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham and Arsenal at the London Stadium in London. (AP) Two events foreshadow an Arsenal corner kick. The moment the referee decrees one, Gabriel, the strapping centre-back, ambles to the vicinity of the far post. On the touchline, manager Mikel Arteta, perennially on an emotional edge, slouches onto his seat in the dug-out; set-piece coach Nicolas Jover, with a twinkle in his eyes, veers onto the touchline.

Two events often follow an Arsenal corner kick too. The soaring giant of a man, Gabriel leaping above his markers, sliding and stretching his neck as though it were made of rubber and heading the ball into the net. Jover would leap and swipe the air. Since the start of last season, Arsenal have converted more set-pieces than any other club (25 excluding penalties) in the Premier League. Gabriel, unsurprisingly, has netted more goals than any other centre-back since his arrival in the 2021-22 season (15, the next best Virgil van Dijk has scored nine times). It's so frequent that their supporters buzz as though they have earned a penalty.

The action — from the time the ball goes out and the corner is swung — barely takes half a minute. In this time, the players move to their designated positions, which vary from match to match. But the most common pattern features one of Arsenal's players rubbing shoulders with the goalkeeper inside the six-yard box, giving a false impression that he is the intended target. He is rather the decoy, his only intention being to distract the goalkeeper, manufacturing space for the intended target (often Gabriel, but not always him, as it could become too predictable). Arsenal's Bukayo Saka celebrates scoring their fifth goal with Arsenal's Jurren Timber and Arsenal's Martin Odegaard 4 Arsenal's Bukayo Saka celebrates scoring their fifth goal with Arsenal's Jurren Timber and Arsenal's Martin Odegaard. (Reuters) Gabriel lurks on the edge of the six-yard box, on the left. Three of them usually hover behind him, inside the 18-yard box. They are the dummy runners, trying to clear out the far post area. When the ball swings in, they often move towards the ball, dragging markers to the near post. One or two might linger just outside the box and the rest stand behind them, to thwart any counter-attack.

Trained Pakistani terrorists, local militants eluding capture – the big worry for security forces in J-K's Kishtwar



When one enters Kishtwar town nowadays, a flex banner is displayed at the entry, with three pictures and an announcement that any information leading to them will fetch a reward of Rs 30 lakh. The pictures are of three militants including Mohammad Amin, the longest surviving militant of Jammu and Kashmir. Similar posters have come up across Kishtwar district, all indicative of a worrying shift in militancy from Jammu's Pir Panjal region to the Chenab valley, illustrated by the attacks listed above. The main reason for worry, according to security sources, is the geographic location of Kishtwar — its remote and inaccessible villages, dense forests and, most significantly, the presence of old militant hands that could help revive the militancy in the region. Kishtwar is the only one of 10 of Jammu's districts that has never been declared militancy-free. It is also home to Jammu and Kashmir longest surviving militant, Mohammad Amin alias Jahangir Saroori, whom police say has been active for over three decades and has a "good rapport" with some locals.

They also believe that it is the local connection — which includes advantages such as a vast network of the overground workers and access to hideouts — that could help Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba militants who moved into the Chenab valley to get a foothold here. "We had inputs that these terrorists would tell people in Doda that they have to meet Jahangir," said a senior police officer, who has been part of the anti-militancy operations. "It seems Doda was just a transit point and they wanted to go to Kishtwar." Over the last few months, Kishtwar has seen a spurt in militant activities, including an increase in the number of gunfights witnessed in the region. According to official sources, there are "at least" two militant groups operating in the area.

"Each group has four to five members. They are Pakistanis and are highly trained," a senior officer said. "They don't come down to villages but operate from the highly dense forests". Police believe that apart from Saroori, there are two other active local militants active in the area — Riaz Ahmad and Mudasir Hussain. All three belong to the Hizbul

25pc of India's population affected by varicose veins, treatable without surgery, experts say

Hyderabad: Approximately 25 per cent of India's population suffers from varicose veins — a condition often underdiagnosed in India — and can be treated without surgery, say leading national and international medical experts. They believe recent advancements in non-surgical treatment methods are transforming the approach to vascular care, enabling even remote areas to access high-quality treatments. It was spearheaded by Dr. Rajah V. Koppala, founder of Avis Hospitals and a renowned vascular interventional specialist. The IVC focused on sharing best practices in non-surgical solutions such as laser treatments and other innovative approaches. Dr. Koppala highlighted that Avis Hospitals has successfully treated over 40,000 patients using non-surgical methods over the past eight years. He stressed the importance of staying updated on new developments to continue enhancing patient outcomes. The event featured insights from international

experts, including Dr. Rodrigo Gomes de Oliveira and Dr. Fernando Tres Silveira, who shared updates on global trends and challenges in vascular and interventional radiology. The discussions underscored that while non-surgical methods can be highly effective, there are cases where surgical intervention is necessary. Indian experts engaged in dialogue with international colleagues, exchanging knowledge on advanced treatments and decision-making for complex cases. Participants gained practical insights into various treatment options, with senior specialists outlining which methods are most effective for different conditions. The Congress showcased the importance of continuous learning and adopting new techniques to improve the treatment of varicose veins, a condition often underdiagnosed in India. Dr. Koppala said the participation of top vascular experts in Hyderabad and the knowledge shared here will benefit practitioners across the country.

Sudhir Mungantiwar at Idea Exchange: 'We will raise Ladki Bahin grant to Rs 2,100. If we don't, we will be criticised across the nation'



So far, it's straightforward. The deliveries, Bukayo Saka from the right and Declan Rice from the left, are largely inswingers fired either on the goalkeeper or to the back post. Some bend late into the goal; some don't. It's then the intricate patterns set in a fury of limbs moving this way or that. The runners from deep in the box charge in, the shield dishevels the goalkeeper or the nearest defender (sometimes controversially, and a reason perhaps the more stringent referees of Champions League award a foul against them). Gabriel's opening goal against West Ham United this weekend was a classic instance, when Jurren Timber bumped into the back of Lucas Paquetá at the front post, denying him the space to jump and clear the ball. It swirled into the path of Gabriel, who hit the target. West Ham players rebelled for a lost cause. As have several other teams the last two seasons. Ben White tried to undo the gloves of Tottenham goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario before one of the corner-kick goals.

Keeping opponents guessing Whereas Gabriel's movements have been similar — a shimmy to the right (when delivered from the right), an explosive leap as he scuds the ball goalward — the rest of their movements are unpredictable. Sometimes, they drift into the box like a swarm of bees. Sometimes, they scatter like a regiment after a drill. It's synchronised chaos, so second-guessing their patterns becomes difficult. These are movements chiselled to perfection on the training ground under Jover's watch. The coach, who joined Arteta from Manchester City after he thought he was not getting enough time to work on set-pieces with the champions, more reliant on open play than set-pieces for goals, polished their set-pieces with intense, opponent-specific drills. The onus is on specific runs to sharpen their movements. Players are given just two seconds to run into a specific point to receive the ball, with Jover insisting on repeating and re-repeating the action until it becomes second nature. Arsenal's Gabriel Magalhaes, Martin Odegaard and Declan Rice ahead of a West Ham United free kick. (Reuters) Arsenal's Gabriel Magalhaes, Martin Odegaard and Declan Rice ahead of a West Ham United free kick. (Reuters) The season before Jover took over, Arsenal had scored just six goals from set-pieces in the entire season. Arteta can't stop praising him. "Him and the rest of the staff have injected the belief into the players that there are many ways to win football matches. This is a really powerful one and he has given us a lot," he once said. Jover is not the pioneer in set-piece coaching, but its most efficient exponent. The 43-year-old Frenchman has never played competitive football, but after completing his sports degree in Canada, joined the French club Montpellier as video analyst, before camping with the Croatian national team as match analyst. It was at Brentford in 2016 that he assumed the role of free-kick specialist. This was around the time teams were starting to focus more on set-pieces than ever before rather than decrying its lack of aesthetics, even though 28 percent of all goals every season arrive in this fashion. Earlier, it was seen as the refuge of teams in the relegation zone (as Brentford was when Jover joined the Bees). But no team has mastered the set-piece art like Arsenal. At the heart of it is Jover.

Sudhir Mungantiwar, senior BJP leader from Maharashtra, on what worked for the party in the Assembly polls, power-sharing with allies and the future of Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray. The session was moderated by Senior Editor Shubhangi Khapre. Shubhangi Khapre: Did you anticipate the Mahayuti win in Maharashtra because, after the Lok Sabha results, the BJP cadre seemed demoralised? Would you attribute it to Hindutva, OBC (Other Backward Castes) vote consolidation or the Maratha factor? Usually, Lok Sabha results are analysed according to seats. We analysed it through votes. We (BJP and allies, including Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party) got 2,48,50,000 votes while the Mahavikas Aghadi (MVA), an alliance of Congress, Shiv Sena-Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray and Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party and others) got 2.5 crore votes. There was a difference of 1.5 lakh votes. In Mumbai, we got 26 lakh votes and the MVA got 24 lakh votes but it was not distributed properly. Once it came to our notice, we formulated several schemes and ensured they reached the beneficiaries.

We implemented several schemes like the Ladki Bahin Yojana, free electricity up to 7.5 horsepower for farmers, the Mukhyamantri Teerth Darshan Yojana for the elderly and the Ladla Bhai Yojana for 10 lakh youth. I have been an MLA for the last 30 years and have seen the speed with which each government works. Often, the announcements we make in the Budget aren't implemented until December, or even until the next Budget. But the specialty of the current Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and the two deputy Chief Ministers, Devendra Fadnavis (BJP) and Ajit Pawar, was that they got to work immediately after the election results. After the Lok Sabha debacle, the BJP cadres were determined to win, just like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj would be determined and win every battle. The Ladki Bahin Yojana, under which money was transferred directly into the accounts of 2.42 crore women and girls, worked for us and they acknowledged that by giving us their mandate. There was total commitment and focus from the BJP's central leadership with Home Minister Amit Shah sending Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and BJP's national general secretary Shiv Prakash. Then there was Fadnavis himself on the ground.

Our aim was never to just win the elections; we wanted to win people's hearts. In the coming days, we have to work with that perspective. When I met Fadnavis last night (Thursday), we didn't discuss who would be the CM. We talked about how Maharashtra, as the economic engine of the country, could contribute to its financial growth. We have to work for development over the next five years and will succeed. Shubhangi Khapre: The BJP focussed a lot on consolidating the OBC vote. How much did that affect this election?

The Marathas also voted for us. Maratha MLA Babanrao Lonikar won from Partur. So it isn't true that only a certain caste group supported us. Even Muslims voted for us in some seats. We lost the Lok Sabha election because we didn't look at our vote distribution. We took care of that this time.

Shubhangi Khapre: Did the campaign slogans like 'Batenge toh katenge' or 'Ek hain toh safe hain' have an impact?

I don't think it influenced the voter much because this slogan has been in use since the time of Chanakya. It was used by Shivaji Maharaj, Maharana Pratap, Rani Laxmibai and even Mahatma Gandhi. This was a slogan to guide and take us forward. We might have got some votes because of it but saying that it helped us win isn't true. ON THE CONGRESS PITCH | They (the Congress) know the politics of winning and not the politics of development. Therefore, it was obvious they would lose this election. Their narrative that quotas would be discontinued didn't work

Shubhangi Khapre: Did it help in Hindu vote consolidation?

I don't think so. Everyone — Muslims and Sikhs — voted for us. Where did the 2.48 crore Lok Sabha votes come from?

Sandeep Singh: There has been a 15 per cent gap in the vote share vis-a-vis the MVA, which is quite abnormal. What do you attribute that to?

I would say the arrogance of the Opposition. It destroys a person. What was the difference between Lord Ram and Ravan? Ravan was arrogant about his knowledge. Lord Ram knew what that could do. After the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress was filled with hubris. Its narrative that reservations would be discontinued — Congress leader Rahul Gandhi himself said so in the US — simply did not work. Besides, who is responsible for inequality in this country? The Congress governed this country for 55 years. According to the 2011 census, 6.5 crore people were living without a house. Between 1960 and 2014, national highways in Maharashtra grew from 2,000 km to 4,500 km, a paltry increase of 2,500 km. In 10 years, the national highways spanned 19,000 km, an increase of 15,000 km. They know the politics of winning and not the politics of development. It was obvious they would lose this election.

Sandeep Singh: How did Rahul Gandhi's campaign play out?

There is a limit to lying. Despite being such a senior leader, you don't know that the Constitution cannot be changed by anyone. Therefore, even BR Ambedkar once said, "The Congress is a burning house. Whomsoever will enter it will be burnt." The Congress was jealous of Ambedkar, they didn't even give him a Bharat Ratna.

ON POWER-SHARING | When Amit Shah heads a meeting, he plays the role of judge and is not there as a party leader. He will hear everyone out and decide. I don't think anyone will remain adamant after a decision is taken. It's okay to make a request but it's not okay to remain adamant. All the three leaders love and respect Shahji. People do make requests and Shahji will decide based on logic. It is untrue that Shinde is insisting on the Home Ministry.

Alok Deshpande: In his speech before the election, Shah had said, "In 2029, there will be 100 per cent BJP." What does that mean?

In 1995, we had an alliance government with the Shiv Sena. We had 61 seats and they had 71. The then BJP state unit chief, Pandurang Fundkar, had then set a goalpost of "Shat pratishat BJP." Did anyone ask Sena's Balasaheb Thackeray or Manohar Joshi about that slogan? It is the same effort now. Hundred per cent BJP means that we reach every village, town and remote area for last mile governance and development. Now even RSS has given a call for reaching out to remote areas.

Mohamed Thaver: Several leaders like Nitesh Rane have had more than 20 FIRs against them. Do you personally approve of the kind of statements he made during the campaign? What about his comments on a community?

If Sanjay Raut (Shiv Sena-Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) makes provocative statements, what should be done? If they are abusing you and you don't reply, people interpret that differently today. As for the community-specific reference you mention, he did that once because the community made some statements against him. It is not like the entire party is commenting on that issue. Besides, the speeches by Akbaruddin Owaisi not inflammatory or the Congress' demeaning of Veer Savarkar not provocative? Every action has a reaction in the heat of the moment but you can't say that the party endorses such statements.

It was the idea of the CM and the deputy CMs. But yes, I would give a lot of credit to the CM for taking it up in various Cabinet meetings and we supported it. Earlier, people were saying that the money (disbursed by the scheme) would come from the taxpayer's money. I said income tax goes to the Government of India. In fact, I think it is the money of the common people as they pay GST on every item and so it is the common man's money going back to them. In 2017, as the finance minister, I implemented the Seventh Pay Commission and gave Rs 86,000 crore to 18,000 people. No one had a problem with that then.

Shubhangi Khapre: Even with a landslide victory, why is it taking so long to form a government?

In the last 20 years, this is going to be the first government that is going to be formed so quickly. In 2004, it took 15 days. In 2009, it took 14 days. In 2014, it was formed in 11 days. In 2019, Uddhav Thackeray was sworn in after over a month of the election results being declared. We will form a government within 11 days. Shubhangi Khapre: The Mahayuti unity seems to be fading after the elections. It seems Shinde is miffed and Ajit Pawar is unhappy.

There's no unhappiness. The day Shinde became the CM, he knew he had to go one day. Who is permanent?

Zeehan Shaikh: With the BJP getting an overwhelming vote share in the Assembly election, how comfortable are you sharing power with allies?

When you form a friendship, you don't weigh it in terms of profit and loss. We worked together, so we should share power together. Just because one is forming the government because it is capable doesn't mean one should leave friends. Had we got fewer seats (than the other alliances), how would we have felt if our friends left us? No party will progress with such a thinking. We didn't think like that even in Bihar. When you decide (to be in an alliance), words have some worth.

Zeehan Shaikh: Would the BJP give up the CM position?

The question doesn't arise because Shinde said he would abide by whatever decision the Mahayuti and the BJP takes. He has told Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah that he would not be a hindrance in government formation. Mohamed Thaver: Can you ensure that you will not make any changes to the Ladki Bahin Scheme or discontinue it once you come to power?

The only criterion that might change is related to income tax payers. So far, several tax payers, too, have received the payouts but we will go through the data now and remove those not eligible from the list of beneficiaries. Then, there was very little time to evaluate and we could not scrutinise all the application forms. The Rs 2.5 lakh (per annum) criteria (of household income) will remain. Sandeep Singh: Will you keep your promise of raising the scheme's limit from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,100 for every woman? One of your alliance partners is saying this was Shindeji's promise.

It will happen 100 per cent. If we don't raise the amount from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,100, then it will be shown as an example across the country in all elections that we renege on our pledge. I will write a letter to the CM. We have to stand true to our words and as the chairman of the Maharashtra manifesto committee, I won't let our manifesto (Sankalp Patra) promises be diluted. Maharashtra pays Rs 59,000 crore as interest and we have the strength to give Rs 2,100 per head. I don't think any of my alliance partners are saying this. Yes, the cut-off date from when the increased amount can be disbursed will be discussed, whether to increase it in January or July. We implemented the scheme on Bhai Dooj last time, so we may increase it during Bhai Dooj next year.

Vijay Kumar Yadav: How much will the burden increase from the present Rs 45,000 crore after the scheme amount is increased to Rs 2,100?

It will be less than the interest we pay. It will be less than the Seventh Pay Commission amount that we have to pay every year. Why do people ask these questions when it comes to giving money to women? Nobody questioned when Videocon was given land worth Rs 3,000 crore at Rs 30 crore. The Constitution directs us to come up with enabling policies. Unlike our allies, who have their leaders here, we are a large national party and have to discuss internally. Also, the Parliament session is going on. The decision will be taken two days before the swearing-in. Modiji and Amit Shahji will decide, I don't see any obstacles.

Shubhangi Khapre: The BJP and Sena had an equal number of ministers in the last Cabinet. The BJP had 105 MLAs then. What will happen this time?

There's a difference this time. We are all brothers and nobody is big or small. All our three leaders will serve the people and work together. The allocation will happen based on numbers.

Shubhangi Khapre: Shinde seems to be okay with giving up the CM's post but he is insisting on the Home ministry.

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Harvey Weinstein hospitalised after 'alarming blood test', attorney says

EMS News Agency, Dec 5



been transferred from Rikers Island to the Bellevue Hospital Prison Ward in Manhattan. Weinstein has been in city custody since earlier this year after the New York Court of Appeals overturned his 2020 rape conviction in the State. The case is set to be retried in 2025. Weinstein has denied any wrongdoing. In a legal filing last week, Weinstein's attorneys accused the city of providing him with substandard medical care for a litany of medical afflictions, which include chronic myeloid leukemia and diabetes.

"When I last visited him, I found him with blood spatter on his prison garb, possibly from IV's, clothes that had not been washed for weeks, and he had not even been provided clean underwear — hardly sanitary conditions for someone with severe medical conditions," Ansari said in a statement that likened Rikers Island to a "gulag." The troubled jail complex, located on an island in New York City's East River, has faced growing scrutiny for its mistreatment of detainees and dangerous conditions. Last week, a federal judge cleared the way for a possible federal takeover of the jail system, finding the city had placed its incarcerated population in "unconstitutional danger." A publicist for Weinstein, Juda Engelmayer, echoed the allegation in a statement Monday. "Mr. Weinstein, who is suffering from a number of illnesses, including leukemia, has been deprived the medical attention that someone in his medical state deserves, prisoner or not," he said. "In many ways, this mistreatment constitutes cruel and unusual punishment."

A spokesperson for New York City's Department of Correction did not immediately respond to an email. The agency's inmate database confirmed that Weinstein had

US targets China's chip industry with new restrictions



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The United States on Monday launched its third big crackdown in three years on China's semiconductor industry, curbing exports to 140 companies, including chip equipment maker Naura Technology Group, among other moves. Below is a list of the biggest actions being taken, according to the Commerce Department. Chip equipmentNew controls will be placed on semiconductor manufacturing equipment needed to produce advanced-node integrated circuits, including certain etch, deposition, lithography, ion implantation, annealing, metrology and inspection, and cleaning tools. This could hit companies like Lam Research, KLA Corp and Applied Materials, as well as non-U.S. companies like Dutch equipment maker ASM International. New controls on software tools for developing or producing advanced-node integrated circuits, including certain software that increases the productivity of advanced machines or allows less-advanced machines to pro-

duce advanced chips, which could affect companies like Siemens, which is parent of Mentor Graphics. MemoryAnother rule in the package restricts high bandwidth memory used in AI chips that correspond with what is known as "HBM 2" and higher, technology made by South Korea's Samsung and SK Hynix and U.S.-based Micron Technology. Industry sources expect only Samsung Electronics to be affected. Samsung generates about 20% of its HBM chip sales from China, a person with knowledge of the matter said. HBM is critical to both AI training and inference at scale, and is a key component of advanced computing integrated circuits. Entity listThe 140 new entrants on the Commerce Department's Entity List include semiconductor fabrication plants, also known as fabs, semiconductor tool companies, and investment companies "that are acting at the behest of Beijing to further the China's advanced chip goals which pose a risk to U.S. and allied national security." Chinese private equity firm Wise Road Capital, tech firm Wingtech Technology Co and JAC Capital were added. Companies seeking licenses to ship to firms on the Entity List generally get denied. The new rule will expand U.S. powers to curb exports of chipmaking equipment by U.S., Japanese, and Dutch manufacturers made in other parts of the world to certain chip plants in China. Equipment made in Israel, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan is subject to the rule while Japan and the Netherlands will be exempt. The expanded foreign direct product rule will apply to 16 companies on the entity list that are seen as the most important to China's most advanced chipmaking ambitions. The rule will also lower the amount of U.S. content that determines when certain foreign items are subject to U.S. control. That will allow the U.S. to regulate any item shipped to China from overseas if it contains any U.S. chips.

Advocate Ramen Roy attacked in Bangladesh for defending Hindu monk, claims ISKCON Kolkata spokesman

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson Radharaman Das on Monday (December 2, 2024) claimed that Advocate Ramen Roy, who had defended Bangladesh's Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Prabhu in a legal case there, was brutally attacked in the neighbouring country and is fighting for his life in a hospital. According to Mr. Das, Mr. Roy's only "fault" was defending Prabhu in court, and a group of Islamists ransacked his home. The attack left Mr. Roy critically injured, and he is currently in the ICU, fighting for his life, ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson claimed.

"Please pray for Advocate Ramen Roy. His only 'fault' was defending Chinmoy Krishna Prabhu in court. Islamists ransacked his home and brutally attacked him, leaving him in the ICU, fighting for his life. #SaveBangladeshiHindus #FreeChinmoyKrishnaPrabhu," he posted on X along with a picture of Roy in ICU. Speaking to a Bengali news channel, Mr. Das, also ISKCON Kolkata vice president, said, "This brutal attack on advocate Roy is a direct consequence

of his legal defence of Chinmoy Krishna Prabhu. It reflects the growing danger faced by those who defend the rights of religious minorities in Bangladesh." Mr. Prabhu, who served as a spokesperson for Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatan Jagran Jote, was arrested at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Monday while en route to Chittagong to attend a rally. He was denied bail and sent to jail on Tuesday by a court in the neighbouring country. Historically, Hindus made up approximately 22% of Bangladesh's population during the 1971 Liberation War.

The Hindu population, once a substantial demographic in Bangladesh, has experienced a significant decline in recent decades, with the minority community now comprising only around 8 per cent of the country's total population.

This drop is largely attributed to a combination of socio-political marginalisation, exodus and sporadic violence over the years.

Key players in Syria's long-running civil war, reignited by a shock rebel offensive

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Syria's long civil war has reclaimed global attention after insurgents seized most of its largest city and dozens of nearby towns and villages. The stunning advance on Aleppo by rebel forces came as several key players in the conflict have been distracted or weakened, triggering the heaviest clashes since a 2020 ceasefire brought relative calm to the country's north. Russian and Syrian forces have carried out dozens of airstrikes to try to limit the insurgents' advances, inflicting heavy casualties. Syria's civil war started in 2011 after an uprising against President Bashar Assad's rule. Five foreign powers have a military presence in the country including the U.S., Russia and Iran. Forces opposed to Assad, along with U.S.-backed fighters, control more than a third of the country. Israel holds the Golan Heights, which it seized in its 1967 war with its Arab neighbours. Here's a look at the key players: Syrian government troops have long controlled a large part of the country, thanks to allied forces dispatched by Russia and Iran. Assad's forces control most of the major population centres, including the capital Damascus and cities in Syria's centre, south and east. The Syrian government's capture of Aleppo in late 2016 was a turning point in the conflict and their loss of the city in recent days is a major setback.

Iran's military advisers and proxy fighters have played a critical role in shoring up Assad's forces throughout the war. But Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group, which is backed by Iran, has been weakened in its recent war with Israel and Iran has been distracted by the conflict. On Monday, Iranian-backed Iraqi militias deployed to Syria to back the government's counteroffensive. Russia's military has supported Assad from the Mediterranean coast, where it main-

tains its only naval base outside the former Soviet Union, and at the Hemeimeem air base in Latakia province, which is home to hundreds of Russian troops. But much of its attention and resources have been focused on its war in Ukraine. Anti-government forces are led by the insurgent Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which long served as al-Qaida's branch in Syria and was considered a terrorist group by the U.N. as well as countries including the U.S. HTS controls much of northwest Syria and in 2017 set up a "salvation government" to run day-to-day affairs in the region. In recent years, its leader Abu Mohammed al-Golani has sought to remake the group's image, cutting ties with al-Qaida, ditching hard-line officials and vowing to embrace pluralism and religious tolerance. Other insurgent groups include Nouredine el-Zinki, which was formerly backed by the U.S., before it joined the HTS-led alliance. A Turkish-backed coalition of groups known as the Syrian National Army has attacked areas including the northern town of Tel Rifaat, controlled by the U.S.-backed and Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. Chinese fighters from the Turkistan Islamic Party and Chechen fighters from the former Soviet Union have taken part in the battles in the country's northwest, according to Syrian opposition activists. Turkey, which controls parts of northern Syria, will not say how many troops it has in the country. The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, a U.S.-backed coalition of groups, controls large parts of eastern Syria. The SDF has battled the Islamic State group, capturing the last sliver of land held by the extremists in eastern Syria. About 900 American troops are stationed in Syria's east to guard against a resurgence by the extremist group. SDF forces still control several neighbourhoods of Aleppo encircled by insurgents.

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What does Bangladesh's constitution state about religious freedom?



The desecration of Hindu temples in Bangladesh and the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das on sedition charges is not only a violation of Bangladesh's constitutional promises but also a negation of international human rights law. Human rights are not the internal matters of any country and thus, India is fully justified in expressing its concerns about the violation of minority rights in Bangladesh. However, the Bangladesh Foreign Ministry's reply has been disappointing, indicative of how a country which violates minority rights usually responds.

Some 20 million Hindus, Christians, Buddhists and Ahmadiyyas who constitute the minorities in Bangladesh could be left at the mercy of the interim government that has not shown any sign of taking concrete steps against the Islamist majoritarian mob except a visit to Dhakeshwari temple by Muhammad Yunus who heads the current political dispensation. The kind of religious freedom the Bangladesh constitution guarantees to its religious minorities must be revisited by the interim government.

Four fundamental principlesPakistan was created through the divisive and erroneous two nation theory of Veer Savarkar and Muhammad Jinnah. No nation is to be created in the name of religion. Proving the theory wrong within 25 years, Pakistan itself got partitioned with the creation of a new country — Bangladesh. This new country was created not in the name of religion but on the basis of the secular and liberal 'Bangla' nationalism. The constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 4, 1972. The constitution also mentioned that this date corresponds to the 18th Day of Kartick, 1379 B.S. The preamble of the Bangladesh constitution mentions nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism as its fundamental principles. Unlike India, their commitment to socialism has been explicitly mentioned and the preamble says that the fundamental aim of the state is to realise through democratic process a socialist society free from exploitation — a society in which rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedoms, and equality and justice will be provided to all citizens. Islam as state religionThough the original Bangladesh constitution was secular, the military dictator Ziaur Rahman in 1977 removed 'secularism' from it, and in 1988, General Ershad got Article 2A inserted in the constitution which laid down Islam as the state religion. This new Article says that the state religion of the Republic is Islam and that other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony. This kind of provision is there both in Sri Lanka as well as Bhutan. But the High Court and the Supreme Court struck down the amendment in 2005 and 2010 respectively. The court said that even though Islam is the state religion, the constitution remains secular. In a 186-page judgment, the court observed that the "preamble and the relevant provision of the constitution in respect of secularism, nationalism and socialism as existed on August 15, 1975 [Mujeerur Rahman was assassinated on this day] will revive." It observed that "omitting secularism, one of the state policy from the constitution, destroyed one of the basis of our struggle for freedom and also changed the basic character of the Republic as enshrined in the preamble as well as Article 8(1) of the constitution."

On June 30, 2011, the constitution was again amended through the 15th amendment and the term 'secular' was reinserted. The amendment removed the expression 'absolute faith and trust in Allah' from the preamble but retained above the preamble expression 'in the name of Allah, the

Internet services face disruption in Pakistan



Internet users across Pakistan faced disruption in accessing various online platforms on Sunday, according to a media report. Popular platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have either been suspended or were operating at reduced speeds, leaving users frustrated with limited access. Around 52% of the users reported issues in sending messages. Users in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar and other parts of the country also reported issues with TikTok and Instagram throughout the day, according to the Dawn newspaper. People in Pakistan are facing slow internet speed after the government reportedly installed a firewall to monitor anti-state content on social media apps. The government downplayed the outages, dismissing concerns about the firewall situation as "blown out of proportion." While speaking to Geo News on Sunday, Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that the situation with the firewall was "blown out of proportion and a web management system has been operating in the country for 10 years."

"There is nothing controversial about a country working on its cyber security," she said, adding that the entire world used different cyber security mechanisms. She said that the security paradigm of the world was shifting towards information and technology (IT) similar to the economic paradigm. Fatima said that given Pakistan faced "millions of cyber attacks" daily, it was getting increasingly difficult to detect terrorist activity in the country. At least two online tools have negated the Pakistani government's claims of uninterrupted internet services. The Dawn newspaper analysed data from these tools, which track network stability and monitor internet outages in real-time, and found that users were unable to access or had limited access to several social media services on Sunday. According to Internet Outage Detection and Analysis (IODA), a tool developed by the Internet Intelligence Lab at the Georgia Institute of Technology, these disruptions lasted for hours. The tool, which measures internet connectivity and detects outages "in near real-

time", found that the network remained stable at the Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) level throughout the day. However, despite the stable network, IODA reported disruption in the internet based on its examination of traffic to Google services. Online tools tracking internet disruptions use traffic to popular websites and services as a benchmark to determine internet stability in a region. In the case of IODA, it uses traffic headed to Google services — search engine, YouTube, Gmail, etc. — from a geographic location as the benchmark to determine any abnormality in internet access. The issues with accessing Google services, reported by IODA, were also corroborated by another tool, Downdetector.

Absolute freedom of religionBangladesh's constitution in an independent article (Article 39) guarantees freedom of thought and conscience. India does not have freedom of thought as a fundamental right but freedom of conscience has been included as part of the freedom of religion in Article 25. Article 41 of Bangladesh's constitution guarantees freedom of religion. It says that every citizen 'subject to public order and morality' has the right to profess, practise or propagate any religion. Like our Article 26, Article 41(b) gives the right to every religious community or denomination to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions. Similarly just like our Article 28, Article 41(c) of Bangladesh's constitution lays down that no person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction or take part in or to attend any religious ceremony or worship, if that instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own. The difference between the two provisions is while we do not permit any religious instruction in any institution that is maintained out of state funds or is recognised by the government, Bangladesh permits religious instruction but only of one's own religion. Article 28(1) is a replica of our Article 15 and prohibits the state from discriminating against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. It also states that no citizen shall on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort or admission to any educational institution. Our Article 15 does not mention educational institutions and gives the right to access only to places maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the

constitution.

U.S. approves sale of \$1.17 billion worth helicopter equipment to India

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

The Biden administration on Monday (December 2, 2024) notified the U.S. Congress of its decision to approve the sale of MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter Equipment and related ones at an estimated cost of \$1.17 billion. The proposed sale will improve India's capability to deter current and future threats by upgrading its anti-submarine warfare capabilities, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency said in a notification to Congress.

The Biden administration's approval of sale of major defence equipment to India comes weeks ahead of the completion of its four-year term. President-elect Donald Trump would be sworn in as 47th president of the United States of America on January 20, 2025. India's request

According to the notification, India has requested to buy 30 Multifunctional Information Distribution System-Joint Tactical Radio Systems (MIDS-JTRS). It also included advanced data transfer systems; external fuel tanks; AN/AAS 44C(V) forward looking infrared (FLIR) systems; an operator machine interface assistant; spare containers; facilities study, design, construction and support; support and test equipment; munitions; and integration and test support.

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin Rotary and Mission Systems. Implementation of this sale will require travel of up to 20 U.S. Government or up to 25 contractor representatives to India on a temporary basis for program technical support and management oversight, it said.

'Sure of remarkable change in IMF's assessment of Indian statistics'



The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) assessment of India's official statistics should improve significantly once the ongoing review of the key macroeconomic indicators is complete, according to Mridul Saggar, Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee on the Index of Industrial Production. "We started this workshop with a note about IMF assessment. You wait for next year's assessment – I am sure there will be a remarkable change in the assessment," Saggar said on Tuesday at a workshop organised by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). Last month, the IMF had retained its overall 'B' grade on India's official statistics and 'C' grade for the GDP data, while acknowledging the government's ongoing effort to update data such as GDP and Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Noting that the IMF's three main concerns had to do with the old base of the GDP, the lack of double-deflation method to compute real GDP, and statistical discrepancies, Narendra Kumar Santoshi, MoSPI's Director General of Central Statistics, said at the workshop that the new data series were addressing these issues to the "best possible extent". Commenting specifically on the new CPI series, which will be released on February 12, 2026, Santoshi said it will be "fully aligned with international standards". As part of the statistical overhaul, MoSPI is changing the basket of goods and services on which CPI inflation is calculated, along with several other methodological alterations. Currently, a basket based on the 2011-12 household consumption expenditure survey is used; this will be updated to a 2023-24 basket, with the base year being updated to 2024 from 2012. Further, GDP data is also set for a big revision, with the base year moving to 2022-23 from 2011-12 as well as new data sources being used to more accurately measure the final value of goods and services.

According to MoSPI Secretary Saurabh Garg, while it's too early to comment on the impact of the various changes being made to the new GDP series – which will be released on February 27, 2026 starting with data for October-December – "we don't expect much changes from what our previous expectations are". BN Goldar, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics responsible for making suggestions to revise the GDP data,

No extension beyond March for IndiGo's wet-leased planes from Turkey; its Turkish Airlines 777s to go back after February



IndiGo has the permission to use wet-leased aircraft from Turkey-based airlines only till March, and no further extension will be provided, India's aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said late Monday. Moreover, the lease on two wide-body Boeing 777 aircraft that are among the planes IndiGo has on lease from Turkish carriers is valid only till the end of February, and has not been extended. The clarification came amid speculation in a section of the media that IndiGo had received the DGCA's nod for a six-month lease extension on the two Boeing 777s.

IndiGo has a total of seven aircraft on wet lease – taking the aircraft on lease along with the operating crew – from Turkish carriers – five Boeing 737 planes from Corendon Airlines till March-end, apart from the two Boeing 777 jets from Turkish Airlines till February-end. IndiGo also has the regulator's permission to lease five Airbus A320 planes from another Turkish carrier Freebird Airways, but these are yet to be inducted by the Indian airline.

"M/s IndiGo has been permitted to operate aircraft on wet lease from Turkey with a last extension valid till March 2026 with a sunset clause that no further extension will be given. This is based on the undertaking submitted by IndiGo airlines in the instant case wherein they have sought last time extension, since their long-range aircraft (A321-XLR) are to be delivered by February 2026," the DGCA said. A senior official said that while the lease validity for the narrow-body planes from Turkish carriers is there till March, the Turkish Airlines' Boeing 777s will have to go back after February.

IndiGo uses the two wet-leased Boeing 777s for its flights to Istanbul from Delhi and Mumbai. Amid backlash against Turkey in India due to the former's public backing of Pakistan during Operation Sindoora, the DGCA had informed IndiGo that it would not allow lease extensions for the two aircraft beyond August. However, in August, the regulator allowed a one-time final lease extension till February-end upon IndiGo's request, but stated that no further extensions will be given. DGCA approvals are mandatory for Indian airlines to wet-lease aircraft.

"Wet leasing of aircraft is a normal practice in the glo-

Hyderabad tops high-value Instamart orders

Hyderabad: From iPhones worth Rs.4.30 lakh in a single cart, nearly Rs. 2 lakh on soft drinks to Rs.31,000 worth roses on Valentine's Day, Hyderabadi have spent big on purchase of both luxury and everyday groceries in 2025. After the launch of the iPhone 17, it did not take long for this tech enthusiast from Hyderabad to splash Rs.4.3 lakh on three iPhone 17 Pros in just a single tap on Swiggy Instamart this year. This order has earned the title of the largest single cart of 2025. A soft drink connoisseur from Hyderabad splurged Rs.1.92 lakh on the soft drinks at a go, while another spent Rs.31,240 on roses alone on Valentine's Day and got the feelings delivered on the big day. These details come to fore in the report 'How India Instamarted 2025' released by Swiggy. As per the report, Hyderabad paired discipline with aspiration, emerging as one of Instamart's strongest cities for high-value carts and category expansion. Along with Apple products, 24k gold coins were ranked among the city's highest-value buys. Further, the report revealed that purchases of electronics and appliances surged by 90 percent. Late-night cravings

across top cities were led by masala-flavoured chips, a pattern also reflected in Hyderabad's night orders. Meanwhile, milk emerged as the country's No.1 essential, with India ordering over four packets of milk per second. This is enough to fill 26,000 Olympic-sized pools. One in every 127 orders in Instamart included a condom and September stood out as a peak month for condom purchases, with a 24 percent surge in orders. A single account in Chennai placed 228 separate condom orders totalling Rs.1.06 lakh. Further, one Bengaluru user shelled out Rs.4.36 lakh on noodles, while another account in Mumbai spent Rs.16.3 lakh on Red Bull sugar-free drink. The tiniest order came from Bengaluru where a user ordered a printout at Rs.10. "Quick commerce in India has moved beyond just convenience. It's not just a service, but a part of the modern Indian lifestyle," said Hari Kumar G, Chief Business Officer, Swiggy. – Hyderabad user splurged Rs 4.3 lakh on three iPhone 17 Pros in one order. – One Hyderabadi spent Rs 31,000 on roses alone this Valentine's Day, while another spent Rs 1.92 lakh on soft drinks.

'What have you done since Hotmail': Sabeer Bhatia says stigma around failure is so strong in India, people don't experiment



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Sabeer Bhatia, the man who co-founded Hotmail, knows a thing or two about building something from scratch. But even years after launching one of the world's first webmail services, people still ask him one question: "What have you done since Hotmail?" For Bhatia, that question says a lot about how we, in India, think about success—and failure. In a recent chat on the NNP podcast, he didn't hold back. He said, "We live in a conformist society—people are often told, 'Listen to others, do what they say.' But why follow a path that's already been walked?"

According to Bhatia, the problem begins with our

schools. He said India's education system is designed to "produce workers who take orders" rather than "visionaries" who challenge the system. He gave an example from his own family. "Teachers don't correct [spelling mistakes] because spelling is irrelevant. What matters is the thought," he said, talking about how his children are taught in the US. "In India, children are punished for making errors instead of being supported to think for themselves."

And he didn't mince words when describing the state of learning in the country: "You're never asked to write a paper. You're asked to memorise 13 chapters and regurgitate them. That is not education." Sabeer Bhatia Another major issue, according to Bhatia, is how society defines success. (file) A society that's afraid to fail Bhatia also touched on India's deep discomfort with failure. Sharing his own experience, he said, "People have even asked me, 'What have you done since Hotmail?'"—as if one moment, good or bad, should define someone forever. He believes this fear is holding back innovation. "Unless India stops confusing blind obedience with real intelligence, it will continue to lose talented minds," he said. According to Bhatia, another major issue is how society defines success. He explained that many Indian students choose careers like medicine or engineering not out of passion but because that's what society tells them to do. "You can't suppress the arts, sports, and culture and expect to build a balanced society," he added. Even when young people want to take a different route—like starting a business—the foundation they've been given doesn't prepare them for that leap.

Gastroenterologist explains why belly fat increases after 30 even if your diet and workouts haven't changed



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Many people notice a frustrating pattern after crossing 30: the waistline expands even though eating habits and workouts haven't changed much. Addressing this common concern, Dr Saurabh Sethi, a California-based gastroenterologist trained at AIIMS, Harvard, and Stanford Universities, recently explained why belly fat tends to increase with age, and why it often feels more complicated to lose than before. In an Instagram post, he said, "The same foods lead to more belly fat. The same workouts give fewer results." According to Dr Sethi, this change is driven by predictable physiological processes rather than a sudden lack of discipline. One key factor is muscle loss.

"After 30, we naturally lose 3-8% of muscle per decade," he explained. Since muscle plays a significant role in burning calories and handling blood sugar, losing it slows daily energy expenditure. He further noted that muscles are responsible for "approximately 70-80% of glucose disposal." He warned, "When muscle mass drops, glucose stays in the blood longer and is more likely stored as abdominal fat." Another contributor is declining insulin sensitivity, which drops by about 4-5% per decade. This means that eating the same carbohydrates can lead to bigger blood sugar spikes and faster fat storage, particularly around the waist. Hormonal shifts also play a role. As levels of growth hormone, testosterone, and oestrogen fall, cortisol rises and, as Dr Sethi put it, "This combination favours deep abdominal fat storage." Over time, this leads to the accumulation

of visceral fat, which he described as particularly harmful. "This fat surrounds organs and worsens insulin resistance and inflammation," he said, noting that the effects are stronger in people with fatty liver, prediabetes, diabetes, or high triglycerides.

But how can someone tell whether their belly fat is primarily visceral?

Dr Adithya V. Naragund, senior consultant in GI & HPB Surgery at Cytecare Hospitals, Bengaluru, tells indianexpress.com, "Visceral fat is the deeper fat that surrounds internal organs like the liver and intestines, and it is metabolically active. Unlike subcutaneous fat, which sits just under the skin and can be pinched, visceral fat gives the abdomen a firm, protruding appearance. It does not reduce significantly with simple weight loss." Clinically, Dr Naragund says, an expanding waistline is one of the earliest indicators. "In Indian adults, a waist circumference above 90 cm in men and 80 cm in women strongly suggests excess visceral fat. Imaging tests like ultrasound, CT scan, or DEXA can confirm this, but they are not always necessary for routine assessment."

Is muscle loss after 30 inevitable?

Dr Naragund notes that some degree of muscle loss with age, known as sarcopenia, begins after the age of 30, but it is not inevitable or irreversible. In most people, the primary drivers are inactivity, inadequate protein intake, poor sleep, and chronic stress rather than age alone. He adds, "Targeted strength training two to four times a week can significantly rebuild muscle mass even in people in their 40s and 50s. When combined with adequate dietary protein, especially from high-quality sources such as pulses, dairy, eggs, fish, or lean meat, metabolic rate can be preserved and even improved." Maintaining muscle is critical because muscle tissue improves insulin sensitivity and increases resting energy expenditure. In practical terms, this means the body handles carbohydrates better and stores less fat around the abdomen.

'Too soon for me to analyse': Vicky Kaushal describes emotional surrender of fatherhood; psychologist explains why new parents feel unprepared



Becoming a parent is often described as transformative, but for many new parents, the emotional shift is hard to anticipate or articulate. In a recent conversation, actor Vicky Kaushal spoke about this early, overwhelming phase of parenthood, sharing that "every day, a new emotion hits." In November this year, Vicky and actor Katrina Kaif welcomed their firstborn, a son, marking the beginning of a life change that, as he admits, he is still trying to process.

When asked about his feelings as a new father, Vicky said, "It's too soon for me to analyse. Every day, a new emotion hits. You surrender to this in a way you've never surrendered to anything." He also described fatherhood as "a grounding experience," adding, "It's a feeling I can't put into words, and wasn't prepared for." Admitting that, despite being at such a glamorous event, all he could think of was going back home, he told GQ India, "For the entire time that I was there, I kept feeling something pulling me back. Your centre just changes. It's kind of beautiful."

Vicky and Katrina had announced the arrival of their son with a heartfelt note on Instagram: "Our bundle of joy has arrived. With immense love and gratitude, we welcome our baby boy. 7th November, 2025. Katrina & Vicky." Earlier, in September, they had confirmed their pregnancy with a joint post from what appeared to be a maternity photoshoot, writing, "On our way to start the best chapter of our lives with hearts full of joy and gratitude." While these moments are deeply personal, the emotions behind them are widely shared by new parents navigating identity shifts, emotional surrender, and the realities of early parenthood.

Meaning of emotional surrender for new parents Vicky Kaushal says, "You surrender to this in a way you've never surrendered to anything." Gurleen Baruah, existential analyst at That Culture Thing, reflects on this, adding that for many new parents, this surrender feels almost magical. "A baby brings a deep sense of belonging and connection that is hard to explain. Biologically, hormones like oxytocin rise sharply, creating strong bonding, tenderness, and protection."

tiveness," says Baruah, in a conversation with indianexpress.com. Psychologically, she adds that the child is experienced as "my own," not just an external responsibility but an extension of oneself. "From a developmental psychology lens, the parents' emotional world reorganises around the infant. Sleep deprivation, constant caregiving, and the baby's complete dependence intensify this bond," mentions Baruah. Why many first-time parents are unprepared for the emotional changes of parenthood

Most people imagine parenthood, Baruah notes, but imagination is not lived reality. Anticipation often focuses on joy, milestones, and love, while the reality includes overwhelm, fear, responsibility, and loss of the old self. "Parenthood brings existential questions: Am I enough? Can I protect this life? What if something goes wrong? These feelings arrive alongside deep love, which makes them even more powerful. No amount of planning prepares someone for how permanent the role feels," states Baruah. Emotional fluctuation in new parents According to Baruah, emotional fluctuation is very normal in early parenthood. Babies' expressions, cries, smiles, and changes can feel almost magical, stirring love, fear, joy, and anxiety all at once. New parents often swing between feeling deeply fulfilled and suddenly overwhelmed. This mix is part of the adjustment

Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri movie review: Kartik Aaryan, Ananya Panday as lovers who can't be apart? Nah!



We know how this tourism tour will end. As they pass through picturesque cafes and beaches, reminding you of the hapless Harry and Sejal (remember them?), Cupid does its thing. Both are smitten. And then comes the conflict — Ray helpfully calling it the Big C (nope, not kidding) — and parental opposition. Actually not: the trouble lies somewhere else. Sure, parents are involved: Col Singh (Jackie Shroff) as Ananya's dad, retired army man dripping patriotism, singing 'Yeh mera India', and Pinky Mehta (Neena Gupta) as Ray's single mom, who comes in warbling 'Choli ke Peeche Kya Hai'. Yes, for real. Are we back in the 90s? Yes, yes, because that's what the kids are thirsting for apparently: a 90s style romance, stuffed with glycerine and melodrama and songs-and-dances from that era. A couple of sub-plots give other characters some room. Rumi's sister Jia (Chandni Bhabha) and her Tinder-hook-up is turned speedily into a shaadi: how else do you get the morose wedding-planner back in play, who has been Pinky-promised into winning over his dulhaniya?

At some point the plot remembers to pull out a mooney-eyed fellow (Gaurav Panday) to hover around Rumi. Other sets of uncles and aunts — one who keeps sighing over Ray's abs — show up, with the Saat Samundar paar ladka who's turned up peeche peeche, burning up the dance floor. Kartik and Ananya looked good together in the 2019 Pati Patni Aur Woh: reunited after six years, they don't for a minute convince you as lovers who can't bear to part. Shroff gives us sonorous dialogue delivery, with a few nice moments with Kartik, and Neena Gupta is flat-out fabulous as the supportive mom, more 'tu mera, main teri' than the hero and heroine.

It says something about us as viewers that we like our filmi romances to masquerade as soppy family dramas, and how they only kick in when the gaana-bajaana and rona-dhona starts. Or do we? Is this a myth Bollywood refuses to walk past? Whatever happened to being in sync with changing times? It's almost 2026, bro, no? Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri movie cast: Kartik Aaryan, Ananya Panday, Neena Gupta, Jackie Shroff, Chandni Bhabha, Grusssha Kapoor, Tiku Talsania, Gaurav Panday, Lokesh Mittal Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri movie director: Sameer Vidwan Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri movie rating: 1.5 stars

The MATH of making a blockbuster trailer: What made 4-minute Dhurandhar trailer stand out, 'Ranveer Singh appeared for only 1 minute'



Dhurandhar broke several established norms, most definite being the revealing of the hero only in the final minute.

Kajale also points to sound as the element that often decides the fate of a trailer. "The audio you cut to can change the response to the same visuals," he said. "We saw this with both the trailer and the first look of Dhurandhar. Whether it was the use of 'Jogi' in the first look, or the brief scratch of qawwali at the very end of the trailer, those choices made people stop and pay attention." This, Kajale explained, is what he looks for when approaching any promotional unit. He cited the trailer of Vikramaditya Motwane's Trapped, designed by his team, which relied almost entirely on sound, ambient noise, score, and effects. "It comes down to what you decide to cut with," he said. "It could be a voice-over, a piece of music, or only sound effects. That choice determines how the film is going to be read." The point holds when one looks back at the trailer of Yash Chopra's swan song, Jab Tak Hai Jaan. Edited by Mohit Sajnaney, a long-time in-house editor at Yash Raj Films, the trailer was built around the poem written by Aditya Chopra and narrated by Shah Rukh Khan. Sajnaney recalled the process simply. "Adi sir was clear that the entire trailer had to move to that narration. The task was to place the best moments within it. For me, cutting a trailer for a Yash Chopra romance was something I had hoped to do for years. When that poem came in, the direction was set, and it worked big time for us."

Dhurandhar part 2 will be releasing on Eid 2026 The trailer of Jab Tak Hai Jaan was edited to a poem narrated by Shah Rukh Khan and penned by Aditya Chopra. At times, sound becomes so central that it is created only for the trailer. Sajnaney pointed to War 2, where the trailer was structured around voiceovers by Hrithik Roshan and Jr NTR, developed after discussions with Aditya Chopra and director Ayan Mukerji. Nilesh Kataria, creative director and trailer specialist at MA+TH Entertainment, shared a similar instance from earlier in his career. While cutting the trailer of Cocktail, he suggested using Honey Singh's "Angrezi Beat." "At that point, we were working with two songs, 'Daaru Desi' and 'Tum Hi Ho Bandhu', but they weren't landing the way we needed. I tried 'Angrezi Beat,' and it changed the tone. It worked so well that the song became part of the film itself," he said.

Having worked across a wide range of films at YRF, from Dibakar Banerjee's Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar to Siddharth Anand's Pathaan, Sajnaney sees the trailer as a response to genre, tone, and directorial intent. "Those factors decide how a trailer takes shape," he said. "When you work on something like Dhoom 3, the audience wants to see Aamir Khan in a franchise built on slick action. The focus was to push that idea, while also holding back. You show enough, then save the rest for the theatre." The approach carried over to Pathaan. "This was Shah Rukh Khan's comeback film. The aim was to build his presence through the trailer, while also establishing the world of the spy universe, its scale, its cast, its music." Sajnaney contrasts this with a film like this year's surprise success Sayaara, whose teaser and trailer leaned away from star projection and towards setting. "The intent was to show the world, introduce two new faces, give a sense of the music, and not reveal the conflict." That balance between what to reveal and what to withhold, he said, shifts with each project. "It changes from film to film. Some ideas are strong enough to pull people in on their own, as with Maneesh Sharma's Fan. That trailer pretty much laid out the core and the different avatars you are going to see of SRK in the film. In other cases, the twist or the conflict carries the film, so you protect it. That was the case with the Sayaara trailer."

Kajale extends this distinction between world-building and character-led narratives. "When we worked on Raman Raghav 2.0, the decision was to open with Nawazuddin Siddiqui's monologue. It drew the audience within seconds. But when the film depends on visual design, you lean into the world. Take Golion Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela."

Nidhhi Agerwal addresses Hyderabad mobbing after Sivaji's statement about her clothes: 'Blaming the victim is manipulation'



praised the host for wearing a saree and said, "I request all heroines not to wear revealing outfits. Please wear sarees or dresses that cover the body fully. Beauty lies in complete attire or a saree, not in displaying physical assets. A woman is like nature. When nature is beautiful, we respect it. A woman is like my mother, whom I hold close to my heart." Pointing out how yesteryear actresses chose to dress with modesty, Sivaji went on to say, "Freedom is precious—don't lose it. People will respect you based on your conduct. Glamour should have limits; it should not cross a certain line."

Following this, the actor faced massive backlash on social media. His thoughts were called regressive and inappropriate by many. Following this, Sivaji shared a video on X rendering an apology for the words he chose. In the video, Sivaji said, "I should not have used unparliamentary words. I was not speaking about all women. I only said maybe actresses wouldn't be made to feel uncomfortable if they dressed carefully. The intention wasn't to demean anyone, but because I used such words, I sincerely apologize."

He later told ANI, "My influence was the incident at Lulu Mall a week ago. Nidhhi Agerwal went to a function. There was a big mob, and they started pulling. She was wearing an off-shoulder dress; she is a very nice girl, but a huge crowd fell on her. I saw her face—she was so embarrassed. That is why I felt I had to address this. My apologies for whatever I spoke about regarding the safety of heroines yesterday at the Dhondraa pre-release event. My intention was good, but those two words were not correct. I totally regret it. I always believe that a woman is Maha Shakti. Without Amma, there is no world. I offer my heartfelt apology for hurting your feelings. My intention was good, but those two words were wrong." Don't Miss: Sivaji apologizes for derogatory comments on women, says intention was 'concern for safety' after Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Nidhhi Agerwal's mobbing incidents

Nidhhi Agerwal reacts to Sivaji's thoughts Recently, actress Nidhhi Agerwal reacted to Sivaji's remarks. She took to her Instagram stories and shared a picture of her outfit and wrote, "Blaming the victim is called manipulation." Nidhhi Agerwal hits back at Sivaji's comments on the mobbing incident (Photo: Nidhhi Agerwal / Instagram Stories) As for Sivaji, the Telangana State Commission for Women has issued a summons for him to appear for inquiry on 27th December.

Imani Dia Smith, The Lion King child star, stabbed to death at 25; boyfriend arrested for murder



son-Small was arrested was arrested for her murder. "Moreover, Smith and Jackson-Small knew each other prior to the incident, thus it was not a random act of violence," added the release. After an initial investigation, he was charged on multiple counts. Jackson-Small was arrested without incident and charged with first-degree Murder, second-degree Endangering the Welfare of a Child, third-degree Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, and fourth-degree Unlawful Possession of a Weapon. Jackson-Small is being held at the Middlesex County Adult Correctional Center pending the results of his Pre-Trial detention hearing," stated the press release. Meanwhile, Smith's family has set up a GoFundMe fundraiser page has already collected over \$50,000 as of December 25. "She leaves behind a 3-year-old son, her parents, her two younger siblings, and an extended family, friends, and community who loved her so very much," wrote her aunt Kira Helper on behalf of the family on the GoFundMe page. "Imani had her whole life ahead of her. She was a vivacious, loving and fiercely talented person. A true triple-threat performer, she most notably played the role of Young Nala on Broadway in Disney's 'Lion King' — an experience that reflected the joy, creativity, and light she put into the world," her aunt wrote on the page. She further wrote that the money collected through the GoFundMe will be funnelled into funeral and memorial expenses, crime scene cleanup at Smith's residence, her family's trauma therapy, legal and administrative expenses linked to the proceedings, and care for Smith's son and dog. Her mother is a hairdresser in Hollywood films, one of her recent credits being The Housemaid.

Imani's 35-year-old boyfriend charged with murder As per People, Imani's 35-year-old boyfriend Jordan D. Jack-

'Dhurandhar is nightmare of pan-India biggies, Bollywood': Ram Gopal Varma calls Aditya Dhar film 'most discussed' in last 50 years



Aditya Dhar's Dhurandhar continues to rule the box office even after three weeks of release and is set to enter the Rs 1000 crore club soon. Amid Ranveer Singh starrer's huge success, director Ram Gopal Varma has pointed out at a the silence from big names of Indian cinema, with no one appreciating the spy-thriller. He called Dhurandhar the 'most discussed' film since 50 years, and claimed that its a 'nightmare' for pan-India biggies.

On Thursday, the filmmaker took to his X handle to share his opinion about the film and why the industry has been ignoring it. "Whenever a path breaking and monstrous hit like #dhurandhar comes, the industry people will wish to ignore it because they will feel threatened by it due to their inability to match its standards... So they will think of it as a nightmare, which will vanish when they wake up in their own films. This is even more true of all the so called pan india biggies which are right now under various stages of production.. They were all written and mounted, modelled on the films made before #dhurandhar which is the exact opposite of what they all believed will work... what's even more worrisome is that #dhurandhar apart from being a omega hit also is the most discussed film since the last 50 years," he wrote.

RGV cited the example of a big, scary dog, which can haunt you just by existing and compared it to Dhurandhar. "Everyone of us experienced an incident like we going to visit someone's house and we see a large scary looking dog which keeps staring at us... Inspite of the owner assuring it's harmless and advises us to ignore it, the tension will remain and will keep growing and we can't resist seeing it from the corner of our eyes... #Durandhar will be like that

monstrous dog which will be invisibly pacing around in every production office wherever the upcoming biggies are being made.. They will try their level best to even avoid uttering the dog's name, but it will keep loitering in all their minds."