

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

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

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

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.

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.

the community should contest to ensure victory. He also stated that he would dedicate the rest of his life to community service. District president Velpula Srinivas Patel said that no individual was greater than the community and that all members were equal. He called for unity with the goal of achieving political empowerment and said that the Medchal district committee would be developed into a model body through collective coordination. Mamindla Srinivas Patel expressed confidence that the district president would discharge his responsibilities effectively and assured full cooperation from all members. Senior community leader Buddhi Sattaiah Patel alleged that Munnur Kapus were facing discrimination in political parties and stressed the need to create awareness to field a single candidate from the community in the upcoming MPTC and ZPTC elections to ensure success. Several state executive members and community leaders, including Pothamsetti Venkateswarlu Patel, Yanjala Padmaiah Patel, Induri Tirupati Patel, Akula Satyanarayana Patel, Keesara Association president Mahender Patel, Karra Venkanna Patel, Mandal Eshwarayya Patel, Katikam Raju Patel, Singam Pawan Kumar Patel, Singam Raju Patel, Puppala Venkateswarlu Patel, and Saggidi Srikant Patel, participated in the programme.

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

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

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.

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 Kuthbullapur 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 Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) 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



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, December 27 (Indian Chronicle):“Development works are progressing at a rapid pace in Uppal Division. Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy is closely monitoring the ongoing works to ensure quality and timely completion.“As part of



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 Malleshham, Vice President Mettu Kanaka Reddy, Bandi Malla Reddy, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, General Secretary Kappari Yellesh Kumar, temple committee members and vice presidents Vemula Durga Reddy, Sugamanji Choudamma, Gundlapalli Malathi, Tungala Venkatamma, along with Annappareddy 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 Lakkineni



“Bhadradi kothagudem , December 27, Indian Chronicle:“Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) Working President Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao (KTR) congratulated Bhukya Dal Singh Naik, a Congress leader from the Yellandu constituency, and Lakkineni 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 Ravichandra introduced Dal Singh Naik and Lakkineni 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 Lakkineni 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 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 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), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, December 27, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“The Telangana Praja Samskruthika 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 Malleshham addressed the gathering. Prominent social movement leader Malleshham 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, Malleshham, 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. Trilashwar Rao as part of the administrative transition process. The handover marked the official integration of Peerzadiguda Circle into Boduppal Circle, aimed at streamlining civic administra-



tion and improving service delivery. AMC Engineer Shyam Sundar Rao, Manager Praveen Kumar, Kranti, and other staff members were present during the occasion.



(Mandava Srisailem... 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 Shivakarthish and Vinith performed the rituals in a traditional and elaborate manner. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, Meerpet 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 Vandana Yadagiri Goud, Sambanna Bolu Harigoud, Kanukula Rajinikanth Reddy, Naveen Goud, Shivakumar, Srikanth Goud, along with priests Shivakarthish, Vinith, and Siddu 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 Sai Mala 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 Convener Mamidi Somaiah, Co-Conveners Pulipulupu Anandam, Bandi Vijay Kumar, Tanneeru Srinivas and Kudithadi Bapurao, 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 fortnightly 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 Pranamy Shirasa, Shlokanjali, Jhem Jhem, Ananda Tandavam,



Charanamule Nammiti, Ramayana Shabdam, Sarasamukhi, Himagiri Tanaye, Vinnaro Bhagyamu, 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, pujadhikas, archanas and abhishekas are done. In this order, on the occasion of Dhanurmasam, the temple priests Pawan, Deepak and Sridhar 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 Mukkotri 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 Konduru 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 Konduru 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 Reporte, 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 Reporte, Jade Srinivas.December, 27.““The Railways has decided to increase the fares by one paise 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 Kagajanagar- 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



construction of Indiramma houses, demanding clear answers from the government.““He expressed regret that instead of fulfilling promises, the Chief Minister was resorting to crude language, thereby lowering the dignity of the constitutional post. He urged the CM to focus on governance and earn public trust through actions.““On delimitation, Talasani alleged that divisions were created arbitrarily without consulting public representatives, political parties, or citizens. He criticised officials for ignoring objections raised in council meetings and complaints submitted to the Commissioner, and questioned the logic behind shifting the Monda Division to Malkajgiri while the Secunderabad Zonal Office remains under Monda limits. He warned of strong public opposition if such policies continue.““Corporators T. Maheshwari and Deepika, Tahsildar Pandu Naik, former corporator Attili Mallikarjun Goud, division presidents and

““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 AJC 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 AJC 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 today.

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



sive 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 mltiple programme 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 “Sahkar se Samridhhi” – 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 HAFED 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 KRIBHCO 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 KRIBHCO’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 “Sahkar se Samridhhi,” 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 KRIBHCO 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

Soon after real estate operative V G Shivaprakash alias Bikla Shiva was murdered in Bengaluru on July 15, BJP MLA Byrathi Basavaraj, an accused in the case, received a phone call from the main accused, Jagadish P alias Jaga, a criminal history sheeter. The two then allegedly held a meeting before Jaga fled the country, according to call and cell phone location data obtained by the Karnataka CID police. The CID’s findings in the Bikla Shiva murder case are part of a chargesheet filed on December 22 and were placed in a special court on Tuesday by a special public prosecutor during arguments in an anticipatory bail plea by Basavaraj, the MLA from the K R Puram region in Bengaluru.

The special court rejected Basavaraj’s anticipatory bail plea by referring to some of the findings presented by the CID police, including those of an ongoing rivalry between the MLA and Shiva. The court ruled that the allegations against Basavaraj are prima facie serious in nature. Basavaraj, who received a reprieve from the Karnataka High Court on December 19 in the form of quashing of charges of involvement in an organised crime under the Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act, 2000, has evaded the CID police over the last week while attempting to obtain anticipatory bail for the murder charges, which remain. Shiva was murdered outside his house on a busy street in east Bengaluru by a gang of hired assailants, allegedly operating on behalf of Basavaraj’s associates, including Jaga. While Jaga is the main accused in the case, Basavaraj is accused number five.

The special court for elected representatives has referred to the call data records and cell tower information

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,”

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.

the former minister asked. He further stated that the committee constituted for the purpose included senior IAS officers, secretaries from the Water Supply, Industries and Commerce departments, Additional Chief Secretary Manveer Singh Sidhu, Deputy Commissioner Komal Mittal, and then Chief Administrator GMADA Vishesh Sarangal. “Despite the presence of all these officers, the non-implementation of the decision amounts to a complete breach of public trust,” Sidhu said.

The former minister said that several municipal councillors of the Aam Aadmi Party had also taken up the issue and assured the affected people that the entire amount would be waived, but nothing has been materialised so far. He demanded a thorough inquiry to bring clarity and to determine “who is lying to the MLA, the government, or whether the entire process itself was misleading.”

Sidhu claimed that nearly 4,000 plot allottees have been affected by the issue, causing hardship to thousands of families. He also questioned the logic behind issuing a fresh newspaper notice now, calling it “sheer injustice”. Responding to the allegations, Mohali MLA Kulwant Singh said that the matter is yet to be placed before the Cabinet. “The copies circulating are only related to the proceedings,” the MLA claimed. He clarified that “once the Cabinet approves the decision, the rates will be reduced in the same manner as they were decided”. The MLA also explained that the advertisement published in newspapers was only meant for “address verification” so that anyone who has changed their address can inform the authorities. “Since the notification will be issued only after the Cabinet meeting, the rate of Rs 3,164 as mentioned in the advertisement for now, will be reduced accordingly in the final notification,” he said. At present, the affected residents continue to wait for clear answers and concrete action, while the issue remains a subject of intense political and administrative debate in Mohali.

Four luxury cars, Rs 20 crore assets — and a lavish Dubai wedding: YouTuber Anurag Dwivedi faces ED heat

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Last week, the village found itself in the limelight once again — an Enforcement Directorate (ED) team landed at Anurag’s doorstep to search the residence in connection with an alleged illegal betting and gambling case. The village home was among 10 premises allegedly linked to Anurag in Lucknow, Unnao and Delhi that were searched by the probe agency’s Kolkata Zonal Office. The ED, in a statement, said during the searches, four high-end cars including a Lamborghini Urus — with a starting price of over Rs 4 crore — a Mercedes, a Ford Endeavour and a Thar, along with incriminating documents, digital devices and around Rs 20 lakh in cash were seized.

Seized documents also revealed that Anurag had allegedly invested in real estate in Dubai through hawala channels, said the agency. In addition, movable assets worth around Rs 3 crore, including insurance policies, fixed deposit balances and amounts in bank accounts, have been frozen under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, it said. The village, which falls under the Bhitrepar gram panchayat, has a small population of about 20 houses. Most of its male residents do odd jobs abroad.

Deepak Tiwari, a resident claimed, “I came to know that around 30 members of his [Anurag’s] family and close associates had gone to Dubai to attend his wedding last month. Since I was not invited, I don’t know how expensive it was, but people are talking about the money spent on it.” Another local resident, Anil Kumar, said Anurag lived in the village until 2019-20. “Even after moving out, he remained

in constant touch with people in the village. But we never knew what exactly he was doing or how he earned so much money.” While villagers were aware he was involved in some kind of cricket-related activity on social media, they claimed they never saw him playing the sport or interacting with children who played cricket in the village. “We suspect the ED action came after news of his Dubai wedding... He was often seen in the village driving around in expensive, luxury cars,” alleged a villager.

Anurag has 2.4 million followers on Instagram. In the description of his YouTube channel, which has 7.11 million subscribers, Anurag called himself a fantasy cricket expert. It also said “he started with just Rs 300 and is now the biggest fantasy cricket player and fantasy cricket expert in India”. His recent videos were on the India-South Africa T20 series, predicting how it would play out. Anurag’s father, Laxminath Dwivedi, a former gram pradhan, runs a medical store in Nawabganj, about 2 km from the village. He did not respond to calls despite repeated attempts to contact him for comment. Village pradhan Manoj Kumar said Anurag’s father is financially stable and comes from a humble background.

“Because of Anurag, the lives of several young boys have been spoiled. Influenced by his lavish lifestyle and expensive cars, they dropped out of school and began following in his footsteps. Anurag himself studied only up to Class IX. Those boys did not succeed and are now doing odd jobs in factories,” Tiwari alleged.

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.



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



Toronto: A 44-year-old Indian-origin man has died of suspected cardiac arrest after waiting for more than eight hours for treatment in a hospital’s emergency room area, a media report has said.Prashant Sreekumar began experiencing severe chest pains while at work on December 22. A client drove him to the Grey Nuns Hospital in southeast Edmonton, where Prashant was checked in at triage and then took a seat in the waiting room.

His father, Kumar Sreekumar, soon arrived. “He told me, ‘Papa, I cannot bear the pain,’” Kumar said. Kumar said his son told him and hospital staff the pain was a 15 out of 10.They did an electrocardiogram (ECG) on him to check his heart’s function, but the family said Prashant was told there was nothing of significance and to keep waiting.Staff also offered Prashant some Tylenol for his pain. He waited, and waited some more.Kumar said as time passed, nurses

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 NigeriaThe 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 Wadepuhl 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”.

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’



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

It's a group effort. The Chief Minister (CM) presides, the Cabinet decides. You cannot say that one person helped us win. Sandeep Singh: Whose brainchild was the Ladki Bahin Yojana?

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, are 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.

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



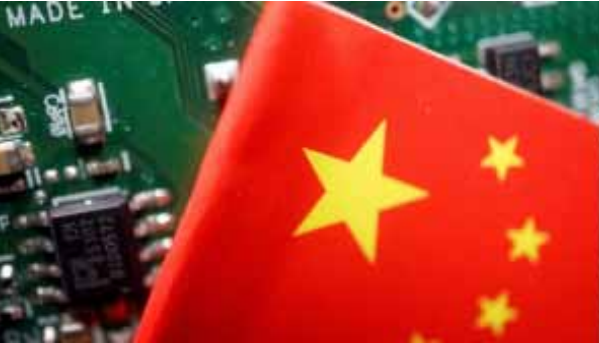
Harvey Weinstein was hospitalised Monday (December 2, 2024) following an “alarming blood test,” his attorney said, less than a week after the disgraced movie mogul filed a legal claim alleging substandard medical care at New York City’s notorious jail complex.Weinstein, 72, was sent to Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan for an “emergent treatment due to an alarming blood test result that requires immediate medical attention,” his attorney, Imran Ansari, said in a statement.“It is expected that he will remain there until his condition stabilises,” the statement continues. "His deprivation of care is not only medical malpractice, but a violation of his constitutional rights."

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

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."

US targets China’s chip industry with new restrictions



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

ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson Radharamn 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 Sanatani Jagran Jote, was arrested at Dhaka’s Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Monday while en route to Chattogram 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

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 neighboursHere’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.

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 cannot 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 November4, 1972. The constitution also mentioned that this date corresponds to the 18th Day of Kartik, 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 [Mujeebur 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-

beneficent, the merciful’ that was added in 1997. To accommodate other religions, it also mentions ‘in the name of Creator, the merciful.’ Thus Allah was changed to Creator. The court also invalidated the 5th amendment that permitted political parties based on religion.Rejection of religious discriminationArticle 2A stated that the religion of the Republic would be Islam but that the state shall ensure equal status and equal rights to Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and other religions. Here there seems to be a contradiction — Islam is the state religion yet other religions have also been given ‘equal status’ and ‘equal rights’. In the classical secular formulation, this is not right. However, it seems that this declaration of Islam as state religion in Bangladesh was similar to the status of the king in the United Kingdom as the ‘defender of faith’ and ‘Supreme Governor of the Church of England.’ King Charles on May 6, 2023 took the oath to ‘uphold the laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel, maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law and reserve the settlement of the Church of England.’ Article 8(1) of the Bangladesh constitution mentions secularism along with nationalism, democracy and socialism as the fundamental principles of state policy. Article 12 was revived by the 15th amendment and it explains what will be the essential ingredients of secularism in Bangladesh and how secularism will be achieved. It says that the principles of secularism shall be realised by the elimination of communalism in all forms; where the state shall not grant political status in favour of any religion; where abuse of religion for political purposes and any discrimination against or persecution of persons practising a particular religion is prohibited. With such a clear cut and progressive provision, whatever happening today is contrary to the constitutional mandate and Bangladeshi courts must immediately intervene just like in 2005 and 2010.Article 38 that deals with the fundamental right to form associations prohibits the formation of unions or associations for the purposes of destroying the religious, social and communal harmony among the citizens or if such associations are formed for the purposes of creating discrimination among the citizens on the grounds of religion, race, caste, place of birth or language etc. or if objects of such associations are contrary to constitution.Additionally, Article 23A imposes a duty on the state to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities of Bangladesh. Unlike Pakistan’s constitution, there is no Muslim qualification to the office of President or other constitutional offices.

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

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, Downtetector.

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

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, 2025India’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 Saggarg, 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," Saggarg 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 Golder, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics responsible for making suggestions to revise the GDP data,

added at the workshop that "we will produce as good an estimate as possible". The two latest GDP growth prints of 7.8 per cent for April-June and 8.2 per cent for July-September have led to economists raising questions about certain methodological aspects. While Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said at the workshop that "half-baked" questions sow seeds of doubt in people's mind about the numbers, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery said it was important to have a "series of fierce and knowledgeable critiques" of the GDP methodology as that would lead to improvements. "I think the Indian public is owed a responsible discussion so that after this enormous amount of work, the issues of – within a range – the credibility of the data can be set aside," Bery said. As part of the IIP revision, which is used to calculate industrial growth, MoSPI has already released a discussion paper in which it has proposed to swap from its sample factories that have shut down with new ones. On Tuesday, officials from the statistics ministry said it is also being discussed if the fixed panel of factories used to calculate industrial production can be expanded every year. Another discussion paper on the same will be published for comments. "The main criticism of the IIP has been divergence in NAS (National Accounts Statistics) growth, ASI (Annual Survey of Industries) growth, and IIP growth. But it should be noted that the ASI frame is revised and updated every year and using this frame ASI estimates are compiled. But for IIP, we have a fixed panel of factories... Some factories get closed and new factories may emerge with significant production, or a factory which was not selected in the base year may become a significant producer of an item. To account for this underestimation by IIP... It is proposed to augment the factories annually in the IIP compilation and align it with ASI numbers," Ankita Singh, a Deputy Director General in MoSPI, said.

Mridul Saggarg, head of the IIP review committee, added that the thinking at the moment was to add new factories in the panel only once a year and only in cases where it's a "very significant effect coming from entirely new production processes or new, substantive production that might get missed. So, that call will have to be taken once a year and not as a rule, but as an exception, was our thinking." However, when asked if changes being made for the new IIP series will put to bed the criticism the data attracts, Saggarg and Ila Patnaik – a member of the IIP review committee and Aditya Birla Group's Chief Economist – said that was unlikely to be the case. "To imagine that anything will solve all the problems is never going to be true because new ones will arise... The rapid change that you are seeing in the economy, it has to lead to new issues. When we look at what the rest of the world does or the guidance we have from international best practices, sometimes we actually don't have that kind of guidance because no other country which is at our level of per capita income and so poor is growing so rapidly... But I think we are making a lot of progress," Patnaik said.

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 Sindoor, 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, Hyderabadis 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 in 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 Hyderabad user 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

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

‘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 her 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 protec-

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

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.

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.



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

Virat Kohli scores an A-class hundred on List A return, but the battles were more mental



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

For a player made for big occasions, the setting at BCCI's Centre of Excellence was anything but that. The walk to the middle in the first over of the chase against Andhra was perhaps the most silent one he had endured since his international career began, as the game was played in closed doors and a fair drive from the city. Even in the days of Covid protocols, loudspeakers tried to recreate the atmosphere. Here, apart from his Delhi teammates in the dressing room, the opponents and the match-officials, he had just a dozen scribes in attendance. The bowling rarely came close to testing him. There were hidden obstacles like the boredom to overcome and some ordinary opponent. The battle was more mental than anything. In the end, Kohli did what he knows best—scored a century in chase to get Delhi off to a winning start in the Vijay Hazare Trophy as they beat Andhra by four wickets.

Though the fixture was shifted to the CoE on Tuesday, on Wednesday morning a few fans had turned up outside Chinnaswamy Stadium hoping against hope. Outside the CoE, a police official manned the perimeter walls every 50 metre. Despite the heavy security, a few fans tried to be brave, climbing the walls to have a look at Kohli from a distance where they couldn't have identified him. With several trucks parked on the roadside, few climbed over those to have a glimpse before police cleared them. The silence was so overbearing at times that Kohli pointed to the dressing room to cheer when Delhi's total touched three figures.

Kohli did play a Ranji fixture earlier this year. But on Wednesday, he got a real hang of what domestic cricketers endure away from all the limelight and attention. He has had an entire Test career sandwiched between his last two Vijay Hazare outings, with his previous one coming in February 2010 even before he laid hands on the World Cup. When Andhra posted 298/8 thanks to a spanking century from Ricky Bhui (122, 105b, 11x4, 7x6), Delhi needed Kohli.

As Arpit Rana departed third ball into the chase, Kohli

briskly walked to the middle to face Nitish Kumar Reddy. Off the first one, he shouldered arms. Off the next, he charged down and lofted him over covers for a couple. Off the third, he brought out a straight drive that sped to the fence. That got Kohli going. In Reddy's next over, he stood tall in the crease and lifted him over covers for his first six and followed it with another boundary. At the other end, Satyanarayana Raju too felt Kohli's destructive force. Like he was in the ODIs these days, he prefers to take on the attack in the powerplay and he continued it. It meant he took a few risks and there were a few expansive shots, as he appeared to rush into shots or manufacture boundaries. He had luck smiling his way as the mis-hits either landed short or Andhra were generous in handing him Christmas gifts. He was first dropped on 32 by Saurabh Kumar at mid-on and then on 97 by Shaik Rasheed. Though Kohli played a few hits and misses, at the other end Priyansh Arya enjoyed the rare opportunity to bat alongside his idol. The left-hander, blessed with wonderful wrists, brought out his pick-up shots on the leg-side. Once when he lofted Satyanarayana off his legs, Kohli lauded him before punching his gloves. With Arya, it was simple. Anything that landed in his range, disappeared as his 44-ball 74 which included 7 boundaries and five sixes, overshadowed Kohli for a while.

Once Arya departed, Kohli's muscle memory took over. Those expansive shots vanished into the distance. Instead, the compact player who bats in autopilot mode in 50-overs came to the forefront. Having scored seven fours and a six when he got to fifty, he didn't completely shut his attacking intent. There were four more boundaries and two sixes before he got to his century, but those were all off deliveries that need to be punished. With Nitish Rana around, they rotated the strike, giving absolutely nothing for Delhi. The century arrived in the 83rd delivery, via a slap past pacer Narasimha Raju. There were no celebrations. He just raised his bat to the dressing room. Earlier, if not for Bhui's knock, Andhra's innings would have folded much earlier. Batting at No 4, he was the lone batsman who showed purpose in the middle. When he walked into the middle in the 13th over, Andhra were placed 42/2 and with Rasheed struggling for timing, he ensured Delhi's seamers didn't make any further inroads. With Simarjeet Singh and Prince Yadav pace causing all sorts of problems, he weathered the storm before launching a stunning assault. It began with Navdeep Saini's over, who was taken apart for three sixes and a boundary to change the tide. Though he kept running out of partners, Bhui's century is what held Andhra's innings together. Brief Scores: Andhra 298/8 in 50 overs (Ricky Bhui 122, Shaik Rasheed 31; Simarjeet Singh 5/54, Prince Yadav 3/50) lost to Delhi 245/2 in 30 overs (Virat Kohli 118 not out, Priyansh Arya 74) by eight wickets

‘Not a contest at all’: R Ashwin reacts to Bihar scoring 574 runs in Vijay Hazare Trophy match against Arunachal Pradesh

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has questioned the quality of some of the country's domestic teams, adding that while it was impressive to see the likes of Vaibhav Suryavanshi make big scores, it could negatively impact the confidence of the opposition. The 39-year-old said that there was a big gulf between some of the teams in first-class cricket, which was leading to no contests between teams.

"Huge applause for Vaibhav Suryavanshi. But I again want to ask a question. There is a huge divide, chalk and cheese, in terms of quality with some teams. It becomes very lop-sided with some teams and there is no contest at all. It is not an ideal contest. Credit to Vaibhav for his performance. He is doing what he has to do. But if we are serious about teams like Arunachal Pradesh becoming good sides, what will this do to their confidence?," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. The comments came after Bihar racked up 574 runs in 50 overs in their Vijay Hazare Trophy match against Arunachal Pradesh on Wednesday, with centuries from Suryavanshi, Ayush Loharuka and captain Sakibul Gani, thereby breaking the record for the highest score made in men's List A cricket. Also praised wicketkeeper batter Ishan Kishan for his performance against Karnataka on Wednesday, stating that the hard work put in was bearing fruit. "Everyone goes through good and bad times but Ishan Kishan had a challenging time. He came and then was out



from the team, he took a break. He made a double hundred in one-day but never made a comeback. He scored a hundred in the IPL but then did not have a great IPL. He played well in the SMAT and in the run of events got into the T20 World Cup squad. Now he is batting in the middle-order slot in the VHT and scored a 33-ball hundred.

It shows what confidence and form can do to a person when time aligns. He has not waited saying his time will come, he has put in that effort," he said. Kishan was picked as the second wicketkeeper in India's T20 World Cup squad on Saturday, after he made 517 runs in 10 innings in the 2025 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy campaign and helped Jharkhand win the title.

Axar Patel reveals Jasprit Bumrah's deep analysis of perfumes: 'kitna percent oil atha kitna percent perfume atha hein...hum tho udhar tak pahuche nehi hein'



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Most cricket followers across the world are well aware of Jasprit Bumrah's accuracy with the ball. Be it with a new ball in red-ball cricket or final overs of T20 games, the Indian ace-pacer delivers for the side or franchise he plays for, and he is quite calculated about the deliveries he wants to execute and does his research on the opposition and batters beforehand. The lesser-known side, which his Indian team, Axar Patel, has revealed about his teammates' knowledge of perfumes. "Jassi bhai ke pass hi collection...abhi woh itna deep chalogaya kitna per cent oil atha kitna per cent perfume atha hein...hum tho udhar tak pahuche nehi hein...hum tho (smells hand and laughs) hum kadak hein karke nikhal jathe hein (Jassi has collection)...he is now so deep into them he sees the percentage of oil and percentage of perfume we just see if it is strong or not and use it)," Axar said on 2 sloggers' YouTube channel.

When asked by one of the YouTubers in the show if it was a post-retirement plan, Axar laughed and said, "Jassi Bhai dekhlena, partnership kardena (Jassi involve us also in partnership)," Axar said. In a meme shared on the chan-

nel, Axar tells Arshdeep Singh how he won a bet against Jasprit Bumrah, and the fast bowler gave Axar a perfume and explains to the viewers and YouTubers what it's all about. Revealing about the story in the show, Axar said. "Jassi bhai ne Siraj ko vadha kiya tha ki mein tumko perfume lake dunga jab West Indies ke sath Test match tha Delhi mein unke vice captain Jomel Warrican karke nehi hein usne shayad pucha hoga chalte chalte acha konsa perfume hein smell arahi hein usne jabardasthi usko dedo na usko pasand aya karke usko dilwa diya. (Jassi promised Siraj that he would give him a perfume, and then, after the Delhi Test against the West Indies, their Vice Captain Jomel Warrican might have asked him what perfume it was, and then Siraj said to give him, he liked it and made sure he got it.)" "Tho isme meine sirf (Does sign of putting on fire) flow mein Boom bhai bole ab uske jagah mein tune dunga. (Then I got involved and in flow, Bumrah told me he would give me too.)

Pallavi beats Crescent as Anirudh churns out another ton

Hyderabad: Ch Anirudh cracked his second century (105) of the week for Pallavi Model School in the HCA Inter-schools under-14 one-day knockout cricket championship here on Wednesday. In other matches, Akhileshwar (115) and K Sai Smaran Reddy (136) for Gowtham Model School, B Ritvik Reddy (121) for Crescent High School, G Rakesh Sekhar (149 no) for Boys Town and Anirudh Goud (128) for Academic Heights HS also batted well.

The scores: Inter-schools under-14 one-day knockout tournament:

Manchester City's owners exit Mumbai City: Indian football's sorry saga claims first victim, will more follow?



GNS News Agency, Dec 27

Six years ago, Mumbai City — a club with minuscule fanbase and playing in a modest ground in an over-crowded Western suburb — became the latest, and surprising, acquisition of the City Football Group (CFG). The owners of England and European giants Manchester City, CFG operate like a football MNC, with clubs in 13 countries across five continents. Mumbai, in November 2019, was their newest toy.

Those were bullish times for Indian football. At the start of 2019, India came up with an impressive performance, by their standards, at the Asian Cup; snatched a point away from home against the mighty Qatar; the men's national team was on the cusp of breaking into the world's top 100; and the Indian Super League had controversially become the official top-division, reducing the I-League to a second-tier competition. The CFG entered the scene in this backdrop, promising to 'deliver transformative benefits to Mumbai City and Indian football.' So, as everything falls apart, there is no league as of now and the national team is in the doldrums, City are the first to run to the exit door. Mumbai City have informed the All India Football Federation (AIFF) that the CFG will sell its 65 percent shares to its parent company, Mumbai City Football India Pvt Ltd, which is co-owned by Bollywood star Ranbir Kapoor and chartered accountant Bimal Parekh. There is no ambiguity — the 'world's leading private owner and operator of football clubs', as the CFG describes itself, is leaving India because there is no football.

It is a standard pattern for a domestic league to run for eight months in a mature football nation. In India, there has been no league action for more than eight months since the last ISL season ended on April 12. And unless some solution is arrived at during the meetings between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the ISL clubs on December 26 and 29, the wait could only get longer. The reason for this

‘Were speaking about India for months’: Temba Bavuma reveals South Africa's meticulous preparations ahead of historic Test series win

GNS News Agency, Dec 27

South Africa reaffirmed their status as world champions in Test cricket by doing something that is regarded by many as one of the most difficult challenges in the sport — defeat India in a series in India. South Africa ended up whitewashing India 2-0 in the series and captain Temba Bavuma said that he had spoken about it with head coach Shukri Conrad for months on end leading up to it. "We have always wanted to prepare ourselves for these types of encounters. Between the two of us, there were months on end speaking about India. What type of team and players did we want? And what did we need to do to be successful? It wasn't a case of getting to India and saying, "Okay, how are we going to do things?" The seed was planted long before the Test series," said Bavuma in his column for ESPNcricinfo.

Bavuma had himself experienced just how difficult it can be for a South African side in India. Of the eight times that the Proteas had toured India since their readmission to international cricket before this year, they had won a series just once, which was back in 1999/00 under the captaincy of Hansie Cronje. Of the 19 Tests played between the two sides in India, South Africa had won just five. "My first tour to India was back in 2015. India claimed the Test series 3-0 and I only played in the fourth and final Test, in Delhi. In 2019, it was really not a great one. We got hammered 3-0 in the series, with India winning by an innings twice," said Bavuma.

This was an Indian side still smarting from the wounds of their series defeat at home against New Zealand and devoid of the likes of Ravichandran Ashwin, Virat Kohli and Cheteshwar Pujara — key figures who fuelled their historic



winning streak in Tests at home between 2013 and 2024. However, Bavuma said that it remained a monumental task for South Africa. At the same time, though, he said that South Africa weren't overawed. "Comparing the Tests, I preferred the second match, in Guwahati, because that is proper Test cricket. Batting in the first Test, in Kolkata, wasn't easy. We had anticipated mentally that we might play on rank turners, so we were able to accept what was in front of us and weren't overwhelmed by the situation," said Bavuma. "Prepare for the worst, hope for the best" will always be my mantra. But it's important that when you get the best, like we did in the second Test, you take advantage. For me personally, my biggest gripe with myself was that when conditions were in my favour in the first innings of the second Test, I wasn't able to really cash in per se with the bat. Selfishly, as a batter you know that in conditions like that, if you get in, there is a real opportunity for you to get big runs," he said.

‘Toughest time as England captain’: Ben Stokes calls for empathy ahead of Boxing Day Ashes Test against Australia at Melbourne



England captain Ben Stokes has termed the ongoing period as captain as his "toughest", adding that he would stick it out through this phase and look into how he can help other players pass through the difficult period. The 34-year-old, who took over the captaincy in 2022, said that he and his side have had a lot to cope with, and a bit of empathy would be helpful. "This is probably the toughest time right now as an England captain that I'll have. "I'm not going to run away from it. I feel like I will lead for the rest of this trip how I think I can help guys get through it," Stokes said ahead of the fourth Test starting in Melbourne on Thursday. "It is very gruelling, and it is tough when you're here, there, and everywhere. I know people have got things a lot worse than what we do. You have to deal with the emotions of being away [and] the scrutiny that you are under, in particular when things aren't going well." "Everything just gets heightened, but there needs to be a little bit of empathy towards stuff that people might not quite understand, but I guess if you're not in it and you're not amongst it, it is hard to understand that. But just in this moment right now, I think a little bit of empathy from everyone would be not too hard to think about, if that makes sense," he added. If England's on-field performances haven't given Stokes enough headaches, a recent video circulating on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) of opening batter Ben Duckett walking around in an inebriated state has led the England and Wales Cricket

Board (ECB) to launch an investigation into the visitors' trip to Noosa between the second and third Tests. Stokes voiced his support for Duckett, adding that he had an idea of how incidents like these could affect players. "He's an incredibly influential person within this group. But he knows that he's got the support of myself and the other guys around him as well. This kind of stuff is very... I don't know if close to me is the right wording, but I have first-hand experience of how this can affect people. "It's never a nice place to be in when not only the media world, but also the social media world, is just piling on top of you. You don't really have a leg to stand on when you have lost three games in a huge series like this. When you're winning, everything's great. When you're losing, it's not," he said.

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



Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri (TMMTMTTM)
Movie Review & Rating: Several questions confront you as soon as you get into this rom com which marks the end of 2025. What do you do when the two leads who are meant to do the usual squabble-make-up-make-out thing exhibit zero chemistry from the get go? What happens when the film looks like a full-blown advert for a European country — Croatia in this instance — where the first half is set? What can you do when the characters look like they've been cobbled together without a thought of whether they gel as a family?

And the biggest question looming over us as we struggle through two and a half hours of this glossily vacuous tosh: is this the best that mainstream Bollywood can come up with, for its clearly demarcated Gen Z audience?

US-based wedding planner Rehaan — call me Ray — Mehra (Kartik Aryan) and Agra-ki-ladki Rumi (Ananya Panday) meet not-very-cute at an airport bookshop. She is tall enough to wear small heels so as to not tower over Ray, but is having trouble reaching for some volumes placed on the top shelf: she's the author of a book, see, and she wants to bring it within easy reach, see; he's the annoying one, of course, who is seated next to her in the flight, flirting with an air-hostess. And of course, they find themselves booked on the same yacht, and believe it or faint, also the same cabin.

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 Bhabhda) 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 aunties — 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 Aryan, Ananya Panday, Neena Gupta, Jackie Shroff, Chandni Bhabhda, Grussha Kapoor, Tiku Talsania, Gaurav Pandey, Lokesh Mittal Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri movie director: Sameer Vidwans 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'



In Vijay Krishna Acharya's Tashan, Bhaiyaji (Anil Kapoor) declares, "first impression is the last impression." This very phrase has travelled across time, questioned, replaced, and often dismissed. Yet it survives in one space with near total authority: the trailer. It is the first and often the only conversation a project has with its audience. It is a perfect fusion of marketing instincts alongside storytelling sensibilities. At a moment when box office returns offer little assurance, tentpole films struggle to sustain runs, independent films fail to secure screens, and theatrical visibility itself feels uncertain, the work of those designing a trailer has grown heavier. The pressure no longer sits only with directors and producers; it spills into the editing room. Rajeev Chudasama, founder of MA+TH Entertainment, a content marketing agency that has worked upon promotional material for several major films and series, and most recently on Dhurandhar's widely discussed trailer, puts it simply: "The first-day number is mostly determined from the trailer alone. That places the weight on us as well. Directors and producers keep reminding us that the trailer has to cut through everything else."

When the Dhurandhar trailer arrived last month, within hours, it became the centre of conversation: discussed, dissected, and divulged. Its opening-day figure of Rs 28 crore can be traced, in large measure, to that four-minute-and-eight-second cut. This is notable because such length rarely works in a trailer's favour. Long trailers tend to test patience, often drawing ridicule rather than interest, (as seen with the 4.58-minute trailer of Singham Again). But filmmaker Aditya Dhar, (along with his brother in law Ojas Gautam, officially credited as the editor), and the team at MA+TH Entertainment, designed a promotional piece that found its way to the audience without spelling itself out.

Sahil Kajale, head of visual promotions at Warriors Touch, another leading agency involved in cutting trailers, spoke to SCREEN about why the trailer worked big time. "There is no fixed length for a trailer," he said. "What matters is whether it holds attention. A one-minute trailer can feel exhausting, while a four-minute trailer can carry you through if the material allows it. That's what Dhurandhar shows." According to Kajale, the trailer's impact came from how it resisted convention. "It doesn't follow the three-act structure we're often asked to use. It gives no clear story. You don't know the premise beyond the setting and the period. What you see are characters, introduced one after another, without clarity on how they relate to each other. In fact, you never see them share a moment on screen." He adds then, "the most decisive break comes at the very end. Ranveer Singh appears only in the final minutes of the trailer. This runs against standard logic, where the lead is always placed early to anchor attention. Data often demands early revelation of your hero. Dhurandhar trailer defied that logic." Dhurandhar is now playing in theatres. The trailer of

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 Sajjaney, 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. Sajjaney 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. Sajjaney 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. Niles 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, Sajjaney 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." Sajjaney contrasts this with a film like this year's surprise success Saiyaara, 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 Saiyaara 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 Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela.

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



Actress Nidhhi Agerwal faced a rather unfortunate situation last week after she was mobbed during Raja Saab's promotional event in Hyderabad. As per the videos that circulated online, Nidhhi appeared quite disturbed by the situation. And what turned the mishap into a controversy was actor Sivaji's comment stemming from the incident where he requested actresses not to wear revealing clothes, but sarees. His speech at the Dhandoraa pre-release event that happened after the Nidhhi Agerwal incident received severe backlash online. Now, Nidhhi has also hitback at Sivaji's remark and called him out for 'blaming the victim'.

Nidhhi Agerwal's mobbing incident at the Raja Saab song launch event

Last week, the makers of Prabhas's film, Raja Saab, launched a song from the film at a grand event in Hyderabad's Lulu Mall. Things got chaotic after the film's actress, Nidhhi Agerwal, got mobbed by fans while she was exiting from the event. According to a few videos circulating on social media, an unruly crowd breached the security at Lulu Mall, leaving the actress distressed as she struggled to reach her car. In the videos, Nidhhi was seen clutching her dupatta tightly as she made her way out while the security personnel struggled to manage the crowd.

What could have been a rather unfortunate incident soon turned into a controversy after actor Sivaji shared his thoughts, referring to the incident and blaming heroines for wearing revealing outfits. During the Dhandoraa pre-release event, Sivaji addressed the crowd in Telugu. He

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 unpardonable 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 apologise."

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 Dhandoraa 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 hitsback at Sivaji Nidhhi Agerwal hitsback 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



Imani Dia Smith, Broadway actor best known for playing the young Nala in the stage adaptation of The Lion King, has been stabbed to death at the age of 25. She was found with stab wounds at her residence in New Jersey on Sunday, December 21, after it was flagged by a 911 emergency call. "On December 21, 2025, at 9:18 A.M., authorities received a 911 call reporting a stabbing. Upon their arrival to a residence on Grove Avenue, they discovered Imani Smith, 26, of Edison with stab wounds. Smith was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital where she was ultimately pronounced deceased," stated a press release issued by the office of the county prosecutor in New Jersey.

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

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.

'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 it's 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. In spite 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."