

INDIAN CHRONICLE

13 January, 2026 | Tuesday | Volume No:10 | Issue No: 289

Pages: 12+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

₹ 3

Ahead of Makar Sankranti, NGO urges citizens not to participate in cockfighting

Animal protection organisation, Humane World for Animals India, on Monday, urged citizens not to participate in cockfighting, an illegal form of animal cruelty that takes place during Makar Sankranti.

The organisation has also appealed to the people to report any instances of cockfighting to local police authorities.

In a cockfight, two roosters, often fitted with razor blades on their spurs and are forced to fight each other to death. The fight usually ends with the death of one or both roosters.

Telangana employees not taking care of parents to face 10 pc salary cut

Hyderabad, Jan 12

The Telangana government will enact a law to deduct 10 per cent salary of the government employees who are not looking after their parents and transfer the same to the bank accounts of the parents.

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy stated on Monday



that

the complaints lodged by elder parents against their sons should be taken as a serious issue and ensure that 10 per cent of the salary is directly transferred to the bank accounts of the parents.

He announced while launching the free distribution of retrofitted motorised vehicles, battery-operated tricycles, battery wheelchairs, laptops, hearing aids, mobile phones, and other advanced equipment to persons with disabilities.

The government has allocated Rs 50 crore for the new scheme. The government is also setting up daycare centres, 'Pranaam', for senior citizens.

He also announced that a new healthcare policy will be introduced in the Budget proposals for 2026-2027.

that the complaints lodged by elder parents against their sons should be taken as a serious issue and ensure that 10 per cent of the salary is directly transferred to the bank accounts of the parents.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to social justice and equal opportunities for all, CM Revanth Reddy said that the caste census conducted for the first time in the

Telangana was a role model to all other States. Bowing to pressure from Telangana, the Union government has agreed to conduct a caste census as part of the national census.

The state government was also implementing SC classification and providing equal opportunities, he added.

The Chief Minister remembered former Union Minister Jaipal Reddy, who rose to become the Best Parliamentarian and an inspiration to persons with disabilities. Jaipal Reddy reached great heights despite facing disability, he said.

The government is providing opportunities to persons with disabilities in all fields so that they do not feel left behind in this competitive world, he said and appealed to them to utilise the opportunities.

The Chief Minister remembered former Union Minister Jaipal Reddy, who rose to become the Best Parliamentarian and an inspiration to persons with disabilities. Jaipal Reddy reached great heights despite facing disability, he said.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to social justice and equal opportunities for all, CM Revanth Reddy said that the caste census conducted for the first time in the

Telangana was a role model to all other States. Bowing to pressure from Telangana, the Union government has agreed to conduct a caste census as part of the national census.

The state government was also implementing SC classification and providing equal opportunities, he added.

Legal Action Must Be Taken Against Kodad DSP and Suryapet SP: Manda Krishna Madiga Allegations Surface in Karla Rajesh Custodial Death Case

“ Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, January 12:” Padma Shri awardee and MRPS Founder-President Manda Krishna Madiga has demanded immediate legal action against the police officials responsible for the custodial death of Karla Rajesh, a resident of Kodad town. On Monday, he visited Gandhi Hospital to gather details related to Rajesh's treatment, post-mortem, case sheet, and other medical records, and held discussions with the Hospital Superintendent, RMO, and senior doctors. Addressing the media at the hospital premises, Manda Krishna Madiga alleged that Rajesh, who was brought to Gandhi Hospital with jail escort at around 2:30 a.m. on November 16, was not provided proper medical care. He accused the police of supplying false medical history to doctors, claiming that Rajesh had habits like smoking and drinking and suffered from diabetes—ailments which, according to him, Rajesh never had. These false details were allegedly entered into the case sheet to mislead the investigation. He pointed out that when Rajesh was produced before a magistrate in Kodad, he had clearly stated that he had no prior health issues and was not on any medication, which is officially recorded. Despite this, police allegedly fabricated health conditions and passed on misleading information to doctors. Manda Krishna Madiga further alleged that mandatory legal guidelines were not followed during the post-mortem of a remand prisoner. He stated that there was negligence in appointing a three-member medical board and in adhering to statutory procedures during the autopsy. Gandhi Hospital authorities, he said, were unable to produce proper legal records related to the post-mortem, though they assured that complete details would be provided soon. He also criticized the role of the Executive Magistrate (Tahsildar), Musheerabad, alleging that the post-mortem panchanama was conducted in a perfunctory manner without following legal norms. Instead of arranging official video recording, the autopsy was allegedly filmed by a videographer brought by the Kodad police. Though not present during the post-mortem, Kodad Rural CI and SI reportedly visited the hospital and used their influence. Claiming that Chilukuru SI Suresh Reddy is the prime accused in the case, Manda Krishna Madiga alleged that Kodad MLA Uttam Padmavathi Reddy, with indirect support from Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, is attempting to shield him. He further accused the Suryapet District SP of committing serious lapses and submitting misleading information to the High Court by including details of an unrelated case in the counter affidavit, allegedly to protect the SI. He questioned why, when Kodad Rural CI was suspended for supervisory failure, the then DSP was not suspended, and demanded consistency in



action. He urged the government to immediately suspend SI Suresh Reddy and initiate legal action against the Kodad DSP and Suryapet SP. Manda Krishna Madiga warned that the entire society is closely watching the approach of the state government, the police department, and the concerned political leadership in handling this sensitive custodial death case. Several MRPS and MSP leaders and activists participated in the programme.

Government Whip and Alair MLA Beerla Ailaiah and Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy offered special prayers at the renowned Sri Someshwara Swamy Temple in Kolanupaka.



“(Mandava Srisailam... Yadadri Bhongir District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... January 12): (Voice Today Correspondent): Telangana State Government Whip and

Family dubs suicide of married woman as murder

Suryapet: The death of a married woman has created a sensation in the town, with the victim's family alleging that it is a case of murder made to look like suicide. The deceased has been identified as Bathula Lakshmi (34), a resident of Suryapet. Lakshmi was married to Bathula Veerababu about ten years ago. Three years ago, Veerababu left for Canada, leaving his wife and their two children in Suryapet. According to Lakshmi's family members, he neither took his wife and children with him nor made any serious effort to reunite them, keeping them back in Suryapet. The family alleged that Veerababu has been living with another young woman in Canada. Because of this, frequent disputes reportedly took place between the husband and wife. Two days ago, Veerababu returned from Canada to Suryapet, and Lakshmi questioned him over his behavior and neglect.

MP civil judge ‘urinates’ in train compartment; Supreme Court terms it ‘disgusting’

New Delhi, Jan 12

Expressing disgust over alleged misconduct of a Madhya Pradesh civil judge who allegedly urinated in a compartment during a train journey in 2018, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the state government to spell out



its stand on the issue.

“We fail to understand how the high court has... Disgusting conduct of a judicial officer. You have managed to turn all the witnesses (hostile). This is a shocking case. You urinated in the compartment. There was a lady,” a bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta said as it wondered how the high court chose to interfere with the disciplinary action taken against the judge in question.

The high court had in May 2025 partly allowed a plea filed by the civil judge challenging his termination from service over the alleged misconduct, noting that a Railway Magistrate Court had acquitted him of allegations of misbehaviour in the train compartment after examining the evidence.

The high court had recommended imposition of only a minor penalty for lesser charges framed against him during the departmental inquiry.

The Principal Registrar (Vigilance) of the high court has challenged the high court's judicial order before the Supreme Court.

The incident allegedly took place in 2018 when the judicial officer was travelling from Indore to Jabalpur by train, allegedly without informing his superiors about his

absence from his place of posting.

He allegedly consumed alcohol and abused co-passengers and railway staff and obstructed the Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) in discharge of his official duties, and threatened those who objected to his behaviour. He allegedly exposed himself and urinated on the seat of a woman co-passenger.

A criminal case was lodged under the Railways Act on a complaint by the TTE. But he was let off as prosecution witnesses, including the complainant turned hostile.

The high court's administrative committee recommended his removal from service after a parallel departmental proceeding concluded that all the charges against him were true. A full court meeting of the high court approved the removal of the civil judge and the Madhya Pradesh Governor ordered his termination from services in September 2019.

However, in May 2025, the Madhya Pradesh High Court set aside the termination which has now been challenged before the top court.

Government Whip MLA Birla Ailaiah, Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy

(Mandava Srisailam...Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... January 12):- Yadadri Telangana State Government Whip, Aleru MLA Birla Ailaiah and Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy inspected the bridge being constructed near Kolanupaka village of Aleru mandal of Bhuvanagiri district on Monday. The officials were asked about the

progress of the bridge construction work, along with the quality standards of the works. It is advised to complete within the stipulated time. They said that if the Kolanupaka Bridge is completed, the transport facilities to the

people of the surrounding villages, Kolanupaka Someswara Temple and Someswara Temple will be improved and the movement of agricultural products will be made easier for the farmers. They stated that this bridge is crucial for the development of the region and ordered the officials to speed up the work so that the people do not face any problems. Local public representatives, officials and party leaders participated in this program.

Sankranti Rangoli Competitions Celebrated with Grandeur at Seethaphalmandi

Women display artistic excellence; BJP leaders distribute prizes

“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, January 12:” Sankranti Rangoli (Muggu) competitions were held

with great enthusiasm and festive spirit in the Seethaphalmandi Division under the banner of the Bharatiya Janata Party. The event was organized under the leadership of former BJP Vice President Rachamalla Krishnamurthy, Vice President Kanikatla Hari, and former Division President Ambala Rajeshwar Rao. Women participated in large numbers and

captivated the audience with vibrant and creative rangoli designs highlighting the cultural significance of Sankranti and themes of patriotism. Their artistic expressions reflected tradition, creativity, and festive joy. Addressing the gathering, the organizers stated that Sankranti is being

celebrated across communities with rangoli competitions, traditional delicacies prepared using new harvest grains, and the lively spectacle of kite flying, symbolizing cultural harmony and unity.

The chief guest, BJP District General Secretary Mekala Sarangapani, said Sankranti is a festival that empowers women to showcase their artistic potential. He lauded the participants for their impressive rangoli creations and encouraged women to advance confidently in all spheres of life. He also appealed to the public to actively participate in the “Khelo India” initiative promoted by Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, emphasizing the importance of sports in nation-building.

Several BJP leaders and party workers, including contested corporator Mekala Keerthi Harsha Kiran, Ajay Naidu, Division President Evi Naresh, Kumaraswamy, Satis Raj, Neeli Srinivas, Mutha Ganesh, General Secretary Suresh, Shobharani, Nagarani, Shailaja, Yadamma, and others, attended the programme. Prizes were distributed to all participants in recognition of their talent and enthusiastic participation.

Government Whip MLA Birla Ailaiah, MLA Kadiam Srihari

(Mandava Srisailam...Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... January 12):- Yadadri Telangana State Government Whip, Aleru MLA Birla Ailaiah and MLA Kadiam Srihari participated as the chief guests in the calendar unveiling program organized under the auspices of Kuruma Sangam at Lingala Ghanpur mandal center of Bhuvanagiri district. On this occasion,

the leaders and members of the Kuruma community in the village gave a warm welcome to the MLA. After that, a rally was organized under the auspices of the Kuruma Sangam and they became a special attraction of the program with traditional

slogans. The calendar was unveiled by Government Whip Birla Ailaiah and Kadiam Srihari. Speaking on this occasion, they wished that the Kuruma community should move towards unity and social development.

He assured that the government is committed to the upliftment of all sections and will always contribute to the Kuruma Sangam. Kuruma community unity is an ideal for society. Traditions and culture should be preserved and the youth should focus on education, employment and economic development.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Global outrage over Grok

The outrage over the disturbing images generated by Grok, the artificial intelligence chatbot of the social media platform X, highlights the growing global concerns over the rogue application of new technologies. American billionaire Elon Musk-owned Grok allows its users to 'digitally undress' people without their consent and post sexually explicit images of celebrities and even underage children. This is a despicable and abhorrent trend that needs to be stopped at all costs. Regulators around the world, including India, are exploring options on how to check the latest menace, which is a result of the combination of X's lax content moderation policies and the accessibility of powerful generative AI tools. In August last year, xAI launched an image-generating feature, called Grok Imagine, with a "spicy" mode that was reportedly used to generate explicit images. Grok seems to be unique among major chatbots in its permissive stance and apparent holes in safeguards. Users discovered that Grok has been creating fake, sexually suggestive edits of real photos of women and girls on request. According to one estimate, Grok generated one non-consensual sexual image every minute. Alarmingly, Grok makes such content easier to produce and customise. And the real impact of the bot comes through its integration with a major social-media platform, allowing it to turn non-consensual, sexualised images into viral phenomena. Following the central government's recent directive, X has now blocked over 3,500 pieces of content and deleted over 600 accounts and has promised operations in compliance with the country's online content laws.

India is not alone in objecting to the generation of explicit content using Grok AI. Indonesia recently suspended the chatbot over concerns about AI-generated pornographic content, and the UK, France and Malaysia have also pushed back against the content generation in the past. The recent case presents a regulatory challenge that extends beyond X. Under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, platforms enjoy safe harbour immunity from liability for content posted by users, provided they comply with due diligence requirements. But generative AI systems like Grok occupy an ambiguous space—they are neither passive platforms transmitting user content nor traditional users creating content independently.

Corporator RAJITHA PARAMESHWAR REDDY Participates in Swami Vivekananda's 163rd Birth Anniversary Celebrations

“Kishore Vaddepalli, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle):”“Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar



Reddy participated in the Swami Vivekananda 163rd birth anniversary celebrations held at the Swami Vivekananda



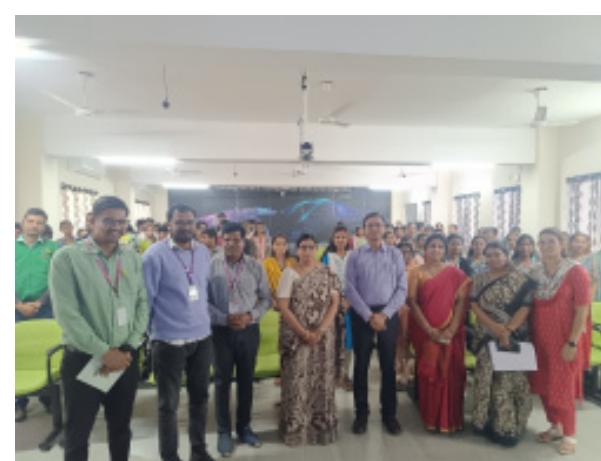
Committee Hall in Chakali Basti, Uppal. She attended the program as the chief guest at the celebrations held on Monday. On the occasion, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy garlanded the portrait of Swami Vivekananda and paid floral tributes. Addressing the gathering, she said that Swami Vivekananda was a great visionary and an inspiration to the youth. As a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he attained profound spiritual knowledge and introduced India's rich cultural heritage to the world. She emphasized that Swami Vivekananda taught that true personality is formed only when physical strength, mental strength, and spiritual strength come together. Education, she added, is not merely for securing employment but for building one's life and character. The program was attended by Uppoji Madhuchari, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Mudigonda Ravi, Boothkuri Rajesh Goud, Nagula Suresh Netra, Boothkuri Naveen, Era Rakesh, Boothkuri Sainath Goud, Raju, Nursing, Srinivas, Ravinder, Boothkuri Ganesh, and several others.

Toopran DSP Narender Goud Unveils Praja Jyothi calendar

“Ind, jan 10, medak incharge nr goud.”“At the Toopran DSP Office, the Praja Jyothi Calendar was ceremoniously unveiled by DSP Narender Goud under the leadership of Praja Jyothi reporter Suresh Goud, representing the combined mandals of Tupran and Veldurthi. Speaking on the occasion, DSP Narender Goud appreciated the responsible role played by Praja Jyothi in highlighting public issues and bringing people's problems to light. He lauded the services and values upheld by Praja Jyothi and extended his congratulations. DSP Narender Goud further stated that the role of the media is crucial in providing truthful and impartial information to society, and commended Praja Jyothi for consistently responding to public concerns and serving the community with integrity.



FDP & STTP on 3D Printing Successfully Conducted



“Ind, jan 10, medak incharge nr goud.”“The Departments of Pharmaceutical Engineering (PHE) and Biomedical Engineering (BME) successfully organized a Faculty Development Program (FDP) and Short-Term Training Program (STTP) titled “3D Printing and Additive Manufacturing: Applications in Engineering and Healthcare” from 05 to 10 January 2026. The five-day program witnessed the participation of 90 faculty members and students from various institutions including JNTU Hyderabad, Adhiyamaan College of Engineering (Autonomous), Government Institute of Electronics, East Marredpally (054), Sri Indu Institute of Pharmacy, Shree Saraswati Institute of Pharmacy (Tondavalai), along with VIPER. Participants represented diverse disciplines such as Pharmaceutical, Biomedical, Chemical, Mechanical Engineering, and Pharmacy. The program was enriched



by expert talks and sessions delivered by resource persons from IIT Hyderabad (IITH), NIPER Hyderabad, NIPER Kolkata, Osmania University, and North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU). The sessions highlighted the latest advancements and applications of 3D printing and additive manufacturing in engineering and healthcare sectors. The program aimed to enhance technical knowledge, promote interdisciplinary learning, and encourage research collaborations. The FDP & STTP received an enthusiastic response with active participation and meaningful interactions throughout. The organizers expressed their sincere gratitude to the Management, Director Dr. Lakshmi Prasad, Principal Dr. Sanjay Dubey, HOD-Pharmaceutical Engineering Dr. P. Vishnu, HOD-Biomedical Engineering Dr. H. Sujana, Sri. Bapiraju, and extended thanks to all the resource persons, coordinators, organizing committee members, and the support team for their valuable guidance and continuous support, which contributed to the successful conduct of the FDP & STTP. “Principal,” Dr. Sanjay Dubey

Excelling in Politics Through Awareness of Laws

State Police Complaints Authority Member Varre Venkateshwarlu at Sarpanch Felicitation Ceremony



“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“Dr. Varre Venkateshwarlu, Member of the State Police Complaints Authority and former Right to Information (RTI) Commissioner, called upon the Yadav community to remain united and take proactive steps toward attaining political leadership and authority. He emphasized that unity is essential for overcoming challenges and achieving collective goals. Dr. Venkateshwarlu spoke as the chief guest at a felicitation program organized for newly elected Sarpanches at A. N. R. Garden, Nacharam, under the leadership of K. Y. Vision. Addressing the gathering, he highlighted the crucial role of Sarpanches in the political system, stressing that they serve as the backbone of grassroots democracy. He advised the newly elected Sarpanches to manage their responsibilities effectively, lead with integrity, and work in a manner that brings respect and recognition to their positions. Dr. Venkateshwarlu further stressed the importance of understanding the Constitution and the laws thoroughly. According to him, a strong knowledge of legal provisions fosters a questioning mindset and helps leaders make informed decisions, which is essential for political and social progress. The program also featured speeches by MLAs Srinivas Yadav and Naveen Yadav, who encouraged youth and socially conscious individuals to enter politics. They emphasized the importance of bringing together other Backward Class (BC) communities to collectively work toward development. They reminded the



Sarpanches and the audience that unity is the key to achieving any goal and that leaders should earn public appreciation through their dedicated service. Several prominent leaders and representatives of the Yadav community attended the event, including State Yadav Sangham leaders Chirra Srisailam Yadav, Kiran Kumar Yadav, Ramulu Yadav, Osmania University Professor Ram Shepherd, and community leaders Doodimetta Balaraj Yadav, Krishna Yadav, Eshwari Bai, Anil Kumar Yadav, and Mahesh Yadav. The ceremony concluded with the felicitation of the newly elected Sarpanches by Dr. Varre Venkateshwarlu, who congratulated them on their victory and encouraged them to uphold the values of service, responsibility, and legal awareness while performing their duties. The event underscored the importance of community unity, legal knowledge, and active participation in politics for the development and empowerment of the Yadav community.

Youth Should Follow the Footsteps of Swami Vivekananda

District Council Member Sangishetti Ravindrasagar



“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“District Council Member Sangishetti Ravindrasagar emphasized that the youth should walk in the footsteps of Swami Vivekananda, who showcased Indian culture to the world. On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, a grand celebration of National Youth Day was organized in Shakti Sai Nagar Division, under the Nacharam Circle, by BJP Medchal-Malkajgiri District Council Member Sangishetti Ravindrasagar. He highlighted that

“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“District Council Member Sangishetti Ravindrasagar emphasized that the youth should walk in the footsteps of Swami Vivekananda, who showcased Indian culture to the world. On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, a grand celebration of National Youth Day was organized in Shakti Sai Nagar Division, under the Nacharam Circle, by BJP Medchal-Malkajgiri District Council Member Sangishetti Ravindrasagar. He highlighted that

Strive to Realise the Ideals of Swami Vivekananda: Chilukanagar Congress President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle):”“On the occasion of the 163rd birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, Chilukanagar 7th Division Congress Party President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj participated in the celebrations held at Chilukanagar, following an invitation from the Swami



Vivekananda Yuva Sangh. Rajesh Mudiraj paid floral tributes to the statue of Swami Vivekananda and offered his respectful homage. On this occasion, representatives of the Swami Vivekananda Yuva Sangh, Chilukanagar 7th Division Congress Party President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, Gandikota Ganesh, Manchala Raghu, Dandugula Shankar, Shiva, B.M. Kiran, youth leaders Gandikota Bharat Kumar, Naresh, Sandeep, P. Swamy, Suresh, Sona, and others. Addressing the gathering, Chilukanagar Division Congress President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj described Swami Vivekananda as a great visionary who continues to inspire the youth of the nation. He said that Swami Vivekananda's teachings serve as a guiding force for national development and social transformation. He urged the youth to imbibe Vivekananda's ideals in their daily lives and take the lead in serving society.

Everyone Must Strive to Realise the Ideals of Vivekananda: Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle):”“On the occasion of the 163rd birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, grand celebrations were held on Monday at Chiluka Nagar Crossroads in the Uppal constituency under the auspices of the Swami Vivekananda Yuva Sangh, Chiluka Nagar. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and paid floral tributes to the statue of Swami Vivekananda. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that the messages given by Swami Vivekananda to the youth continue to inspire the present generation. He emphasized that the role of youth is crucial in the development of the nation and called upon everyone to work towards achieving Vivekananda's ideals. Several lead-



ers and members participated in the programme, including BRS State Leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj; Swami Vivekananda Uppal-Chiluka Nagar Yuva Sangh President Erelli Ravinder Reddy; the General Secretary and committee members; BRS senior leaders Rajkumar, Yedda Kondal Reddy, Kokonda Jagan, Jalli Mohan, Ashok, Kola Ravi, MD Shafi, MD Mohammed Hanif, Ravinder Goud, Sundar, Muddam Srinivas Yadav, Balakrishna Goud, Pedda Pentana, Jillaala Praveen, Balender, Kumar, Nursing Neta, Sakinala Chandu, Fareed, along with BRS leaders and party workers.

BJP Organizes Rangoli Competition in Shakti Sai Nagar Division

““Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“On the occasion of Sankranti, the BJP, under the leadership of Medchal-Malkajgiri District Council Member Sangisetti Ravindrasagar and women leader Lalitha, organized a Rangoli (Muggu) competition at the BJP office in Mallikarjuna Nagar, Shakti Sai Nagar Division. The event was graced by BJP state leader and former MLA of Uppal, Shri N.V.S.S. Prabhakar, as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, he appreciated the enthusiastic participation of women, noting that a total of 164 Rangolis were created. He remarked that it is heartening to see Telangana’s culture being celebrated vibrantly in both villages and urban areas, with women skillfully creating traditional patterns such as Gobbermmas and Basavannas related to Sankranti. He further noted that around 500 to 600 participants attended the event, and the women participants enjoyed the festival celebrations immensely. As part of the competition, prizes were awarded as follows: First Prize – ₹5,000, Second Prize –



₹3,000, Third Prize – ₹2,000, Fourth Prize – ₹1,000, and every woman participant received a saree as a token of appreciation. The program saw the presence of senior BJP leaders including G. Anjaneyulu Sagar, Division Women President Sabitha Yadav, senior leaders Aparna Goud and Akila Sagar, leaders Mutyam Reddy, Division Secretary Ramesh Sagar Punyavati, along with several other party workers and community members. The event successfully highlighted the cultural spirit of Sankranti while encouraging women’s participation in social and cultural activities.

Congress Leaders Submit Petition to Uppal Deputy Commissioner Seeking Removal of Water Hyacinth and Mosquito Control Measures

““KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle):”“Congress leaders from the Habsiguda Division of Uppal constituency on Monday submitted a representation to Uppal Deputy Commissioner Raju during the Prajavani programme, urging immediate removal of water hyacinth from Ramanthapur Pedda Cheruvu and the implementation of urgent measures to control the mosquito menace in Habsiguda Division. The leaders explained to the Deputy Commissioner that residents across all colonies in Habsiguda Division are facing severe mosquito problems, causing daily hardships, especially during night hours. They requested that, as an immediate step, anti-mosquito spraying be carried out in all colonies and that proper sanitation be ensured by deploying sanitation workers effectively to prevent the accumulation of garbage. They also specifically appealed to the GHMC authorities to take strict and timely action to address the issue and protect public health. Those who participated in the programme included Uppal constituency Habsiguda Division Congress senior leaders Janampalli



Venkateshwar Reddy, Tavidaboyina Giribabu (Contested Corporator) and Ramanthapur Congress Party In-charge, Uppal constituency Congress senior leader Gaddam Ravikumar, Uppal A Block Congress Party General Secretary Survi Murali Goud, Paboju Naveen Chary, and others. Responding to the petition, the Deputy Commissioner directed AE Naresh Reddy to take special interest and ensure speedy resolution of the issues raised.

Asmita Yogasana Second-Day Events Held Grandly at Delhi Public School



““Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“The second-day events of the Asmita Yogasana program were held in a grand manner at Delhi Public School (DPS). BJP State President Shri N. Ramachandra Rao attended the second day of the program as the chief guest. On this occasion, Shri N. Ramachandra Rao paid floral tributes to DPS Chairman and Yogasana Bharat Secretary Shri Nandanam Krupakar. Addressing the gathering, DPS Chairman and MLC Shri Malka Komaraiah stated that yoga has gained global recognition and influence after the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He emphasized that if yoga is made a part of the academic curriculum, students would have opportunities to participate in events such as the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, and could also adopt yoga as a profession. Shri Komaraiah highlighted that yoga involves very minimal expenditure and can be practiced by anyone at home, even in small spaces such as flats. He also informed that scholarships worth approximately 7 lakhs are available in the field of sports. He further stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisions India becoming one of the world’s top five nations by 2047, and such yoga competitions are being organized as part of that vision. Speaking as the chief guest, Shri N. Ramachandra Rao extended his congratulations to all



the participants of the yoga competitions. He specially appreciated DPS Chairman Shri Komaraiah for organizing such a meaningful and well-structured program. He described yoga as a scientific practice that helps maintain good health and overall well-being. Shri Ramachandra Rao expressed happiness that the event was organized on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda’s 164th Jayanti, noting that Swami Vivekananda always encouraged physical fitness and sports. He observed that yoga is being widely practiced by people across the world, especially in Europe and Australia. He also expressed joy that the South Zone yoga competitions were being held at his friend’s institution. Welcoming participants from various regions, he remarked that Hyderabad is popularly known as the “City of Pearls” and is also synonymous with biryani, and extended a warm welcome to everyone to the beautiful city. He concluded by urging everyone to continue promoting the ideals of Swami Vivekananda and the encouragement he gave to sports and physical fitness. The event concluded on a positive note with enthusiastic participation from students, organizers, and guests, reflecting the growing importance of yoga in education and society.

Providing Free Medical Services Is Commendable

MLA Lakshma Reddy Unveils Calendar

““Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“Uppal MLA Shri Bandari Lakshma Reddy stated that it is highly commendable for colony representatives to organize and provide free medical services to the public. He made these remarks while attending a free mega medical camp organized under the joint leadership of Bhavani Nagar Welfare Association President Shri Ragiri Mohan Reddy and General Secretary Shri Kancharla Madhusudan Reddy, within the limits of Nacharam Division. The medical camp was inaugurated by Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy along with the local Corporator Shri Shanti Sai Jan Shekhar, who participated as chief guests. On this occasion, the MLA also underwent a blood pressure check at the camp. The camp was conducted with the support of Medicover Hospital, where residents of the colony availed free sugar (diabetes) tests. Essential medicines were distributed free of cost to those in need. During the event, the New Year calendar was formally unveiled by the MLA along with colony representatives. Several colony elders and residents participated in the program, including Beeredy Haranath Reddy, C. H. Vinod Krishna Reddy, Anand Kumar, Surender, Y. Sathyanarayana, T. H. Rayudu, Venkatesh, V. Madhusudan Reddy, P. Vishnuvardhan Reddy, Bhavani Ashok, Ramulu, Sudhakar Reddy, Dasu,



Bal Reddy, Sridhar Reddy, Vivek, and Venkatachalam. The event concluded with appreciation for the organizers and a collective commitment to continue such welfare activities for the benefit of the community.

Ramanthapur Division Congress President Mohammed Rafiq Distributes Letters on 200 Units Free Power Scheme



Ramanthapur Division Congress Party President Mohammed Rafiq, with the cooperation of Uppal Congress In-charge Parameshwar Reddy and officials from the Electricity Department. Speaking on the occasion, party leaders stated that the implementation of the scheme as promised by the Chief Minister has significantly reduced the financial burden of electricity expenses on poor and middle-class families. Residents of Ramanthapur Division expressed happiness and satisfaction over the effective execution of the free power scheme. Mallikarjuna Swamy Devasthanam Chairman Nam Raji Reddy, Bestha Bhaskar, Poosa Sattaiah, Mohammed Nayem, Lagusani Srinivas Goud, Madhu, Suri, Icon Swamy, Sai, Mohammed Jangir and several others participated in the programme.

Nacharam Reddy Sangham New Year 2026 Calendar Unveiled



““Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12:”“The New Year 2026 calendar unveiling ceremony was held under the leadership of Nacharam Reddy Sangham President Shri Erra Srinivas Reddy and General Secretary Shri Namilkonda Bhupal Reddy. Uppal MLA Shri Bandari Lakshma Reddy and former MLA Shri Bethi Subhash Reddy attended the program as chief guests and formally unveiled the calendar. Several prominent members and leaders participated in the event, including Ragiri Mohan Reddy, Immadi Ramachandra Reddy, Bekkari Ravinder Reddy, Pogula Venkata Ramana

Bulldozers over Bullet bikes... Police crush silencers of 30 bikes



““Vikarabad District, Tandur (Indian Chronicle 12, Jan) ”“In Vikarabad district’s Tandur town, the police came down heavily on Royal Enfield (Bullet) motorcycles that were causing noise pollution. As modi-

Revanth Reddy Government Implementing Election Promises: Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy



““KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle):”“Former Medchal-Malkajgiri District Youth Congress President Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy stated that the Congress government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is effectively implementing the promises made to the people during the elections. On Monday, he distributed 200 Units Free Electricity (Gruha Jyothi) scheme cards to beneficiaries in the Habsiguda Division, along with electricity department officials and Congress leaders. Speaking on the occasion, Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy said that thousands of families in the Gandhi Girijana Basti of Habsiguda Division, Uppal constituency, are benefiting from the Gruha Jyothi scheme. He emphasized that the Revanth Reddy government is taking all necessary steps to fulfill every promise made by the Congress Party during the elections. He further stated that thousands of families in Habsiguda Division are also benefiting under the Gruha Lakshmi housing scheme. As per the instructions of Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy, greeting cards sent by Deputy Chief

Minister and Energy Minister Bhatti Vikramarka were distributed to Gruha Jyothi beneficiaries in Gandhi Girijana Basti by Kandi Shravan Kumar Reddy. He clarified that eligible poor and middle-class families consuming less than 200 units of electricity per month are receiving power supply free of cost under the zero-bill system. He also highlighted that under the Mahalakshmi Scheme, the Revanth Reddy government has already provided free RTC bus travel for women across the state. The program was attended by DE Dasarath, AE Ganesh Reddy, Habsiguda Division Congress President Gannaram Vijay Kumar, ST Cell President Ganesh Naik, Division General Secretary and Endowments Department Director Dharmendra Naik (Dharma), SC Cell leader Solomon Babu, Kishan Naik, Indramma Committee members Gundurajanna, Habsiguda Ramalayam Chairman Chintala Babu Rao, Mallu Naik, Ramesh, Division Secretary Suman Naik, Lingam Naik, Dharmaraju, Sai Kiran, Lakshminarayana, Sai, and several other party workers and local residents.

Grand Celebrations Kudarai Festival



Secunderabad Cantonment, January 12 (Indian Chronicle): "As part of the Dhanurmas celebrations, grand celebrations were organized at Venkateshwara Sami Temple in the famous New City Colony of Bowenpally. This is the main part of the worship done to Godadevi, Sri Krishna or Srimannarayana in the month of Dhanurmasam, in which Godadevi wants to offer herself to Sri Krishna. This indicates the determination to marry Godadevi Sriranganathuddha and usually happens on the first day of Bhogi. In this, special pujas made with milk, rice, wheatgrass and coconut were offered as sacred offerings to the Lord in 108 Gangalas, and in this order, special pujas were organized by the devotees at Shri Venkateshwara Swami Temple in Bowenpally with devotion. On the occasion of the completion of the 27th Paasura Pathanam composed by Godadevi, the priests of the temple dedicated to the worship of Lord Venkateshwara Swami, specially decorated with 108 Gangaals. Due to this, there was a quarrel with the devotees and the temple premises became infected with Jai Shriman Naaraayana Jai Jai Shriman Naaraayana Naamsmarans. On Wednesday evening, the temple committee members announced that a grand celebration would be held in the premises of the temple along with anointments, auspicious prayers and chanting of mantras and blessings of the goddess Shri Venkateshwara Swami kalyanam. Temple members Naarayana, Yadaiya, Lakshman, Archakalu Deepak, Sridhar, etc. participated in this programme."

Grihajyoti scheme is proof of the welfare regime of public government.

Secunderabad Cantonment, January 12 (Indian Chronicle): "Jampa Pratap, Vice President of All India Cantonments said that the Grihajyoti scheme is a proof of the welfare regime of the public government. The Government of Telangana is implementing Zero Bill Grihajyoti scheme to reduce the burden on the people. In this context, in order to reach out to the beneficiaries more, as per the orders of the State Deputy CM Mallu Batti Vikramarka, the officials of the power department are going to the beneficiaries, conveying their New Year and sankranti greetings and bringing awareness to the people regarding this scheme. Jampa Pratap, Vice President of Boards, Ade Haque and Ade Mounika were present and started this program. Jampa Pratap spoke on this occasion. As part of the six guarantees given by our public government, through the Griha Jyoti scheme, free electricity is provided to your family up to 200 units per month, the government pays the electricity bill directly to the electricity companies. Now the money spent on electricity bills can be used for children's education, health and family needs, he said." After that DE said. Along with your family, 52,82,498 families in the state are benefiting from zero



electricity bills. Since the beginning of this scheme till date, the government has fully borne the amount of Rs.3,593 crores owed by the people and directly paid to the power companies on behalf of the beneficiaries. "This not only reduces the financial burden on the people, but also proves the welfare regime of the public government. The government is committed to the development of the state by continuing such welfare programs in the future as well. May you and your family members celebrate this Sankranti festival with more joy. Prakash, Narsimha, Raju, Srinivas in the program

Kuruma Sangham New Year Calendar–2026 Unveiled



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle): "The Kuruma Sangham New Year Calendar–2026 was ceremoniously unveiled at Venkata Reddy Nagar, Ramanthapur. The event was presided over by Mr. Gotika Satyiah, President of the Venkata Reddy Nagar Kuruma Sangham. State Kuruma Sangham Secretary Mr. Goraghe Mallesh and Uppal Zone Kuruma Sangham President Mr. Repu Krishna attended the programme as chief guests. Mr. Suddala Suresh, General Secretary of the Kuruma Sangham, served as the programme in-charge, while Treasurer Mr. Badapatla Yellaiah acted as the master of ceremonies. Committee members, community elders, and Sangham members participated in large numbers and made the event a grand success."

Swami Vivekananda Jayanti Celebrated with Fervour in Kushaiguda



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, January 12, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "On the occasion of National Youth Day, the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with enthusiasm in Kushaiguda Division. The programme was organised under the leadership of Kushaiguda Division BJP President Challa Prabhakar. Former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar attended the event



as the chief guest. As part of the celebrations, floral tributes were offered to the statue of Swami Vivekananda. Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest called upon the youth to follow the ideals and teachings of Swami Vivekananda and emphasised the relevance of his message, "Strength is life, weakness is death," in today's society. He urged young people to adopt discipline, confidence, and dedication in their personal and social lives. He also highlighted Swami Vivekananda's vision of cultural pride and national awakening, stating that his thoughts should serve as an inspiration for future generations. Several BJP leaders and party workers participated in the programme, including Surender Goud, D. Nadam, Uppal Assembly Media Convener Thalla Anand Goud, R. Venkateswarlu, BJP Division General Secretary Pawan Kumar, Lakshmi Narayana, Ashok, Ganesh Goud, Brahmachari, Dayanand, Bola Srinivas, Venkatesh Yadav, Harinayak, Sahadev Goud, Srikanth, Bharat, Srisailam, Vidyasagar, Ratnapuram Venkatesh, V. Rambabu, Bandari Anil, Kiran, and women leaders Chandrakala and Kalavathi, among others. BJP leaders, women representatives, party workers, and a large number of local residents attended the event and recalled the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, contributing to the successful conduct of the programme."

I Will Extend My Full Support for the Development of the Community Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy



Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, January 12: "Uppal MLA Shri Bandari Lakshma Reddy has assured that he would extend all possible support and cooperation for the overall development of the Padmashali community. He made these remarks while attending the 10th annual celebrations of the Markandeya Padmashali Sangham, which were held in a grand manner on Sunday at Ambedkar Bhavan, Mallapur. The program was conducted under the chairmanship of Sangham President Shri Bamini Anantharam. MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy participated in the event as the chief guest and addressed the gathering. In his speech, the MLA highlighted the importance of unity and collective effort in strengthening community organizations. He urged the members to actively participate in social, educational, and cultural activities for the progress of future generations. Responding positively to the request made by the Sangham representatives, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy assured that



suitable land would be allocated for the construction of a permanent Sangham building. He stated that such infrastructure would help in organizing community programs and welfare activities in a better manner. On this occasion, the New Year calendar was officially unveiled by Akhila Bharata Padmashali Sangham President Shri Kandagatla Swamy and Greater Hyderabad Padmashali Sangham President Shri Kathula Sudarshan, along with leaders Sai Jan Shekhar and other prominent Sangham representatives. Several senior leaders and representatives of the Padmashali Sangham from Mallapur, Nacharam, Kapra, Boduppal, Bolliguda, and nearby areas attended the event in large numbers. The participants expressed happiness over the assurance given by the MLA and thanked him for his continued support towards the Padmashali community. The event concluded with cultural interactions and a collective commitment by the members to work towards the growth and unity of the Sangham.

Rangoli Competitions at Ramanthapur Chinna Cheruvu

Uppal Constituency Congress In-charge Parameshwar Reddy Attends as Chief Guest



pated enthusiastically, creating vibrant and colorful rangolis that added to the festive grandeur of Sankranti. Prizes were awarded to the top three winners—Srujana, Saketh, and Navyashree—for their attractive rangoli designs. In addition, consolation prizes were presented to all women participants. On the occasion, gratitude was expressed to all the women who made the program a success by showcasing rich traditions, as well as to the Colony Welfare Association members, colony residents, and the event organizers. Those present at the program included Taufiq, Rafiq, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Jaleel Pasha, Shravan Reddy, Raji Reddy, Poosa Satanna, Garika Sudhakar, Upender Reddy, Narasimha Reddy, Muthyala Babu, Samuel, Bullet Ashok, Mittu, Harish, Sandeep, Bhaskar, Kashamalla Shankar, Satish Goud, Jillu, Ashok, Srinivas Goud, Pentayya, Yadagiri Reddy, Uday, G. Swamy, K. Swamy, Shaag Sridhar, Nayim, Chintu, Yogi, Menga Ravi, Gautham, Kiran, Sharath, Kishore, Harish Reddy, Vijay, Kanna Yadav, Mallikarjun, Menga Shobha, Ambika, Bejjim Shobha, Naveen, Shreyas, Ramakrishna, Sai, Mani, Malli, Balaraju, along with the Colony Association President and other colony residents.

Swami Vivekananda Jayanti Celebrated with Grandeur in Ramanthapur

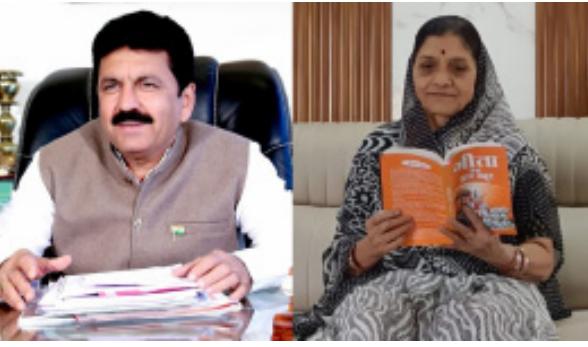
Former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar Attends as Chief Guest



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, January 12 (Indian Chronicle): "Swami Vivekananda Jayanti celebrations were held in a grand manner at the Mini Tank Bund in Ramanthapur Division under the auspices of the Samajika Samarata Vedika, Ramanthapur Nagar. Former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar attended the programme as the chief guest and paid floral tributes to the statue of Swami Vivekananda. Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said that the ideals and teachings of Swami Vivekananda are a great source of inspiration for the youth. He recalled that the Government of India declared Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary as National Youth Day in 1984, and since then the Jayanti has been celebrated across the country. He urged today's youth to follow the path shown by Swami Vivekananda and actively participate in the nation's development. The programme was attended by Ramanthapur Corporator Bandaru Srivani, Ramanthapur Division President Vangala Santosh Gupta, senior BJP leaders Tinder Hanumantha Rao, Muthineni Jagadish, Revu Narasimha Kuruma, Vemulakonda Somasekhar Goud, Vallapu Jagan Yadav, Gaddam Saikiran, along with RSS leaders Teertha, Purushottam, Jagadish, Srinath Reddy, Bharat, and several BJP leaders, party workers, and activists.



NCP's Yogesh Behl aiming for record 7th term, BJP's Usha Dhore eyes 5th



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The first elections to the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) were held in 1986. And since then, Yogesh Behl has been contesting the civic elections. This time, he is contesting for the eighth consecutive time. Till now, he has won a record six times and lost only once. "I contested my first PCMC election when I was just 22 years old. I fought the election against the bigwigs of that time and lost only by a small margin of 36 votes. But after losing my first election, I have never lost another one. I have won six consecutive polls," Yogesh Behl, who is currently heading the Pimpri-Chinchwad unit of the NCP, told The Indian Express Saturday.

"In 1986, I was contesting as an independent, yet I put up a strong fight. I lost by a small margin of votes to Vasant Shevde of the BJP. The Congress then had fielded the nephew of a minister," recalled Behl. Since 1986, Behl has contested from the Sant Tukaram Nagar-Vallabh Nagar ward. Whenever it was converted into a Prabhag (a bigger ward), he then also represented nearby areas, including Nashik Phata and Kasarwadi. This time, too, he is contesting from the Sant-Tukaram Nagar-Kasarwadi Prabhag.

Behl said that, except for the first election, he has rarely faced any strong contenders. Incidentally, his main opponent has been Yashwant Bhosale, a prominent labour leader from Pimpri-Chinchwad. Yashwant Bhosale lost all five times he contested against Behl. Talking about their rivalry, Yashwant Bhosale said, "He (Behl) might claim that ours was not a close contest, but the fact is it was always a close contest. I think in every election, my margin of defeat was not more than 200-300. Though I lost by a margin of over 3,500 votes in the 2017 Prabhag elections, I garnered 9,000 votes, which clearly showed many people were against my rival." Behl's victories are mainly attributed to his close connection with his voters. Some of the voters in his ward said he is available all the time and is easily accessible, which works in his favour in every election. "People believe in his ability to deliver. Everyone knows he is well-connected with top leaders in his party and knows several ministers," said Jayant Kariya, an activist from Kasarwadi.

However, Yashwant Bhosale alleged that Behl used unfair means to win elections. "He is a cash-rich person and uses every other means to woo the voters. But I have never done anything wrong to impress the voters. I have always followed the democratic means," claimed Yashwant

Bhosale. Behl was first elected as a Congress corporator in 1992 and re-elected in 1996. After the NCP was formed in 1999, he joined the party and has never left it. He has served as mayor, standing committee chairman, PCMC House leader and even as Opposition leader. Other prominent candidates like Yogesh Behl is eyeing a record seventh term, there are a few others who are contesting either for the third, fourth or fifth time. Usha (Mai) Dhore is contesting for a straight fifth term from the Sangvi area. Twice she had won on an NCP ticket and twice on a BJP ticket. Dhore, re-fielded by the BJP this time, has also served as mayor of Pimpri-Chinchwad. Seema Sawale, who recently switched to the NCP from the BJP, is contesting for the fourth term from the Indrayani Nagar-Balajinagar area. Sawale served as the standing committee chairperson of the PCMC in 2017. Sawale is facing a challenge this time from Dr Suhas Kamble, a prominent orthopaedic surgeon who runs the Sai Hospital in the Moshi area. "Our area has always witnessed keen contests. It has kept the entire Pimpri-Chinchwad interested," said Sawale.

Raju Misal, who recently switched over to the BJP from the NCP, is also contesting for the fourth term from the Pradhikaran area. "Raju Misal has been a close aide of Ajit Pawar. But due to election compulsions, he had to shift to the BJP. Unlike other leaders who wake up during elections, Raju Misal has a team that works throughout the year, trying to resolve citizens' complaints. And that has always kept him in the good books of the voters," said Iklas Sayeed, a resident of Akurdi. Usha Waghare, who is contesting from Pimprigaon, has been elected three times as a corporator. This is her fourth time, and she is contesting from the same Pimprigaon area. Her husband, Sanjog Waghare, who is not contesting this time, has won four times. While Sanjog Waghare and his father Bhikhu Waghare-Patil both have served as mayor of Pimpri-Chinchwad in the past, Usha Waghare had been the standing committee chairperson of PCMC. Nana Kate, former NCP Pimpri-Chinchwad president, is contesting for the third time from the Pimple Saudagar area. He is contesting on an NCP ticket. His wife, Sheetal Kate, is also contesting for the third time from Pimple Saudagar. It was Nana Kate, who is close to Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, to whom Baramati MP Supriya Sule had first spoken about the need for two NCPs to come together. After which, the two factions got to the discussion table. Rahul Bhosale is contesting for the third time from the Nehru Nagar area. Before him, his father had won the elections from 1986 to 2007. "There is complete domination of the Bhosale family in the Nehru Nagar area. Before Rahul, his father Hanumant Bhosale had become a corporator from the Nehru Nagar area for consecutive terms. His father had also been the mayor of Pimpri-Chinchwad," said advocate Sushil Mancharkar, who lives in the area. In Wakad, Rahul Kalate is contesting his second civic elections but his mother and his father had won from the same area in the past elections. Rahul Kalate is contesting this time on a BJP ticket. He was earlier in Shiv Sena (UBT). His opponent, Mayur Kalate, is contesting for the second time on an NCP ticket.

ED raid at I-PAC office: Fresh row in Bengal over 'presence' of top officials, including chief secy, with Mamata Banerjee

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The controversy further escalated when Banerjee said on Friday that she had gone there as chairperson of the Trinamool Congress (TMC). The controversy further escalated when Mamata Banerjee said on Friday that she had gone there as chairperson of the Trinamool Congress (TMC). A fresh row has erupted in West Bengal over the alleged presence of Chief Secretary Nandini Chakraborty, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Manoj Pant and other officials with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at I-PAC's Sector V office during the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raid on Thursday. The controversy further escalated when Banerjee said on Friday that she had gone there as chairperson of the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

The ED had on Thursday conducted raids at multiple locations in Kolkata and Bidhannagar, including those linked to the political consultancy firm I-PAC, in connection with a money laundering case linked to the coal smuggling scam. In all, the central agency raided four places in Delhi and six in Bengal, including I-PAC's office and the residence of its director Pratik Jain. In a statement, the ED said proceeds of the scam, amounting to crores, were sent to I-PAC through hawala channels. The searches covered I-PAC's office on the 11th floor of a Salt Lake building, the Loudon Street residence of Jain, and the office of a trader in Posta, Burrabazar. Soon after the raid, Banerjee reached Jain's residence and allegedly snatched some files, laptop and documents from there. Then she rushed to the I-PAC office in Sector V in Salt Lake.

As per sources with the administration, Chakraborty, Pant and other officers also reached Salt Lake after some time. A senior official with the state administration said, "Police officers can go anywhere with the chief minister because there may be a security threat or law and order issues. But there was no need to rush physically to the spot, especially where a security agency was conducting a search operation. It is gross misconduct." He further added, "I can remember both Jyoti Basu or Buddhadev Bhattacharya



never met any officers in their party office or residence."

Criticising the development, BJP state vice-president Jagannath Chattopadhyay said, "In West Bengal now, politics and governance are completely mixed in nature. The chief minister can't differentiate between governmental and non-governmental practices. IAS officers, including the chief secretary, are also entangled in this political system. This is a completely pathetic situation." A former IAS officer said, "On February 3, 2019, Mamata Banerjee sat on a dharna in Kolkata's Esplanade area after a CBI raid on then Kolkata Police Commissioner and current DGP Rajeev Kumar's home in connection with its probe into the Saradha Ponzi scheme case. At the time, Malay De was the chief secretary and he refused to go on the dharna mancha when the chief minister proposed to hold a Cabinet meeting there. Later, that Cabinet meeting was held on PWD premises near the dharna mancha." Alleging collusion between the TMC and BJP in the matter, CPI(M) Central Committee member Sujan Chakraborty said, "Mamata Banerjee herself said that she went there as a Trinamool Congress leader. Then why did she have Z-category security and too many police officers? It could be argued that she needed security cover owing to threats from within her party. But how and when did the chief secretary and the principal secretary become part of this security cover? Why did they go there?"

Western Railway to cancel 120 suburban trains each on Monday, Tuesday for sixth line work between Kandivali-Borivali

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

At least 120 suburban train services will be cancelled on January 12 (Monday) and January 13 (Tuesday), 2026, on Mumbai's Western Railway network due to major night blocks and ongoing infrastructure work for the construction of the sixth railway line between Kandivali and Borivali. According to Western Railway officials, the cancellations include 60 Up and 60 Down suburban services on both days, impacting peak commuter movement on one of the busiest sections of the Western line. The large-scale cancellations form part of a longer 30-day block period that began on the night of December 20-21, 2025, and will continue until January 18, 2026. The extended block has been undertaken to facilitate multiple stages of civil, track and signalling works connected to the sixth line project between Kandivali and Borivali. The project is aimed at increasing line capacity and easing congestion on the heavily saturated suburban corridor. As part of the ongoing works, Western Railway will impose major night blocks on January 11-

12 and January 12-13. On the night of January 11-12, a block will be taken for the dismantling of Point No. 104 on the car shed line at Kandivali. During this period, the Up Fast Line will be blocked from 11.15 pm to 3.15 am, while the Down Fast Line will remain blocked from 1 am to 4.30 am. On the following night of January 12-13, another major block has been scheduled at Kandivali.

For this work, the Up Fast Line will again be blocked from 11.15 pm to 3.15 am, and the Down Fast Line from 1 am to 4.30 am, affecting train movement between Kandivali and Malad. Western Railway has stated that in addition to these blocks, the suspension of the fifth line and the imposition of speed restrictions in the affected section have further constrained operations, leading to the cancellation of a significant number of suburban services. "These major blocks are essential for carrying out critical track and signalling works related to the construction of the sixth line between Kandivali and Borivali.

BJP demands narco test for Mumbai ex-top cop Sanjay Pandey to find the real mastermind over alleged plot to arrest Devendra Fadnavis



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Ameet Satam, Mumbai BJP president, on Saturday, demanded that former city police commissioner Sanjay Pandey undergo a narcoanalysis test to uncover the mastermind behind the alleged effort to falsely implicate Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in fabricated cases. Satam told reporters on Saturday, "Under the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) regime led by then undivided Shiv Sena president and former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, there were shocking incidents involving police officials, such as Sachin Waze, who planted a bomb outside an industrialist's residence and murdered an innocent person." He claimed that a conspiracy was allegedly orchestrated during Thackeray's tenure in which Pandey was instructed to have Fadnavis arrested on false charges. According to Satam, Pandey

assigned this task to two police officers. "Two police officers — Lamikant Patil and Sardar Patil — were approached and pressurized to find a case to frame Fadnavis who was then the Opposition leader in the state legislative assembly," Satam alleged. All the details are mentioned in DGP Rashmi Shukla's report submitted to the government five days before her retirement, Satam said, calling for a thorough probe taking into account the seriousness of the matter. "I urge the government to do a narco test of Sanjay Pandey. It is necessary to know at whose behest Pandey was carrying out the work to frame Fadnavis in false cases. The real mastermind behind this should be brought to the public," he asserted. Satam also indicated that during the MVA regime, there was a clear disregard for rules and law, and murders took place in which police officers were linked. He also mentioned that Pandey himself was subjected to an ED probe and arrested in the NSE scam. He is currently on bail. But the matter is before the court, he revealed. In 2019, Uddhav Thackeray aligned with the Congress-NCP coalition to form a government, breaking ties with the BJP, which then became the Opposition with Fadnavis as its leader. In 2022, following a split in the Shiv Sena, Eknath Shinde became Maharashtra's Chief Minister, with Fadnavis serving as Deputy CM in the BJP-Shiv Sena coalition government. Subsequently, the NCP, led by Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, joined the ruling coalition. In 2023, Fadnavis made startling revelations, saying there was a conspiracy to frame him in false charges and put him in jail.

How safe is Pune? What residents see beyond the headlines

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

For a long time, Pune has carried the reputation of being a 'safe' city; more silent than India's metros, culturally rooted, and relatively insulated from violent crime. Conversations with residents across neighbourhoods, however, suggest that this sense of safety is increasingly becoming fragile. While the city may still fare better than many others, evolving crime patterns, uneven policing, and everyday incivilities are reshaping how citizens experience safety in public spaces. Advocate Asim Sarode, a criminal and constitutional lawyer from Pune, practising at the Supreme Court and Bombay High Court, situates this shift in a longer historical context. In the late 1990s, Pune had around 28 active criminal gangs, largely engaged in petty crime. Over time, several gang leaders and associates entered politics, using power and patronage to legitimise themselves. "Now these gundas are no longer gundas but politicians," Sarode notes.

The consequences, he argues, are visible in today's crime landscape: offences are no longer confined to street-level violence but extend to cyber fraud, digital extortion, juvenile drug trafficking, and large-scale economic crimes linked to land and urban expansion. Rapid urbanisation has intensified land disputes, coercion, and unlawful conversions, particularly as land values soar. Yet, Sarode points to a deeper institutional failure. According to him, police responses often bypass due process and legal obligations, breeding mistrust. Decades of "sheltered corruption and hunger for power," he warns, have normalised violence and communal tensions to the point where sections of society have become desensitised to them. "The system is decaying from the inside, and that decay is beginning to shape public attitudes," he says.

Persistent uneaseOn the ground, residents articulate persistent unease. A 50-year-old member of the Deccan Gymkhana Parivar Samiti, who has lived in the area since childhood, still considers Pune safer than many cities. Yet daily risks loom large. Rampant disobedience towards traffic laws, especially at night, has become a major concern given the non-functional signals, drunken driving, speeding, and road rage. Public intoxication, he adds, often spills



into harassment and littering in residential spaces. While community groups regularly alert authorities, responses are slow. Still, he insists this is "not a lost cause" and places faith in better awareness and enforcement. For students and young migrants, safety is uneven and deeply mediated by identity. Abhinav Shah, a law student, feels secure within his hostel but acknowledges that this comfort is shaped by caste and religious privilege. He has observed both implicit and explicit communal hostility. He says, "Minor fights break out, and my friends from minority communities have faced discrimination. Pune feels pretty safe for me, but not equally for everyone."

Pratyancha Sinha, a Symbiosis student living in Viman Nagar, rates the area's safety a cautious 6.5 out of 10. While she feels safer than friends in cities like Delhi or Kolkata, incidents of catcalling and harassment are common, even in crowded areas. "It's fairly safe," she says, "but still scary as a non-local." Taken together, these voices point to a city at a crossroads. Pune is neither unsafe nor secure; unfortunately, it exists in a fragile middle ground merely sustained by habit and comparison. Safety, residents acknowledge, cannot rest on relative comfort alone. The challenge lies in recognising everyday vulnerabilities before they harden into something far more dangerous.

After chief secy's visit, Karnataka govt directs BIAL to resolve pickup, bus bay issues at Bengaluru airport in a week

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The Karnataka government has directed Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) to modify its controversial parking and pickup regulations at Kempegowda International Airport within a week, mandating that vehicles be allowed up to the arrival gates to reduce passenger hardship. The direction came after state Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, who is also the chairperson of BIAL, visited the airport on Friday. Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy had on Wednesday pulled up the airport officials over the inconvenience caused due to the new parking policy and reduction of the bus bays in Terminal 1.

Passengers and taxi drivers had complained about the new parking policy implemented at the airport in the last week of December as per which vehicle access was restricted at arrivals, forcing many passengers to walk with their luggage for over 800 metres to reach cabs. According to sources with the government, BIAL has been given a week's time to modify the existing rules. "BIAL has agreed to hold meetings with stakeholders and to allow passengers' private vehicles to be parked at P4. One can also come to the arrivals area to pick up the passengers," an officer said.

Rajneesh also directed the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) to resume the services of its helpdesk at T1 which was closed for renovation. Addressing concerns of yellow-board vehicle operators and taxi drivers, the chief secretary said the matter was discussed with instructions given to KSTDC to simplify the registration process. "I have spoken to both BIAL and the KSTDC managing director to bring parity for all service providers," she stated. However, the issue related to bus bays, which minister Reddy had highlighted, remains unsolved. Rajneesh has directed the BIAL CEO to hold a meeting with the managing director of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) to sort out the matter. According to BMTC data, there are 22 routes from the airport, on which 156 buses ply. It said the passenger count on these buses recently reduced to around 11,000 from 14,000 since the new policy was implemented last month. A BIAL spokesperson recently said that the bus bays were not removed but only shifted to Terminal 2. "The main bus bay has been shifted to Terminal 2 at the multi-level parking facility, where a larger bus bay/terminal has been



provided. The space at Terminal 1 currently functions only as a BMTC and KSRTC bus pick-up point, BIAL stated. At present, the T1 arrival gate has four pickup curbs with a total of 12 lanes. While each lane has the capacity to handle 30 vehicles every 90 seconds, the simultaneous arrival of over 100 vehicles leads to delays of up to 10 minutes. Measures have been initiated to address and mitigate this congestion. BIAL has agreed to introduce valet parking services for private vehicles in the P4 parking area, enabling vehicles to be brought to the arrival lane within four minutes. The timelines for this will be communicated later. BIAL said the existing P4 parking facility, which currently has a capacity of 1,000 vehicles, will be converted into a multi-level parking facility in the future. As per the guidelines of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, parking is prohibited within 100 metres of the arrival gate. The police department has been instructed to declare this area a 'No Honking Zone' and to take strict action against violators. Free access will continue for private (white-board) vehicles, while commercial (yellow-board) vehicles will be permitted only within designated zones. New standards for taxi and aggregator services Pickup points for aggregator services, including Namma Yatra and Rapido, have been shifted from P1 and P2 to the P4 area. Only vehicles that meet the prescribed safety and compliance standards—including mandatory police verification, RTO fitness certification, AIS-140 tracking, functional panic buttons, the Suraksha Mitra app, uniformed drivers, and clean vehicles—will be registered through KSTDC and allowed to park near the arrival gate. As many as 900 permits have already been issued, with provisions to issue more if required. Inter-terminal and parking shuttle buses will operate every five minutes.

'If passed, Karnataka will oppose it': Siddaramaiah warns Pinarayi Vijayan on Malayalam Language Bill



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has written to his Kerala counterpart, Pinarayi Vijayan, expressing "serious concern" over a proposed Malayalam Language Bill that would make Malayalam the compulsory first language even in Kannada-medium schools in border districts like Kasaragod. In a letter written on January 8, Siddaramaiah stated, "India's civilisational strength has always rested on plurality without fear. Languages in our country have flourished not through compulsion, but through mutual respect and organic coexistence. Border regions like Kasaragod are living examples of this ethos, where Malayalam, Kannada, Tulu, Beary and other languages have harmoniously shaped everyday life, education and identity for generations."

"For linguistic minority communities, language is not merely an academic choice; it is identity, dignity and access to opportunity. Any policy that compels a single linguistic pathway risks placing an undue burden on children, weakening minority-run educational institutions and unsettling long-standing educational ecosystems that have served these communities with trust and continuity," he added. Saying that the Constitution offers "unequivocal protection" to linguistic minorities, Siddaramaiah said, "Articles 29 and 30 guarantee the right to conserve language and administer educational institutions of choice. Article 350A mandates facilities for instruction in the mother tongue, and Article 350B entrusts the State with safeguarding minority linguistic interests. Any legislative measure must reflect not only constitutional legality, but constitutional morality."

Karnataka, Siddaramaiah added, took immense pride

Karnataka hands over New Year Day Ballari clash case to CID

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The Karnataka Government has transferred four cases in connection with the January 1 violent clashes that occurred in Ballari to the Crime Investigation Department (CID) unit of the state police. Clashes broke out outside the house of BJP MLA G Janardhan Reddy, over a banner dispute during a Valmiki community event, which resulted in the death of a Congress worker in a firing during the incident. Karnataka police chief Dr M A Saleem on Friday ordered the transfer of the cases registered at Brucepet police station "to CID for further investigation with immediate effect". The cases were registered based on the complaints by the relatives of the deceased worker Rajashekhar Reddy, local Congress leaders, the local police, and BJP MLA Janardhan Reddy.

"The Director General of Police, CID, Special Units and Economic Offences, Bengaluru, may please arrange to take up further investigation. After the completion of the investigation of the case, a detailed report may be sent to this office," read the order by the state police chief. In response to the development, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said on Saturday, "Let an investigation be done and let the truth come out."

Rajashekhar Reddy, 28, was killed in the January 1 firing that occurred near the house of G Janardhan Reddy, the BJP MLA for the Gangavathi region, after Congress and BJP supporters clashed over a Valmiki statue inauguration banner, outside the BJP MLA's house in the Havamabhi area of Ballari city. Based on medical evidence and the post-mortem report, senior police officers have indicated that the Congress worker was hit by a bullet from a private gun. The police have arrested Gursharan Singh, an armed bodyguard of a local Congress leader, Sathish Reddy, as he was seen wielding a shotgun and firing in videos of the clashes. As many as 35 others have also been arrested for the clashes.

According to preliminary investigations, there were three separate incidents of clashes that occurred on January 1 outside the house of Janardhan Reddy, which escalated over a period of around six hours. The first incident is reported to have occurred in the early evening hours of January 1, when Congress workers reportedly put up a banner outside Janardhan Reddy's house to announce the January 3 inauguration of a Valmiki statue at the city centre in Ballari.

Subsequently, it was reportedly removed by workers at the BJP MLA's house, which resulted in a second incident of clash in the evening, when Sathish Reddy — who is allied with Congress MLA of Ballari, Nara Bharath Reddy — arrived with his supporters and demanded that the banner be reinstated. As the second incident escalated with stone pelting and scuffling, Sathish Reddy's bodyguard is reported to have fired his personal weapon, and the bullet from it struck Congress worker Rajashekhar Reddy.

A third incident is reported to have occurred later in the night with the arrival of the Congress MLA Bharath Reddy

12-year-old Pune boy dies after falling through building duct; builders booked for negligence

12-year-old Pune boy dies after falling through building duct; builders booked for negligence. The police identified the boy as Shlok Nitin Bandal, a resident of Swara Classic building in Siddhivinayak Society. A 12-year-old boy died in Pune after he fell through the duct of an under-construction building's terrace in Ambegaon Khurd on Thursday evening. A day later, the police booked the builders on charges of negligence. The police identified the boy as Shlok Nitin Bandal, a resident of Swara Classic building in Siddhivinayak Society. Bandal went to the terrace of Sneh Sparsha Heights, a six-storey building located near Swara Classic, to fly kites. But he slipped and fell down the duct near the staircase on the terrace of the building, the police

said. There was no railing, barricading, or fencing around the duct, the police added.

"Sneha Sparsha Heights is a building under construction. Yet people are residing in the building till the fifth floor. Construction work of the sixth floor is yet to be completed," Assistant Police Inspector Bholing Dodmire, the investigation officer of the case, said.

After receiving the information, a team from Ambegaon police station rushed to the spot. On Friday, a First Information Report (FIR) was lodged against the builders of Sneh Sparsha Heights on charges of death by negligence, as per sections 106 (1) and 3 (5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

in Kannada, a language shaped by social reform, equality and inclusive thought. "At the same time, we have always upheld the principle that promotion of one's language must never become an imposition on another. This belief has guided our policies and our commitment to harmony," he further stated. The Karnataka chief minister called for the Kerala government to reconsider the Bill and conduct broader engagement on it as it would reinforce India's unity while preserving the dignity of every language and every citizen. "If this Bill is passed, Karnataka will oppose it by exercising every constitutional right available to us, in defence of linguistic minorities and the plural spirit of our Republic. This position flows not from confrontation, but from our duty to the Constitution and to the people whose voices must never be marginalised," Siddaramaiah stated. Incidentally, Karnataka currently has a policy for English and Kannada to be the first or second language for school students up to Class 10, but it is not enforced by law. 'Karnataka, a convenient ATM'

Siddaramaiah's letter to Vijayan comes amid criticism by the BJP that Congress leaders were in deference to the Kerala lobby in the Congress party and not protecting the interests of Kannada. "Now that Kannadigas are facing discrimination, threats to their language, and erosion of their rights, will @priyankagandhi stand with Kannadigas by opposing the Kerala Malayalam Language Bill-2025, which seeks to impose Malayalam as the first language even in Kannada-medium schools, affecting lakhs of Kannadigas in the border districts?" BJP leader of opposition in Karnataka, R Ashok, said on social media while referring to the Wayanad MP. "The Kerala lobby of @INCIndia continues to treat Karnataka like a convenient ATM and a political bargaining chip. Kannada pride, self-respect, and cultural identity are repeatedly compromised for Congress' political convenience," the BJP leader said. Earlier, Siddaramaiah had said on social media that the proposed Malayalam Language Bill, 2025, was an "attack on the freedom of language guaranteed by the Constitution". This came a day after the Karnataka Border Areas Development Authority (KBADA) petitioned Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, urging him to reconsider the legislation. The Bill enacted in October mandates Malayalam as the first language from Classes 1 to 10 in all government schools. This was expected to impact the Kannada-medium schools located in the border areas of Kerala, such as Kasaragod, with a sizable population of Kannada speakers.

Punjab cuts flood damage claim to Rs 11,855 crore in final report to NDMA



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Punjab cuts flood damage claim to Rs 11,855 crore in final report to NDMA. According to a Punjab government officer, the final assessment was carried out under the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) framework, which applies once a state is declared severely flood-affected. (file) Punjab has revised its flood damage assessment for the second time, reducing its final relief demand to Rs 11,855 crore, as the state government sent its final report to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) earlier this month.

The assessment has been scaled down from Rs 13,289 crore in the preliminary memorandum to Rs 12,905 crore in October 2025, and now to Rs 11,855 crore in January 2026 — a reduction of Rs 1,050 crore from the October estimate. According to a Punjab government officer, the final assessment was carried out under the Post Disaster

Needs Assessment (PDNA) framework, which applies once a state is declared severely flood-affected. "We took the assistance of IIT Roorkee. The damage has been calculated scientifically, and we are now seeking compensation for the actual losses suffered," the officer said.

The assessment was finalised after several central teams visited the flood-hit areas. The exercise had earlier triggered a political controversy after Union minister Shrihar Chouhan blamed illegal mining for causing floods in Punjab. Centre-state relations hit a new low when the Punjab government alleged that not a single rupee had been released by the Centre towards flood relief, while the Centre sought details of nearly Rs 12,000 crore lying in the state's disaster management fund. "The earlier memorandum was based on approximations. This report reflects actual damage, and the figures were finalised in agreement with the central teams," the officer said, adding that it took nearly three months to complete the report. The report sent to the NDMA seeks Rs 11,855.65 crore for rebuilding public infrastructure. This includes Rs 3,949 crore for road repairs, Rs 3,034 crore for agriculture and horticulture, Rs 2,077.61 crore for the Water Resources and Irrigation Department, Rs 1,137 crore for schools and colleges, and Rs 1,135 crore for hospitals and dispensaries. Additional allocations sought include Rs 149 crore for animal husbandry, Rs 37.20 crore for the power department's infrastructure, Rs 34.51 crore for fisheries, Rs 22.01 crore for water supply and sanitation, and Rs 3.6 crore for the forest and environment department. The state has also sought an additional Rs 274 crore under other heads

Pune citizens losing Rs 900 cr a month to traffic jams: Ajit Pawar bats for free public transport system

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Ajit Pawar said on Saturday that Pune citizens were losing Rs 900 crore every month due to traffic chaos in the city, and this could only be stopped by providing a free public transport system. "Everyone must be surprised how free public transport service is being promised. It is possible, and I have planned it with consultation from field experts," he said. "There are 30 lakh private vehicles in the city, and considering that 15 lakh of them are on the road every day. A traffic jam leads to an hour of travel for every citizen every day, which means half a litre of fuel is consumed, which is Rs 50 per day for each vehicle," he explained. For 30 days, this fuel expense loss is Rs 7.5 crore per day, and the loss of one man-hour is a loss of Rs 250 per person, which amounts to a loss of Rs 22.5 crore per day. It means Rs 30 crore per day of citizens' money is lost due to travel in traffic, which amounts to Rs 900 crore per month and Rs 12,800 crore in a year," Pawar further elaborated.

Pawar's remarks were made at an event where the NCP and the NCP(S) jointly unveiled their manifesto for the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) election, scheduled for January 15. After discussions with Pune Metro and Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Limited (PMPML), the free service will require payments of ?5 crore and ?20 crore to each, respectively, every month, Pawar said. "The total of ?25 crore per month and ?300 crore annually funded by the civic body for Metro and PMPML is affordable, considering the budgets of ?12,600 crore for PMC and ?9,600 crore



for Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation," he added. Pawar said that, just as the Ladki Bahin and free power schemes for farmers are manageable at the state level, a free bus service in Pune is possible by strengthening PMPML operations and improving Metro services. "It has additional benefits, as free service would discourage the use of private vehicles, helping to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, while saving public money and conserving natural resources. This scheme has already been successfully implemented in Luxembourg, Estonia, and some cities across the United States and France," Pawar added. NCP(S) working president Supriya Sule said the traffic issue is the biggest concern of the city and last-mile connectivity is important for ensuring maximum use of Metro rail, which would be handled efficiently by the NCP and NCP(S). "The plan for an effective public transport system is ready," she said.

UP voters can now 'Book-a-Call with a BLO' for electoral roll updates. Here's how it works



within 48 hours.

UP Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Navdeep Rinwa has appealed to voters to make maximum use of the facility for queries related to the SIR exercise and the electoral roll.

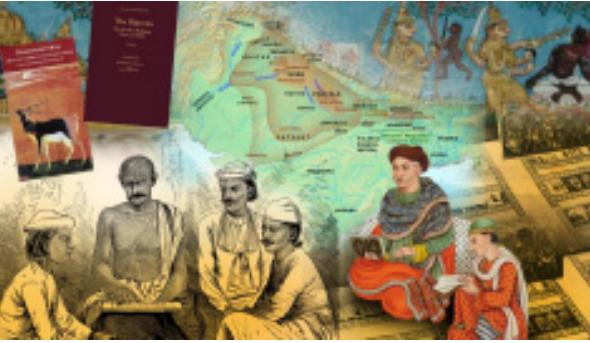
Claims and objections received in the draft electoral roll, the total number of electors in the state decreased by nearly 19%, from 15.44 crore to 12.55 crore — 14.06% deletions are on account of electors being declared absent or shifted, 1.65% enrolled at multiple places and 2.99% deceased. Of the 12.55 crore voters on the draft list, 1.04 crore will receive notices as their mapping has not been completed, Rinwa had said. According to the SIR daily bulletin issued by the UP CEO, the claims and objections period under the SIR is open from January 6 to February 6. Eligible voters may submit claims for inclusion and objections for deletion of names from the draft electoral rolls by following the prescribed procedures. The bulletin noted that political parties have appointed Booth-Level Agents (BLAs) to collect claims (Form 6) and objections (Form 7) from the public and submit them with the required declarations. As per the bulletin, 1,334 claims and objections were received from national and state parties against the draft electoral roll. Till Friday, among national parties, the ruling-BJP had submitted the highest claims — 1,214 — for inclusion of names in the electoral roll. The main opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) filed 82 claims and objections. The Congress and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have filed 19 each; these claims are for inclusion of names in the electoral roll. No party has so far filed any claim or objection for exclusion of voters. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), CPI(M) and Apna Dal (S), which are active in UP and have deployed their BLAs for the SIR, have not submitted a single claim or objection so far. The bulletin said after the publication of the draft rolls, 32,290 claims and objections were also received directly from electors for inclusion.

Jadumani Singh sets up final clash with Pawan Bartwal at National Boxing Championships

Hyderabad: Boxing World Cup Finals silver medallist Jadumani Singh dominated 2022 Commonwealth Games gold medallist Amit Panghal in the semi-finals of the men's 50-55kg category to set up a summit clash against Pawan Bartwal in the Elite Men and Women National Boxing Championships at Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, on Friday. This is the first time that the men's and women's National Championships are being held simultaneously at the same venue, with 600 boxers from across the country participating in 10 weight categories each. In the semi-finals, Jadumani registered a dominant 5:0 win over Amit, while Pawan scored an identical win over Victor Singh of

Manipur. Meanwhile, world champion Minakshi (women's 45-48kg) of All India Police defeated Madhya Pradesh's Malika Mor 5:0, while Nikhat (48-51kg) won her semi-final with a 4:1 split decision against UP's Kusum Baghel. Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain also advanced to the final of the women's 70-75kg category, beating Imroz Khan of Uttar Pradesh 5:0, while Preeti (51-54kg) outclassed Uttarakhand's Aarti Dhariyal 5:0 to reach the final. In the men's section, Sachin (55-60kg) defeated Punjab's Bhupinder Singh, while Rajasthan's Vivek was no match for Hitesh Gulia (65-70kg).

Homo Opportunisticus: the making of caste



The origin of the caste system does not lie in religious ideas of purity and pollution, racial differences, tribal or Harappan customs — or even the British census, as recent social media commentary would suggest. It lies in ancient political contingencies and economic circumstances. The earliest mention of a four-tiered hierarchy occurs in the Purusha Sukta of the Rigveda. But it is commonly accepted that this is a late book, and that the Purusha Sukta is a later insertion. There is no mention of the shudra in the Rigveda outside of the Purusha Sukta. There are only doubtful and rare occurrences of even 'brahmana' as a social category. Therefore, one can agree with Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton in their 2014 translation of The Rigveda, that in the earliest religious poetry of India, the caste system is embryonic. But how did that embryo come to be? Studies by scholars Michael Witzel (The Realm of the Kuru) and Thennilapuram Mahadevan (The Rsi Index of the Vedic Anukramani System and Pravara Lists: Toward a Prehistory of the Brahmins) provide the keenest insight.

To recount Witzel's arguments briefly, the tribe of the Kurus became predominant after the Battle of the Ten Kings or Dasraja mentioned in the Rigveda. After the battle, the "geographical centre of the Vedic civilization" moved eastwards from Punjab to Kurukshtetra, the land lying between rivers Sarasvati and Drishadvati, about 175 kilometres northwest of New Delhi. (This region would later come to be subsumed under the term Aryavarta, defined as being the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhya, and to the east of where river Saraswati disappears and west of the Kalaka forest, which is supposed to have been at the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna.) As they consolidated their power, the Kurus felt the need for a unified canon, drawing on the sacrificial hymns of their own tribe as well as defeated tribes. The last hymn of the Rigveda is about unity. It says: "Come together, speak together; together let your thoughts agree..."

Until this happened, around 1000 BCE, writes Witzel, "the Rigvedic hymns were held as 'personal or clan property'". When a common canon was made out of these collections, writes Mahadevan, the families that were once in charge of their own hymnal traditions became the backbone of a 'pan-Vedic agency to sing a pan-Vedic corpus'. There being no writing at this time, they were now an 'oral agency' carrying forward a common tradition, now 'bound into a biological body' through new rules regulating marriages among them.

The first 'caste' takes shape. As Mahadevan tells it, each of those who had a collection of family songs was now called a gotra. The new rules were that marriages must not occur within the same gotra (exogamy), but must occur within the 50-odd gotras (endogamy), thus creating 'One, Out of Many', 'the caste' of Brahmins'. The brahmanas are thus the first and perhaps the only real 'varna/caste' to be formed at a particular time and place, with enormous implications for the future.

The 'ksatriya' or the warrior/ruler caste will be mostly decided de facto: those who manage to get and keep power are regarded as ksatriyas. Historian D.D. Kosambi once wrote: "Don't be misled by the Indian Ksatriya caste, which was often not a Brahmanical fiction." Those who do not fall into either of these categories are considered 'vaisyas' or common folk — the residual category of the Arya community. In the following centuries, those who were outside the Arya culture, but served the Arya as domestic workers or as farm labourers, were accommodated within the system as low-status 'shudra'. Those who were outside of all four categories, such as the tribes who lived in the forests, were regarded as 'outcastes'. But this fully fleshed-out varna-jati system will take time to develop, being dependent on the speed with which agriculture and, therefore, the need to engage non-family labour, took off.

Many things follow from this. One, the caste system did not arise out of a purity-pollution cline; nowhere in the Rigveda or other samritis is it suggested that there is a hierarchy of purity among the brahmanas, rajanya and the vis or vaisyas. Two, it did not arise out of differences in eating habits; the idea of vegetarianism originated centuries later with the ascetic sramana traditions such as Jainism

and Buddhism in Greater Magadha, which lies to the east of Aryavarta. Three, it had little to do with race or ethnicity to begin with; the three varnas were all considered Arya. Four, the idea of a varna system did not spread from a pre-Aryan or Harappan Civilization. And five, it was not brought to India by the Steppe pastoralists, who called themselves Arya. It was made in India, and ideas such as purity and pollution were justificatory accruals that occurred centuries later. Varanasi was important for those on both sides of the debate over varna: brahmanas and sramanas. Varanasi was important for those on both sides of the debate over varna: brahmanas and sramanas | Photo Credit: Getty Images

The trigger for the beginning of the caste system was the need of a victorious kingdom to have a unified religion and a priesthood to administer it. The best model that fits this evidence is that of a universal 'Homo Opportunisticus', and not an Indian 'Homo Hierarchicus' which, according to sociologist Louis Dumont, represents a cultural predilection for hierarchy. Given the opportunity, political and economic man will create a system of belief and along with it, a social system, to perpetuate his status and power. What began as an embryonic scheme in the Rigveda bloomed into a full-fledged system in the later brahmana texts when settled agriculture began to take off. These texts elevated the four-fold hierarchy from the world of mortals to the universe itself. Gods, animals, hymns, seasons, were all mapped into the varna system so that, as professor Brian K. Smith wrote in his book *Classifying the Universe* (1994): "...certain humans could present what was an arbitrary social status or status claim as natural and sacred..."

The next step in the evolution of caste happened in the context of a vigorous resistance to it from the sramanic religions. Buddhism and Jainism refused to acknowledge the authority of the Vedas, condemned animal sacrifices and accepted into their monastic orders people from all classes. Emperor Asoka's espousal of the cause of 'dharma', without mentioning varna, queered the pitch further. In response, newly composed Dharmasutra and Dharmashastra that lay down the rules of conduct for members of the Brahmanical society restated the varna ideology with vigour and patterned it into every nook and corner of Arya custom, from the cradle to the pyre. Manusmriti (or Manava Dharmashastra) was only one of many similar texts written around the beginning of the Common Era.

But when these texts were being written, the varna hierarchy was far from commonly accepted. Buddhism, especially, was experiencing the kind of expansion never before seen, riding a wave of prosperity caused by booming trade. But this would change when, between 235 CE and 284 CE, the Roman Empire was hit by a crisis that almost brought it down, the Kusana empire started disintegrating, and world trade was disrupted.

The next source of prosperity, however, was already evident: the deepening and widening of agriculture across the subcontinent. This could only happen if millions of people were drawn into the agricultural system as labourers, especially as farm settlements moved into the lands of forest-dwelling or semi-nomadic groups. And this was a humongous task, which the dozens of new kingdoms that came into being took on eagerly from around the middle of the first millennium CE. In this task, they found the social framework based on a hereditary hierarchy useful.

To implement the new system — and to lend it legitimacy — many kings, including those professing Buddhist or Jaina faith, invited brahmanas from Aryavarta to come and settle in their kingdoms on lands granted to them. Following this, the varna-jati system, whose two core principles are (a) an alliance between the ruling and priestly powers, and (b) an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt as Ambedkar put it, spread to the rest of the subcontinent through agro-temple-state formations in the first millennium CE.

This will shape many social attitudes, perhaps leading sociologist Dumont to think up the concept of Homo Hierarchicus in 1966, but without paying attention to the long resistance against it and the way it was shaped by political and economic contingencies. Thirty-five years later, anthropologist Nicholas Dirks would publish another last-mile snapshot of caste in his book *Castes of Mind*, but without paying attention to the step-by-step evolution and geographical expansion of caste. What we know now is that caste was historically contingent in its origins and socially contested throughout its history and eventually gave rise, in the 20th century, to Ambedkar's call to 'annihilate' it. The full text of his guest lecture at the Indian History Congress on December 28, 2025 titled 'Homo Opportunisticus: The Contingent, Contested Evolution of Caste' is available here. NB: This article does not make a hard distinction between varna and jati because in the ancient texts we are dealing with, there is no indication that the two were treated as different systems.

Kurdish fighters refuse to leave Syria's Aleppo after truce



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The violence killed 21 people and was the latest challenge for a country still struggling to forge a new path after Islamist authorities ousted long-time ruler Bashar al-Assad just over a year ago. It also forced around 30,000 families to flee their homes, according to the U.N. Both sides traded blame over who started the fighting, which came as they struggled to implement a deal to merge the Kurds' administration and military into the country's new government.

On Friday (January 9, 2026), the Defence Ministry announced a ceasefire in the fighting with the SDF, which controls swathes of Syria's oil-rich north and northeast, and was key to the defeat of the Islamic State group in 2019. "To prevent any slide towards a new military escalation within residential neighbourhoods, the Ministry of Defence announces ... a ceasefire in the vicinity of the Sheikh Maqsud, Ashrafiyah and Bani Zeid neighbourhoods of Aleppo, effective from 3:00 a.m.," the Ministry wrote in a statement.

Kurdish fighters were given until 9:00 a.m. Friday (January 9, 2026) to leave the three neighbourhoods, while the Aleppo governorate said the fighters would be sent, along with their light weapons, to Kurdish areas further east. Hours later, the local councils of Sheikh Maqsud and Ashrafiyah said the Kurdish fighters would not leave. "We have decided to remain in our districts and defend them," the statement said, rejecting any "surrender". An AFP photographer located on the edge of Ashrafiyah saw members of the security forces enter the area, as well as vehicles that appeared to

put pressure on each other and rally international support," he said. He warned that if the hostilities spiral, "a full Damascus-SDF conflict across northern Syria, potentially with Turkish and Israeli involvement, could be devastating for Syria's stability". Israel and Turkey have been vying for influence in Syria since Assad was toppled in December 2024. In Qamishli in the Kurdish-held northeast, hundreds of people have protested the Aleppo violence. "We call on the international community to intervene," said protester Salaheddin Sheikmous, 61, while others held banners reading "no to war" and "no to ethnic cleansing".

Syria announces ceasefire after days of clashes with Kurdish fighters in Aleppo



Syria's Defense Ministry announced a ceasefire on Friday (January 9, 2026) after three days of clashes between government forces and Kurdish fighters in the northern city of Aleppo that displaced tens of thousands of people. The statement said the ceasefire was effective at 3 a.m. in the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsud, Achrafiyah and Bani Zeid and gave armed groups six hours to leave the area.

It said departing militants would be allowed to carry their "personal light weapons" and would be provided with an escort to the country's northeast, which is controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. Aleppo Governor Azzam al-Gharib toured the contested neighbourhoods with an escort of security forces overnight.

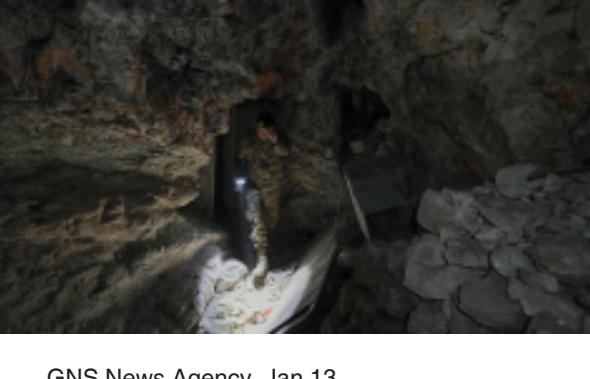
There was no immediate public response from the SDF, and it was not clear if Kurdish forces in Aleppo had agreed to the deal. U.S. envoy to Syria Tom Barrack welcomed the announcement in a statement on X and extended "profound gratitude to all parties — the Syrian Government, the Syrian Democratic Forces, local authorities, and community leaders — for the restraint and goodwill that made this vital pause possible." Mr. Barrack said the U.S. was working with the parties to extend the ceasefire beyond the six-hour deadline. Some 142,000 people have been displaced by the fighting, which broke out on Tuesday (January 6) with exchanges of shelling and drone strikes.

Each side has accused the other of starting the violence and of deliberately targeting civilian neighbourhoods and infrastructure, including ambulance crews and hospitals. Kurdish forces said at least 12 civilians were killed in the Kurdish-majority neighbourhoods, while government officials reported at least nine civilians were killed in the surrounding government-controlled areas in the fighting. Dozens more on both sides have been wounded. It was not clear how many fighters were killed on each side. The clashes come amid an impasse in political negotiations between the central State and the SDF. The leadership in Damascus under interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa had signed a deal in March last year with the SDF, which controls much of the northeast, for it to merge with the Syrian army by the end of 2025. There have been disagreements on how it would happen.

Some of the factions that make up the new Syrian army, formed after the fall of former President Bashar Assad in a rebel offensive in December 2024, were previously Turkey-backed insurgent groups that have a long history of clashing with Kurdish forces. The SDF has for years been the main U.S. partner in Syria in fighting against the Islamic State group, but Turkey considers the SDF a terrorist organisation because of its association with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has waged a long-running insurgency in Turkey. A peace process is now underway. Despite the long-running U.S. support for the SDF, the Trump administration in the U.S. has also developed close ties with al-Sharaa's government and has pushed the Kurds to implement the March deal. U.S. welcomes ceasefire

Mr. Barrack on Friday (January 9) welcomed a ceasefire in the city of Aleppo after days of deadly fighting between the army and Kurdish fighters forced thousands of civilians to flee. "The United States warmly welcomes the temporary ceasefire achieved last night in Aleppo's Ashrafiyah and Sheikh Maqsoud neighbourhoods and extends profound gratitude to all parties — the Syrian government, the Syrian Democratic Forces, local authorities, and community leaders -- for the restraint and goodwill that made this vital pause possible," Mr. Barrack wrote on X.

Lebanese military moves to new phase of disarming non-state groups like Hezbollah



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

The Lebanese military said on Thursday (January 8, 2026) it had concluded the first phase of its plan to fully deploy across southern Lebanon and disarm non-state groups, notably Hezbollah. Israel said it is encouraging but "far from sufficient." The effort to disarm Hezbollah comes after a Washington-brokered ceasefire ended a war between the group and Israel in 2024. The military's statement didn't name Hezbollah or other armed groups in particular, but it comes before President Joseph Aoun is set to meet with Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and his government to discuss the deployment and disarmament plans. Both said disarming non-state groups was a priority upon beginning their terms, not long after the ceasefire went into effect. Lebanon's top officials have endorsed the military's announcement. A statement by Mr. Aoun's office ahead of the meeting called on Israel to stop its attacks, withdraw from areas it occupies, and release Lebanese prisoners. He called on friendly countries not to send weapons to Lebanon unless it's to state institutions — an apparent reference to Iran, which for decades has sent weapons and munitions to Hezbollah.

Speaker Nabih Berri, a key ally of Hezbollah who played a leading role in ceasefire talks, issued a statement saying the people of southern Lebanon are "thirsty for the army's presence and protection." Israel maintains that despite Lebanon's efforts, Hezbollah is still attempting to re-arm itself in southern Lebanon. "The ceasefire agreement brokered by the United States between Israel and Lebanon states clearly, Hezbollah must be fully disarmed," a statement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office read. "This is imperative for Israel's security and Lebanon's future." Military says disarmament plan is in an advanced stage.

The text of the ceasefire agreement is vague as to how Hezbollah's weapons and military facilities north of the Litani river should be treated, saying Lebanese authorities should dismantle unauthorised facilities, starting with the area south of the river. Hezbollah insists that the agreement only applies south of the Litani, while Israel maintains that it applies to the whole country. The Lebanese government has said it will eventually remove non-state weapons throughout the country. The Lebanese military has been clearing tunnels, rocket-launching positions, and other structures since its disarmament proposal was approved by the government and went into effect in September. The government had set a deadline of the end of 2025 to clear the area south of the Litani River of non-state weapons. "The army confirms that its plan to restrict weapons has entered an advanced stage, after achieving the goals of the first phase effectively and tangibly on the ground," the military statement read. "Work in the sector is ongoing until the unexploded ordnance and tunnels are cleared ... with the aim of preventing armed groups from irreversibly rebuilding their capabilities," it said. Hezbollah did not immediately comment on the Lebanese military's announcement. Officials have said the next stage of the disarmament plan is in segments of southern Lebanon between

the Litani and the Awali River, which include Lebanon's port city of Sidon, but they have not set a timeline for that phase. Israeli strikes continue. Israel still strikes Lebanon daily and occupies five strategic hilltop points along the border, the only areas south of the Litani where the military said it has yet to control. Regular meetings have taken place between the Lebanese and the Israelis alongside the United States, France, and the UN peacekeeping forces in southern Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, to monitor developments after the ceasefire. Lebanon's cash-strapped military has since been gradually dispersing across wide areas of southern Lebanon between the Litani River and the UN-demarcated "Blue Line" that separates the tiny country from Israel. The military has also been slowly confiscating weapons from armed Palestinian factions in refugee camps. Israel accuses Hezbollah of trying to rebuild its battered military capacity and has said that the Lebanese military's efforts are not sufficient, raising fears of a new escalation. Lebanon

meanwhile, said Israel's strikes and control of the hilltops were an obstacle to the efforts. Lebanon also hopes that disarming Hezbollah and other non-state groups will help to bring in money needed for reconstruction after the 2024 war. Hezbollah says it has been cooperative with the army in the south but will not discuss disarming elsewhere before Israel stops its strikes and withdraws from Lebanon's territory. The latest Israel-Hezbollah conflict began the day after the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas-led attack on Israel, which triggered the war in Gaza. The militant group Hezbollah, largely based in southern Lebanon, began firing rockets into Israel in support of Hamas and the Palestinians. Israel responded with airstrikes and shelling. The low-level conflict escalated into full-scale war in September 2024. Israeli strikes killed much of Hezbollah's senior leadership and left the group severely weakened. Hezbollah still has political clout, holding a large number of seats in parliament representing the Shiite Muslim community and two Cabinet Ministers.

Google rolls out Gemini-powered AI Inbox, new smart features for Gmail users

New Delhi: Google has announced to introduce new Gemini-powered experiences, including AI Inbox, for more helpful and personalised insights for its users. The new capabilities have started rolling out in the US to Gmail users as well as Google AI Pro and Ultra subscribers, said the company. "We're starting with English and excited to roll out more languages and to more regions in the coming months," said Blake Barnes, VP Product, Gmail, in a blog post. AI Inbox is like having a personalised briefing, highlighting to-dos and catching you up on what matters.

"It helps you prioritise, identifying your VIPs based on signals like people you email frequently, those in your contacts list and relationships it can infer from message content. Crucially, this analysis happens securely with the privacy protections you expect from Google, keeping your data under your control," said Barnes. "We're giving trusted testers access to AI Inbox before making it more broadly available in the coming months," he added. Just like Google Search, AI Overviews turn information into answers without the digging.

Akon to A P Dhillon: Delhi gears up for 30 mega shows in 80 days, targets 3,000-crore windfall



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Featuring pop sensations such as Akon, AP Dhillon, and Papon, and stand-up comics such as Anubhav Singh Bassi, and Zakir Khan, Delhi is gearing up to host 30 major entertainment and music concerts over the next three months. The events, scheduled from October 18 are expected to generate Rs 3,000 crore in revenue, said officials. This comes after the Sports Authority of India (SAI) last month reduced the booking fees for major stadiums like Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) and Indira Gandhi Stadium.

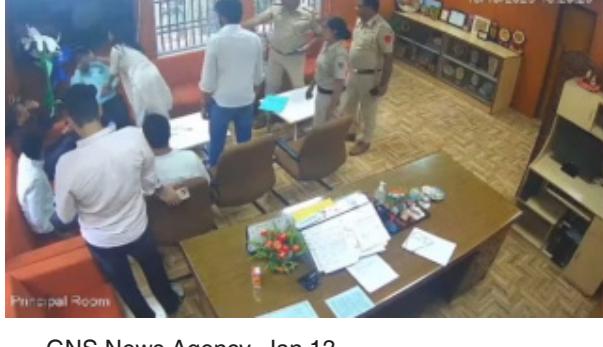
The city is no longer just the national capital but is rapidly evolving into India's "Creative Capital", Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Thursday while addressing a press conference. Amid efforts to make Delhi an "event-friendly city," Gupta said, the rental rates for major stadiums and auditoriums have been significantly reduced, and these venues are being upgraded to meet international standards. Tourism Minister Kapil Mishra, also present at the press conference, highlighted that one of the major barriers to hosting large events in Delhi was the high rental cost of venues. "Realising that the Capital was losing potential revenue, we proposed to the Centre to reduce the tariff rates of major stadiums in Delhi. After several rounds of meetings, the SAI revised the booking charges last month," Mishra said. The booking charges for the JLN main arena for non-sports events have been reduced from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 25 lakh per day, while the price for IG Stadium has been revised from Rs 20 lakh (including electricity and other consumption charges) to Rs 16 lakh, officials

confirmed. "Travis Scott had previously cancelled his events in Delhi due to high rental charges. However, following the revised rates, he has rebooked and will perform on October 18 and 19 at JLN," Mishra noted.

Gupta also acknowledged the challenges faced by the city's entertainment economy. "There was a time when organisers hesitated to hold large concerts and events in Delhi due to inadequate facilities and lack of institutional support. Recognising this, the government has taken a significant step to reduce the tariff rates of all major stadiums under both the Central and Delhi governments, and to upgrade their facilities to international standards," she said. She emphasised that the "concert economy" is a vital economic sector for states and deserves serious attention. Highlighting that India's live entertainment industry is currently valued at around Rs 150 billion, Gupta said Delhi is projecting revenue of Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000 crore in the coming years. Commenting on revenue targets, Mishra said, "We will actively promote these events. Our target is Rs 3,000 crore in revenue from these concerts. People currently travel to other cities for such experiences, but now they won't have to. Instead, people from other states will come to Delhi, boosting the city's revenue through GST on tickets, food, accommodation, and more." Mishra added that Delhi began to re-emerge as a hub for grand, large-scale events as soon as the decision to reduce booking prices was implemented.

"This is just the beginning. The Delhi government has a broader roadmap that will bring Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision and the CM's farsighted plan to life," he said. He added that the roadmap will elevate Delhi's standing in the fields of art, culture, language, and tourism. To ensure smooth organisation of these events, Gupta also announced the introduction of a single-window system for event permissions, logistics, and security processes, aimed at further promoting the city's live entertainment industry. The initiative is being jointly undertaken by the Delhi government, the Event and Entertainment Management Association (EEEMA), and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), to ensure that these events maintain high standards, run efficiently without administrative or logistical hurdles, and offer complete enjoyment to the audience, the CM said.

DU students' union joint secretary slaps professor, teachers demand university-level probe



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

A disciplinary committee convener and faculty member at Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar College of Delhi University was allegedly slapped by Deepika Jha, the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) Joint Secretary and an Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) leader, inside the Principal's office on Thursday afternoon. Following the incident, which has triggered a huge row, the faculty member, Professor Sunil Kumar, resigned from the committee as other members demanded a university-level inquiry. Even as Jha apologised to "the entire teaching community" in a statement later, she alleged that Kumar had misbehaved with her — the professor, however, rejected the claims. Around 50 students, the Democratic Teachers' Front (DTF) alleged, entered the college along with DUSU President Aryan Maan and Joint Secretary and "mistrated teachers and demanded the resignation of the disciplinary committee convener." The DTF said, "The Joint Secretary slapped Professor Sujit Kumar in the Principal's office, CCTV footage of which is available." Condemning Jha's action, the DTF warned, "... This mobocracy and hooliganism mentality must be stopped immediately, otherwise DU will be plunged into violence."

Speaking to The Indian Express, Professor Sujit Kumar, who heads the disciplinary committee, said, "I only

took action against an ABVP candidate because he was misbehaving with an NSUI candidate... I was not favouring a particular party. I think that is what bothered the ABVP members who slapped me today." He said the incident took place around 4 pm in the Principal's room. "I was slapped by the DUSU Joint Secretary. I was also asked to resign from my position... Action needs to be taken against such students who misbehave with teachers or else it will become very difficult for teachers to teach," he said, adding that no such incident had occurred in his 30 years in the college. A purported video shows that the incident occurred in the presence of police officers. "A complaint has been received. The matter is being enquired, accordingly action will be taken," said an officer. Meanwhile, Jha claimed that she was called by students who complained of "politically motivated abuse and assault" by the professor. "In the Principal's room, in the presence of police, Professor Sujit threatened and abused me. I complained to the police, but the police officers present took no action," she said. She alleged that the Professor "had come to the college in an inebriated state" and that his "repeated threats, staring at me, and making indecent remarks made me feel unsafe". "Consequently, in a fit of rage, I resorted to assaulting him. I regret this incident and apologise to the entire teaching community... My intention was not to hurt the sentiments of the teaching community, but I am concerned about the safety of female students on the campus." In a statement, the NSUI called the incident "ABVP-led DUSU hooliganism" and said no action had been taken despite CCTV evidence. "Jha slapped a senior professor inside the principal's office — in the presence of Delhi Police personnel. Disturbingly, the DUSU President was also present during this act of hooliganism," it said. NSUI National President Varun Choudhary stated, "This act of violence... is not just an attack on a professor but on the dignity of the entire academic fraternity... The silence of the administration and Delhi police shows the political pressure exerted by the BJP." NSUI demanded the "immediate arrest of all those involved, including the DUSU Joint Secretary and President."

No early release for Priyadarshini Mattoo's killer

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

1996 Priyadarshini Mattoo rape murder, IPS officer son rapist Santosh Kumar Singh, Delhi University student Mattoo rape murder, Sentence Review Board, Hemant Mattoo. After the Delhi High Court had referred the case to the SRB in July, Mattoo's Canada-based brother Hemant too had raised an objection against the decision. The Sentence Review Board (SRB) on Thursday rejected the plea of Santosh Kumar Singh, convicted in the 1996 Priyadarshini Mattoo rape-murder case, for an early release. The Indian Express has learnt. Mattoo, a Delhi University law student, was raped and killed by her senior Santosh Kumar Singh in 1996. Even as a lower court had acquitted him in 1999 for lack of evidence, despite the judge saying that he was guilty, the Delhi High Court awarded him the death penalty in 2006.

The Supreme Court in 2010, however, had commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment. Nearly three decades later, on July 1, the Delhi High Court directed the Sentence Review Board to consider afresh Singh's case for premature release. Holding the SRB's decision to deny Santosh, along with two other prisoners, premature release as suffering from "material procedural and legal infirmities", the HC highlighted several lacunae in the current process undertaken by the board while deciding applications for early release of prisoners. Government sources confirmed the latest development. On July 27, a delegation from the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), an organisation that voices the issues of Kashmiri Pandits, met Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood, objecting to Singh's premature release. Welcoming the decision, Ravinder Pandita, President, AIKS, on Thursday said, "We are happy that the government has rejected the plea. It was a heinous crime, which doesn't deserve anything less than a capital punishment. The judiciary and other agencies involved should take suo motu cognisance



Mattoo, a Delhi University law student, was raped and killed by her senior Santosh Kumar Singh in 1996. Even as a lower court had acquitted him in 1999 for lack of evidence, despite the judge saying that he was guilty

and reconsider their decision of life imprisonment. "After the Delhi High Court had referred the case to the SRB in July, Mattoo's Canada-based brother Hemant too had raised an objection against the decision. Speaking to The Indian Express, he had said, "I want to know what signs of reformation he has shown. Has he apologised to my family? Has he apologised to his own family? He's never even approached us. He still maintains his innocence."

On January 23, 1996, while Priyadarshini was alone at home, Santosh was seen by a neighbour entering her house in the evening. She was later found lying under her bed, with a room heater's cord wrapped around her neck — she had been brutally raped and murdered. Singh, an IPS officer's son, had been pursuing her relentlessly in the months leading up to her death.

Why has Noida been seeing a sharper spike in pollution during evenings?



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Noida pollution, Noida spike in pollution, Central Pollution Control Board, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast mist and haze in the mornings for the next two days, with the overall AQI expected to stay in the 'poor' or 'very poor' range across Delhi-NCR over the weekend. Even as Delhi's air quality slipped into the 'poor' category on Thursday, Noida has been recording sharper, late-evening surges in PM2.5 levels, pointing to a possible rise in local emissions from traffic and early use of firecrackers, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and air-quality analysts.

Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) stood at 245 ('poor') on Thursday, up from 233 a day earlier. In comparison, Noida recorded 288 ('very poor') and Greater Noida 272, while Ghaziabad remained in the 'very poor' category at 307. A day earlier, Noida had recorded the highest pollution levels in the country at 318 ('very poor'). The pollution build-up in Noida has been peaking between 7 pm and midnight — a pattern distinct from Delhi where spikes tend to occur later at night. "If this was due to stubble burning, Delhi would have seen similar spikes, which it hasn't," said Sunil

Dahiya, lead analyst and founder of Envirocatalysts. "The timings of these peaks overlap with traffic congestion and bursting of firecrackers, suggesting strong local contributions." Calm winds and rising humidity have further trapped pollutants near the surface. Within Noida, Sector 125 and Sector 116 witnessed the highest spikes. The pattern has been evident at least for four days now. On October 13, PM2.5 in Sector 125 rose from 68 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at 5 pm to 247 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 8 pm — a spike, Dahiya said, cannot be explained by meteorological conditions alone. Dahiya added that the intensity and timing of the peaks indicate a mix of vehicular emissions and local celebratory activity, with morning spikes between 7 and 9 am likely linked to commuter traffic. Stubble burning woes. Meanwhile, even as local emissions remain a dominant factor, stubble burning has also begun to rise across neighbouring states.

A total of 889 burning events were detected in six states between September 15 and October 16, according to data from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI). Of these, Uttar Pradesh accounted for the highest share, with 403 fires, followed by Punjab (188), Madhya Pradesh (171), Rajasthan (96), Haryana (28), and Delhi (3). Govt launches winter action plan. Six new Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) will be operational in Delhi by March 2026 as part of the Delhi government's Winter Action Plan 2025-26, launched Wednesday that comprises 25 targeted measures under seven themes, including road dust, vehicular emissions, industry and power, waste and open burning, agricultural residue, citizen engagement, and innovation. Steps include use of Green Delhi App, real-time monitoring in green war room, use of mechanical road sweepers, water sprinklers and anti-smog guns, 578 enforcement teams from Transport department checking PUC norms for vehicular emissions control. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast mist and haze in the mornings for the next two days, with the overall AQI expected to stay in the 'poor' or 'very poor' range across Delhi-NCR over the weekend.

In pre-SIR exercise in 7 Bengal districts, nearly 50% names not in benchmark 2002 voters' list



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Before kickstarting the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound West Bengal, the Election Commission (EC) has started comparing this year's voters' list with that of 2002, when the last revision exercise was conducted in the state. This process of "matching-mapping" is being done by the EC in every electoral district of the state. Sources in the EC said that so far, it has completed matching-mapping in seven districts and found that 40% to 45% names in the 2025 list were not matching with the 2002 list. In Jhargram district, only 51.36% of the names in the two voters' lists matched — the lowest among the seven districts — whereas in the hill district of Kalimpong, the matching was the highest at 65.27%. In Alipurduar, it was 53.73%, Kolkata North 55.35%, Malda 54.49%, Purulia 61.29%, and Midnapore 62.94%.

"The big and highly populated districts are in South and North 24 Parganas, Kolkata South, and Nadia. In these

four districts, we will have to see what percentage of the data will match. That will be significant," a senior EC official said. In Bihar, the only state where the SIR has been conducted so far, the latest voter list was compared to the 2003 list, when the revision exercise was last carried out there. All those who did not figure in the 2003 list were required to submit a list of documents for enrolment, which is likely to be implemented in Bengal too. Deputy Election Commissioner Gyanesh Bharati, who visited West Bengal after the Durga Puja to take stock of the preparations for the SIR, had directed all the district magistrates to complete the matching-mapping process by October 15. However, only seven districts have been able to complete the exercise. A string of festivals in the state has put a temporary halt to the process, and the SIR of electoral rolls will now most likely begin in November, sources in the EC said. The EC's decision to halt the SIR this month comes days after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had questioned the "haste shown" by the EC in conducting the exercise even as the state was celebrating a string of festivals. She had also accused the poll panel of acting like a "rubber stamp" of the BJP. After concluding his two-day visit to the state, Deputy Election Commissioner Bharti had expressed concern over the pace of work and questioned the district administration's justification for Puja holidays. According to sources, Bharti had stressed that since SIR was being implemented across the country, there should not be any further delay in conducting it in West Bengal. The ruling TMC and the Opposition BJP are at loggerheads in the state over conducting the SIR. While the TMC has warned against the deletion of voters' names, the BJP has argued that SIR would help in weeding out illegal migrants from the voters' list.

Congress asks EC to call all-party meeting on SIR, says release findings of matching-mapping exercise



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Subhankar Sarkar, Prasenjit Bose, Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, sir electoral rolls, electoral rolls sir, Election Commission, West Bengal Assembly elections, Indian express news, current affairs. The deletion of names of permanently relocated migrants should be mandatorily accompanied by re-enrollment in their current place of residence," it added. With the Election Commission all set to start the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral roll in poll-bound West Bengal, the state unit of the Congress on Thursday asked the poll panel to convene an all-party meeting at the national level to review the experience of the SIR process in Bihar. In a deputation submitted to the state Chief Electoral Officer, the party asked the EC to convene the meeting at the earliest, before notifying the SIR schedule in the state.

The party also said the 'matching-mapping' process (comparing the voters list of 2002 when the SIR was last held in the state with that of 2025) should be completed first and its results "be disclosed in a transparent manner". The deputation was submitted by state Congress president Subhankar Sarkar, Prasenjit Bose, the chairperson of the state Congress Committee to Safeguard the Right to Vote & Citizenship, and other leaders. "The EC should also conduct software-based demographic de-duplication and prepare a list of Demographically Similar Entries. Duplicate or multiple enrollments should be deleted only after due verification in the enumeration phase," the party said. It said the EC should also collect data on registered deaths from the Registrar of Births and Deaths and link them with the base electoral roll to identify and enlist possibly dead electors. Similarly, specific guidelines need to be framed for ascertaining an elector as "permanently shifted", especially for married women and other migrants. "The deletion of names of permanently relocated migrants should be man-

datorily accompanied by re-enrollment in their current place of residence," it added. The party also asked the EC to discontinue the "convoluted exercise" of deleting the names of existing electors for non-submission of enumeration forms within 30 days and then requiring them to fill Form 6 for re-enrollment as a new elector within the next 30 days. "This is a significant flaw in the existing SIR 2025 process," the party added.

Will sack teacher accused of sexual harassment, Ramjas College tells High Court

GNS News Agency, Jan 13
teacher accused of sexual harassment, Ramjas College, delhi high court, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs. The minor had filed a complaint with the ICC in December 2024 and an FIR was filed in May this year for offences under the POCSO Act. Ramjas College on Monday (October 13) informed the Delhi High Court (HC) that its governing body has decided to terminate the services of a professor who was accused of sexually harassing a minor in 2024.

The HC has now directed Delhi University to "urgently consider the matter and take requisite steps" within three weeks, after the college informed it that it has also sent a communication to the varsity on the governing body's decision. The submission came before Justice Sachin Datta in a petition by the survivor, seeking the court's directions to Delhi University and Ramjas College to act on the recommendations of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) dated June 18 under provisions of the University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015. The professor had resigned in January following protests by students on the campus over alleged inaction by the college administration on the issue. The minor had filed a complaint with the ICC in December 2024 and an FIR was filed in May this year for offences under the POCSO Act.

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

1996 Priyadarshini Mattoo rape murder, IPS officer son rapist Santosh Kumar Singh, Delhi University student Mattoo rape murder, Sentence Review Board, Hemant Mattoo. After the Delhi High Court had referred the case to the SRB in July, Mattoo's Canada-based brother Hemant too had raised an objection against the decision. The Sentence Review Board (SRB) on Thursday rejected the plea of Santosh Kumar Singh, convicted in the 1996 Priyadarshini Mattoo rape-murder case, for an early release. The Indian Express has learnt. Mattoo, a Delhi University law student, was raped and killed by her senior Santosh Kumar Singh in 1996. Even as a lower court had acquitted him in 1999 for lack of evidence, despite the judge saying that he was guilty, the Delhi High Court awarded him the death penalty in 2006.

The Supreme Court in 2010, however, had commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment. Nearly three decades later, on July 1, the Delhi High Court directed the Sentence Review Board to consider afresh Singh's case for premature release. Holding the SRB's decision to deny Santosh, along with two other prisoners, premature release as suffering from "material procedural and legal infirmities", the HC highlighted several lacunae in the current process undertaken by the board while deciding applications for early release of prisoners. Government sources confirmed the latest development. On July 27, a delegation from the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), an organisation that voices the issues of Kashmiri Pandits, met Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood, objecting to Singh's premature release. Welcoming the decision, Ravinder Pandita, President, AIKS, on Thursday said, "We are happy that the government has rejected the plea. It was a heinous crime, which doesn't deserve anything less than a capital punishment. The judiciary and other agencies involved should take suo motu cognisance



Mattoo, a Delhi University law student, was raped and killed by her senior Santosh Kumar Singh in 1996. Even as a lower court had acquitted him in 1999 for lack of evidence, despite the judge saying that he was guilty

and reconsider their decision of life imprisonment. "After the Delhi High Court had referred the case to the SRB in July, Mattoo's Canada-based brother Hemant too had raised an objection against the decision. Speaking to The Indian Express, he had said, "I want to know what signs of reformation he has shown. Has he apologised to my family? Has he apologised to his own family? He's never even approached us. He still maintains his innocence."

On January 23, 1996, while Priyadarshini was alone at home, Santosh was seen by a neighbour entering her house in the evening. She was later found lying under her bed, with a room heater's cord wrapped around her neck — she had been brutally raped and murdered. Singh, an IPS officer's son, had been pursuing her relentlessly in the months leading up to her death.

India proactively forging partnerships, strategies to secure national interest: Shaktikanta Das



In an increasingly changing world order, India's stance is clear: the country stands for a "co-operative and rules-based global system", a top aide to the Prime Minister said Friday. At the same time, India is "proactively forging partnerships and strategies to secure national interest in a world where power is more diffused", Principal Secretary to PM Shaktikanta Das said here. Stating that traditional multilateralism is under severe strain, Das said key international institutions are struggling to deliver on their mandates. He said that multilateralism is increasingly being sidelined by geopolitical rivalries, protectionism and fragmentation, with critical sectors like semiconductors, rare earths, energy and pharmaceuticals being leveraged as tools of influence and exposing vulnerabilities, especially in dependent economies. Das was speaking on the theme 'Indian economy, a story of rising credibility' at the inaugural Bibek Debroy Memorial Lecture. Debroy, former Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), was a contributing editor for India stands today at the cusp of a historic journey – from being an incredible India to a credible India, Das said. Noting that there will be headwinds and challenges emanating from "known and unknown sources", he said the Indian economy is speeding ahead on "multiple cylinders".

Youthful demographics, digital public infrastructure, the deepening financial inclusion, and technological and artificial intelligence (AI) potential are India's multiple strengths that are coming together in a historic confluence, he said. "...with the policies that the country has adopted, the wind is in our sails. We are indeed on our path to Viksit Bharat," he said.

The Indian economy remains resilient and is expected to be the fastest-growing major economy in the world despite multiple and overlapping global shocks since the Covid-19 pandemic, Das said. "The Indian economy rebounded after the COVID-19 pandemic with an average growth of 8.2 per cent from 2021–22 to 2024–25, driven by resilient private consumption and investment. In 2025–26, the real GDP is expected to grow at 7.4 per cent as per the projections of the National Statistics Office. Further, India is projected to contribute around 18 per cent to the global GDP growth in 2025–26," he said. Pointing out that the share of trade in global GDP has stagnated, Das said it signals a

shift from hyper-globalisation to regionalisation, which have resulted in certain vulnerabilities for the emerging countries. "At a certain level, these trends may result in rising costs and inefficiencies. Emerging markets, and within that the Global South, is particularly vulnerable. For them, economic volatility is getting amplified and opportunities for convergence are getting slimmer," he said. In this fluid global landscape, India has embraced Atmanirbarta, a vision of self-reliance, as the overarching principle of its policies. "Atmanirbarta is not being isolationist, but a strategy to build core competence and resilience. Economic Atmanirbarta means developing the capacity to produce critical goods and technologies at home and reducing over-reliance on foreign sources," he said. Das further said that the idea of Atmanirbarta has been built upon the tripod of — stability, reforms and schemes — that address certain structural gaps in the economy. India has maintained macroeconomic and financial sector stability, brought inflation under control, and is committed to the path of fiscal consolidation, he said.

"The general government's gross debt-to-GDP ratio declined to 81.6 per cent in 2024–25 from the peak of 88.4 per cent in 2020–21 which saw the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The IMF has projected it to decline further to 76.9 per cent in 2030–31. This commitment to fiscal prudence is restoring headroom for future counter-cyclical policies and keeping the public debt levels sustainable," he said.

Das noted that the government has enacted and implemented several landmark reforms across taxation, financial architecture, labour regulations and business facilitation including Goods and Services Tax, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act along with the adoption of the flexible inflation targeting framework, which mandates the Reserve Bank of India to maintain inflation between 2–6 per cent. Commenting on the recent notification of the four labour codes, Das said these reforms are important because they aim to reduce regulatory complexity, encourage formalisation of the workforce, attract investment, and generate higher employment by offering greater labour-market flexibility along with strengthening wage protection and improving social security coverage. Referring to government schemes such as production-linked incentives, National Critical Minerals Mission, the Electronic Component Manufacturing Scheme, among others, Das said these schemes and initiatives are not random schemes, but are parts of a larger strategy to build domestic capacities in critical areas and make India self-reliant. Das said India's demographic dividend can not be on autopilot and it must be steered and its potential imaginatively harnessed. Also, in areas of technological innovation and AI, machine learning, blockchain, space, biotech, pharma, etc., India has significant potential. "Building on our strong base of STEM talent, as India produces the highest number of engineers and science graduates in the world, we are positioning ourselves at the forefront of the new tech revolution," he said.

RBI Governor calls on regulated entities to jointly develop tools to combat digital fraud



"The purpose of enforcement actions undertaken by the Reserve Bank is generally not punitive. The intent is largely to correct," he said. "The purpose of enforcement actions undertaken by the Reserve Bank is generally not punitive. The intent is largely to correct," he said. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Friday called on all regulated entities to work together in developing analytics and tools to proactively prevent the rising incidences of digital fraud.

"While banks and other regulated entities individually should continue to improve their tools, techniques and processes in preventing and tackling digital frauds, this is an area where we need to collaborate with each other to build analytics and tools to detect mule accounts and suspicious transactions timely and pre-emptively," Malhotra said during his address at the third annual Global Conference of the College of Supervisors. Mule accounts are commonly used by fraudsters to channel proceeds of frauds. The Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBH) — a subsidiary of RBI — has developed an artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning (ML)-based model called MuleHunter. AI to detect and flag mule accounts in near real-time. Malhotra said digital channels help in improving financial inclusion and convenience, but without guardrails. They can also facilitate opaque pricing, weak disclosures and inappropriate recovery practices.

"The aim should be to ensure that digitalisation and innovations are aligned with fair outcomes for consumers, and a key element of this endeavour should be to protect customers from the menace of rising digital frauds," he said. "For all of us, protecting customers' interest is not just a priority — it has to become the cornerstone of a sustainable and resilient financial system," Malhotra said. He added

Gold ETF inflows surge 211% month-on-month to Rs 11,647 crore in December on safe-haven demand



Inflows into gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) surged over 200 per cent in December 2025, led by a sharp rally in gold prices and on safe-haven demand for the yellow metal amid an uncertain global environment.

During the month, gold ETF inflows hit a record high of Rs 11,647 crore, a jump of 211 per cent from Rs 3,741.79 crore in November. Higher flows resulted in the net assets under management (AUM) of gold ETFs rising to nearly 16 per cent on a month-on-month (m-o-m) basis to Rs 1.28 lakh crore in the reporting month, according to the latest data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). Indian investors have increasingly turned to gold ETFs as a regulated, liquid, and cost-efficient alternative to physical gold, particularly during periods of volatility across equity and bond markets. The steady allocation to gold ETFs, even during intermittent market swings, underscores their growing role as a strategic portfolio hedge and diversification tool. The sharp rise in domestic gold prices over recent months has further reinforced investor confidence in gold-linked products, prompting fresh allocations into ETFs. These inflows also reflect structural growth in the category, supported by rising folio counts and expanding assets under management as more investors incorporate gold into diversified portfolios to hedge against inflation, currency volatility, and global macro risks," said Himanshu Srivastava, Principal Research, Morningstar Investment Research India. Besides, greater adoption of digital investment platforms and the ease of accessing gold through transparent ETF structures have aided category growth,

he said. In December 2025, inflows into equity-oriented mutual fund schemes declined 6.2 per cent to Rs 28,054.06 crore, as against Rs 29,911.05 crore on a m-o-m basis. Flows into small cap funds slipped 13 per cent to Rs 3,823.82 crore from Rs 4,406.9 crore. Inflows into mid-cap and large-cap funds declined 7 per cent and 4.4 per cent respectively. Flexi-cap funds continued to attract strong inflows of nearly Rs 10,000 crore. "We are also seeing investors turn selective rather than exit the market completely, with continued interest in certain equity categories. The standout trend in December was the sharp surge in defensive allocations," said Ankur Punj, MD – Business Head, Equirus Wealth. Debt-oriented schemes witnessed outflows to the tune of Rs 1.32 lakh crore. Liquid funds saw the highest outflows at Rs 47,307.9 crore, followed by Rs 40,464.36 crore withdrawn from money market funds.

Dietitian recommends you go to bed slightly hungry; here's why



That slight rumble when you hit the pillow might be the secret to your weight loss. Online health coaches claim that going to bed slightly hungry means you hit a calorie deficit, leaving your body no choice but to tap into stored fat overnight. Edwina Raj, Head of Services – Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics, Aster CMI Hospital, Bangalore, said that many health coaches say going to bed slightly hungry can help the body, and there is some truth to this, but it needs balance.

"When you stop eating a few hours before sleep, insulin levels slowly fall. Low insulin helps the body use stored fat for energy instead of storing more fat. During sleep, growth hormone levels increase, supporting fat burning, muscle repair, and overall recovery. A light feeling of hunger can also improve digestion and sleep quality because the body is not busy processing a heavy meal," she explained, adding that some people wake up feeling lighter, with better hunger control and steady energy the next day. However, "slightly hungry" does not mean starving.

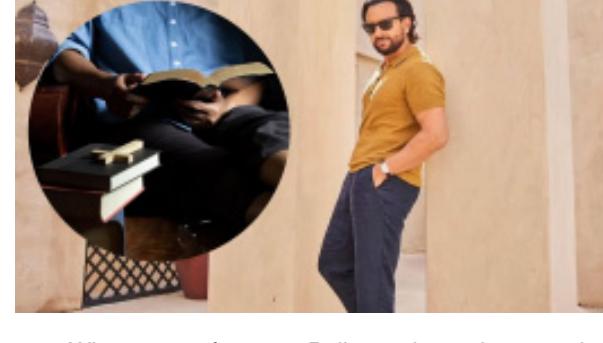
"If you go to bed very hungry, stress hormones like

cortisol can rise. This may disturb sleep, cause early waking, and increase cravings the next day. Poor sleep can slow fat loss and harm overall health," said Raj. So, the goal is a gentle calorie gap, not extreme restriction. Should you go to bed slightly hungry? Going to bed slightly hungry can support fat loss. (Source: Freepik)

What happens if you eat too much before bed?

Eating too much and going to bed has its own problems. According to Raj, a heavy or late meal keeps insulin levels high, encouraging fat storage. Digestion continues during sleep, which can reduce sleep quality and cause bloating, acid reflux, or heartburn. Poor sleep can affect hormones that control hunger, leading to overeating the next day. Over time, this pattern may increase weight gain, blood sugar issues, and fatigue. According to Dr Jinal Patel, dietitian, Apollo Spectra Hospital, Mumbai, doing so tends to "slow down the body's metabolism" and can lead to certain chronic diseases. "The body finds it difficult to digest carbohydrates if consumed right before sleeping; as a result, you may gain weight and also experience acidity problems. One may also have abdominal pain, discomfort, constant heartburn and acidity — ultimately leading to Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). To add to that, those who eat late at night are prone to obesity, heart problems, and diabetes. "Binge eating junk food, especially late at night, will further narrow down and clog arteries because of cholesterol and fatty deposits (called plaque)," explained Dr Patel. In short, going to bed slightly hungry can support fat loss and better sleep for some people. It works best when dinner is balanced, eaten early, and includes enough protein and fibre. Listening to your body is key, because good sleep matters as much as diet.

Saif Ali Khan reveals his current reading list: '...I bought the rights to the book'



What are our favourite Bollywood stars busy reading all year round? An avid reader, Saif Ali Khan's taste in literature reflects an eclectic mix of murder mysteries, thrillers and spine-chilling horrors. In fact, even his wife Kareena Kapoor Khan shared his love for "crazy crime thrillers," as revealed in an interview with The Nod Mag. While Kareena was busy reading Jessica Bull's latest crime thriller, *A Fortune Most Fatal* — a period crime drama with a World War II setting; the Sacred Games actor gave us a peek into all the titles sitting on his To Be Read (TBR) list, during a recent conversation with Esquire India.

Black River by Nilanjana S. Roy According to Khan, it's a police procedural murder mystery, but it's also really emotional and moving. "It's about the murder of a very young little girl. And I love the story so much, I bought the rights to

the book, and we are trying to make a movie out of it. It's taking a while to write, but it's a really moving piece. It's lyrical and dramatic, obviously. On the back of the book, it says it's an ode to India that does not exist anymore," elaborated the Jewel Thief-The Heist actor. Saif and Kareena love thrillers Saif and Kareena both love thrillers. (Source: Varinder Chawla)

Japanese Ghost Stories by Lafcadio Hearn

"I love very well-written ghost stories. There's a collection of them. Lafcadio Hearn, an Irish writer who ended up living in Japan, had a very sad life where both his parents left him or died early. And then he ended up living in Japan, married a lady there, and got to know the culture really well and would retell famous Japanese ghost stories, but in this amazing poetic prose," he shared.

Pandora's Jar: Women in the Greek Myths by Natalie Haynes

"It is a feminist take on all the famous women in Greek myth and history, like Medusa, and people who have been viewed as monstrous in one way or another, but probably through the male gaze. She defends them and explains how that is probably a warped way of looking at it. I think they've done it quite a lot these days. Basically, women who have been called mean or nasty. Medusa, for example, is crazy. Raped in a temple, and then punished for being raped in the temple by God. This is the worst thing, and she's viewed as a monster. I've always felt something for her," said Khan.

This unique hotel lets you sleep in France and Switzerland at the same time



Mondes Polaires. Whether you are visiting during summer or winter, there are endless activity options like cross-country skiing, mountain biking, golf, paragliding, and snowshoeing to keep you and your loved ones entertained. You can also visit the authentic and exotic villages of Haut-Jura for a culturally immersive experience.

hotel arbez The hotel has cozy rooms, brasserie and a restaurant featuring French and Swiss cuisine full of local and seasonal specialties. (Source: Instagram/@francetravelers)

How did this hotel come to be?

Hôtel l'Arbez Franco-Suisse's construction is built upon the history of a dispute between France and Switzerland over Vallée des Dappes, south of La Cure. The valley offered an accessible military route, and possession would provide a significant military advantage. Initially annexed by France, it was returned to the Swiss, but the French kept asking for it back. Finally, in 1862, the two countries signed a treaty, with France agreeing to offer Switzerland a sizable portion of their territory in exchange for the valley. Even though La Cure was entirely within French borders, the new boundary cut the village in half. However, the treaty stipulated that all existing establishments were to be left alone, which gave a local businessman the idea to build a three-story building on that plot of land, which is known today as Hotel Arbez. The hotel has cosy rooms, a brasserie and a restaurant serving French and Swiss cuisine, featuring local and seasonal specialties. A private parking, a bed and breakfast and free Wi-Fi make it an ideal option for those looking for a romantic, family or business stay.

The international line runs right through the building, separating two beds in the honeymoon suite. You can go to sleep in France and wake up in Switzerland! The hotel dates back to the 1860s and even played a role in WWII history, as people could legally take refuge upstairs on the Swiss side. A perfect getaway spot for nature lovers and adventure junkies, the hotel is a stone's throw from hiking trails, Lake Les Rousses, the ski slopes in the area, and iconic locations like La Dôle, Fort des Rousses, and Espace des

Google rolls out Gemini-powered AI Inbox, new smart features for Gmail users

New Delhi: Google has announced to introduce new Gemini-powered experiences, including AI Inbox, for more helpful and personalised insights for its users. The new capabilities have started rolling out in the US to Gmail users as well as Google AI Pro and Ultra subscribers, said the company. "We're starting with English and excited to roll out more languages and to more regions in the coming months," said Blake Barnes, VP Product, Gmail, in a blog post. AI Inbox is like having a personalised briefing, highlighting todos and catching you up on what matters.

"It helps you prioritise, identifying your VIPs based on signals like people you email frequently, those in your contacts list and relationships it can infer from message content. Crucially, this analysis happens securely with the privacy protections you expect from Google, keeping your data under your control," said Barnes. "We're giving trusted testers access to AI Inbox before making it more broadly available in the coming months," he added.

Just like Google Search, AI Overviews turn information into answers without the digging. When you open an email with dozens of replies, Gmail synthesises the entire conversation into a concise summary of key points. "And when you ask your inbox a question, we use Gemini to generate a simple AI Overview with the answer," said Google. AI Overview conversation summaries are rolling out for everyone at no cost. Starting today, everyone can use 'Help Me Write' to polish emails or draft them from scratch. There are also new Suggested Replies (an update to Smart Replies) which use the context of your conversation to offer relevant, one-click responses that match how you write. Help Me Write and Suggested Replies are also rolling out to everyone at no cost. The Proofread feature is available for Google AI Pro and Ultra subscribers. Next month, the company will update Help Me Write with better personalisation by bringing context from your other Google apps. Today, 3 billion users rely on Gmail to connect.

'We act as if nothing affects us': Najmul Hossain Shanto on uncertainty over Bangladesh's participation in T20 World Cup in India



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Bangladesh's Test skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto said that even though the uncertainty around the team's participation in the upcoming T20 World Cup in India is affecting the players, they are acting as if everything was ok. Shanto also slammed Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Director M Najmul Islam for calling former captain Tamim Iqbal an agent of India. "First of all, if you look at our World Cup results, we've never really played consistently good cricket. Last year, we did play well, but there were even better opportunities, and we couldn't capitalise on them. But you'll see that something always happens before every World Cup. I can say this from my experience of three World Cups – it does have an effect. Now, we act as if nothing affects us, that we are fully professional cricketers. You guys also understand that we are acting – it's not easy. Of

course, it would be better if these things didn't happen, but this is partly beyond our control," he said on Saturday. Bangladesh's involvement in the showpiece event is under a cloud after the board demanded that their matches be moved to Sri Lanka after pacer Mustafizur Rahman was released from the IPL on instructions of the BCCI, which cited unspecified "developments all around" to justify the decision.

"I don't know the details of how it happened, or how it could have been controlled. Still, I'd say that even acting in such circumstances (is difficult). With the right mindset if we go to the World Cup and play anywhere, we should focus on how to do our best for the team," Shanto said. The World Cup gets underway on February 7 and Bangladesh are scheduled to play four games (three in Kolkata and one in Mumbai) in India. Shanto also expressed deep anguish over BCB director M Najmul Islam calling former captain Tamim Iqbal "an Indian agent". "Very sad, very sad because such comments were made about a cricketer – a former captain, and in my opinion one of Bangladesh's most successful cricketers whom we grew up watching. As players, we expect respect – whether someone is a former captain, a regular player, successful or not. At the end of the day, a cricketer hopes for respect," he said. Shanto the BCB is "is supposed to be our guardian" but ended up making an unacceptable statement. "Parents should correct you at home, not in front of everyone. So such a comment from someone who is supposed to be our guardian is very difficult to accept. I completely reject it as a player," he concluded.

Neeraj Chopra splits with Czech coach Jan Zelezny



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra on Saturday announced an end to his partnership with Czech coach Jan Zelezny after just one season, which the Indian said was marked by "progress, respect, and a shared love for the sport." Chopra did not specify the reason for ending the stint with Zelezny, a bona fide legend of the sport who holds the world record and under whose tutelage the Haryana-lad breached the 90m mark last year. Reflecting on their work, Chopra said to learn directly from an athlete he had admired since childhood was a dream come true and gave him a completely new "toolbox of exercises, technical ideas, and fresh perspectives".

"Working with Jan opened my eyes to so many new ideas. The way he thinks about technique, rhythm, and movement is incredible, and I learned a lot from every single session we had together," Chopra said. "What I'm most proud about is the friendship I've built with someone who has been my idol all my life. Jan is not only the best javelin thrower of all time, but also one of the best human beings I have ever met," he added.

The 59-year-old Zelezny also reflected warmly on the partnership and the progress they made together. "Working with an athlete like Neeraj was a great experience. I'm glad we met and were able to work together, that I got him to break the 90-metre barrier for the first time. Apart from the World Championships, he finished eighth in the world event after the 90m high achieved in the Doha Diamond League last year.

Jemimah Rodrigues says Virat Kohli's words rang in her head during World Cup semi-final winning knock



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Indian cricket team star Jemimah Rodrigues has revealed that Virat Kohli's words about his own match-winning knock against Pakistan at the T20 World Cup in Melbourne were ringing in her ears during her game-changing innings at the recent Women's World Cup when she dragged India to the final with an unbeaten 127 against Australia. India were chasing a target of 339 runs set by the formidable Australian team, when Rodrigues joined forces with captain Harmanpreet Kaur (89) put on 167 for the third wicket on the way to completing the highest successful run-chase in women's ODI history. Rodrigues said.

Kohli had dragged India to victory over arch-rivals Pakistan with an unbeaten 82 from 53 balls in a game of the T20 World Cup in 2022. What had been remarkable about that innings was that Kohli had dragged India to victory from being 31/4 at one stage while chasing 160. "I once spoke to Virat Kohli about this. I asked him about that Melbourne knock. I said, 'You know, this knock is something else... it was a crazy knock. What was going on in your head? How did such a knock even happen?' What he told me was, 'You know Jemimah, even if I want to take credit for that knock, I can't. If you ask me to replicate that knock, I can't. I was just grateful that God chose me at that moment to be the person to take India through.' And when that World Cup semifinal happened, I just remembered what he said. Because I didn't change anything in my practice. My preparation was the same. Everything was the same, but it's just... you know, you are just chosen for that moment. And things just happen. I think that was one moment for me where I can't take credit," Rodrigues said in an interview for Breakfast With Champions. Rodrigues said that when she was bat-batting in that semi-final against Australia, she had gone into "Zen mode".

"When I was playing that match, it was just like... sometimes you go into a 'Zen mode' where you don't know much about what's happening around you. You are just so focused on, 'Oh, we just have to win this match and make it happen.' Usually, you know when you're about to win—when there are two runs left in nine balls, you know you're supposed to cross the line. Usually, I always have a

celebration ready—I'll jump, I'll do this or that. But until that final run was scored, I had nothing. I was blank. And the moment that ball went for a boundary—Amanjot hit that shot—I hugged her, I picked her up, and I just burst into tears. I hadn't planned that. I didn't even think I would cry. But I don't know, it was just that moment: a World Cup semifinal at home, in front of my home crowd, with my parents there. After everything that happened over the last month, I think all of that was just bottled up and it finally came out," Rodrigues said.

"One thing that happened before the semifinal was that when we found out we'd be playing Australia after we played New Zealand, there was a different kind of peace about it. Someone even spoke about it, saying, 'Actually, Australia is more vulnerable in a semifinal than a final.' They lost to South Africa in a T20 semifinal in Dubai, and when Harman scored that 171, they lost in a semifinal too. So we were like, 'Maybe everything that has happened is for the best.' That was the conversation we had. Rodrigues said: "Honestly, even when Australia scored 339 in the semifinal... when Phoebe Litchfield and Ellyse Perry started batting the way they were, I was like, 'Man, it's going to be 400 today.' Honestly! I started stressing out a bit because it's a do-or-die game. It's a semifinal. I was thinking, 'How will we chase 400?' Then I told myself, 'I can't control that. Don't think so far ahead. Just field and let's see what happens.' But then, for our bowlers to pull it back the way they did in the last 10 overs—even against such a strong batting order—and hold them to 339, it became a matter of perspective. I was like, 'Oh no, I was preparing for 400, but I got a 339 discount!' It felt feasible. It didn't feel too bad. Even when I went in, and I think Richa was there, we were like, 'Actually, they are 20 runs short.' That was the conversation," Rodrigues said.

Fourrise Premier League Hyderabad launched

Hyderabad: Fourrise Sports LLP officially launched the first season of the Fourrise Premier League (FPL) – Hyderabad on Friday night.

The official FPL poster was unveiled by the chief guest Mr. Ch. Kiran Kumar Reddy, MP, in the presence of senior corporate leaders, sports administrators, and dignitaries. Mr. Padi Rakesh Reddy, MLA, Amroor, also graced the occasion and extended his support to the league's vision of promoting corporate sports alongside social responsibility.

The league is founded and promoted by Mr. Nangi Devendar Reddy, Chairman & Founder, and Dr. Srivakash Vinnakota, Founder & President, FOURRISE Sports LLP, with a vision to build a transparent, professionally managed corporate cricket ecosystem across the Telugu States.

England's Ashes debacle prompts 'WILD thought' from Kevin Pietersen for Brendon McCullum's replacement: 'He gets Test cricket'



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Andy Flower now that he's changed and in line with the modern day player? He gets Test Cricket. I've been told by many players that he's changed his ways since our drama. He's winning leagues so really does get the modern day player. VERY IMPORTANT! Wild, I know! Thoughts?"

Pietersen's post comes amid uncertainty over the future of England's current head coach Brendon McCullum. The England and Wales Cricket Board announced a "thorough review" of a campaign in which the players have been accused of ill discipline at various levels. England's decision to not play any proper practice game in Australia before the series was questioned throughout the duration of the Ashes, with the number of catches they dropped being seen as a symptom of poor preparation. Their mid-series trip to Noosa, a beach town, and rumours of a drinking culture within the team have also come up. All of it was only exacerbated by the emergence of news that star batter Harry Brook had got into an altercation with a bouncer outside a club during England's ODI series in New Zealand that preceded the Ashes. "We will take many lessons from this tour and are determined to improve quickly. Our focus is on regaining the Ashes in 2027. A thorough review of the campaign is already underway. This will cover tour planning and preparation, individual performance and behaviours, and our ability to adapt and respond effectively as circumstances require," said ECB chief executive Richard Gould in his statement.

'That's your job': James Anderson tears into Ben Stokes' comments on England players' efforts during Ashes

GNS News Agency, Jan 13

Questions continue to be asked of the overall culture prevalent in the England cricket team after their 4-1 humiliation at the hands of Australia in the Ashes. There was a considerable gulf in quality between the two sides, with England playing almost no warm-up games in the run-up to the series and consequently being accused of slacking off between the Tests in terms of discipline. Fast bowling great James Anderson has said that he was puzzled with captain Ben Stokes appreciating the efforts of the players in his squad.

"When I saw Stokes come out and say, the way (Josh) Tongue and (Brydon) Carse have just run in like consistently, I had a Roy Keane moment," said Anderson on BBC Radio. "I was like, that's your job. If you're not willing to run in all day for your team, don't bother. You're in the wrong sport." Anderson took the example of Australia pacer Mitchell Starc, who was player of the series for taking 31 wickets and even scoring 163 runs. "Starc, for me, was the absolute standout of the series. He bowled on Day 5 of the final Test as quick as he had bowled all series long. He was consistent with his speeds. But that is what you expect from all your bowlers. That is the standard. It always annoys me when someone says 'can't fault your efforts'. Well, the

effort shouldn't be a thing. It should just be in you." Stokes had said in the press conference after the fifth Test that England's efforts in the Ashes can't be questioned and that they lost due to shoddy execution. "We've dropped a lot of catches on this tour which have been very costly to the overall situation of the games. In terms of stepping up, I can never fault anyone's commitment or energy that they've given into this. We haven't performed well, we know that, we hold our hands up to that. But no one should question the care and commitment to try and go out there and give it your absolute best. It's just been down to the lack of execution," Stokes said.

Shubman Gill breaks silence on getting omitted from T20 World Cup squad: 'I am where I have to be'



GNS News Agency, Jan 13

India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill has said that he respected the selectors' decision to omit him from the T20 World Cup squad last month. The 26-year-old, who was made the T20I vice-captain last August, was omitted from the 15-member squad with Axar Patel reinstated as the deputy to Suryakumar Yadav. "I respect the selectors' decision. All the best to the team for the T20 World Cup. I am where I have to be, and whatever is written in my destiny, no one can take that from me. A player always believes he will try his best for the country, and the selectors have taken their decision," Gill told reporters before the first ODI against New Zealand. Gill took over India's ODI captain in October, but has been out of 50-over action after suffering a neck injury in the Test series against South Africa. The 26-year-old said that it was frustrating to be on the

sidelines and watch the team play while being out injured. "Never easy, especially whenever you get injured, watching your team play, and you feel like you are missing out on all those games, especially when you have just been named the captain." "There are so many things that you want to do, and when you set out, it is definitely very frustrating, but at the same time, you just have to focus on what are the things that you need to do in that moment and kind of build on that," Gill said.

The right-hander revealed that he had suggested more practice in red-ball cricket, especially when the team was shifting from white-ball cricket. "One of the suggestions that I was very keen on is that, if you would see in the last two test series that we played, we didn't have that much time to prepare. It's not easy playing in India and playing another match in a different country on the fourth day. Especially when you are travelling on long tours." "And yes, I feel even if we would have won the series against South Africa, it still wouldn't have made that much of a difference because we know we need to prepare well to be able to win test matches all over the world. And preparation for me is really big and I didn't think that we had that much time to prepare when we came back from Australia, or even after the Asia Cup, when we played the West Indies series. I think it's important to at least have some bit of preparation, some time." "Especially changing from the white ball format to red ball. So this was one of the things that I was very keen on, and I think we'll take some action and we'll keep it in mind to be able to prepare well before the start of any red ball series," Gill said.

'Started regaining confidence after implementing what Mahi bhai told me': Axar Patel reveals MS Dhoni's role in his batting transformation

GNS News Agency, Jan 13 Axar Patel has gone from being considered a spinner who can bat and a backup to Ravindra Jadeja to a senior all-rounder himself, particularly in T20Is where he has been sent as high up as No.3 in recent games. The 31-year-old has said that legendary former India captain MS Dhoni, under whom Axar had started his international career, had a role to play in getting him to change his attitude towards batting.

"I started as a batter but became a full-time spinner when I reached the NCA. In my early days I didn't do well with the bat and started doubting myself," Axar told the Times of India. "When I got dropped in 2018, I worked very hard on my batting. When MS Dhoni was mentor of the 2021 T20 World Cup team, he told me that in my earlier days, under his captaincy, I put pressure on myself by thinking I had to perform all the time, rather than simply believing that I was a capable batter. Slowly I started implementing what Mahi bhai had told me and I regained my confidence."

Axr's reliability as a batter was on full display in the

final of the 2024 T20 World Cup. India were in dire straits batting first, having lost three wickets inside the first five overs for 34 runs. Axar then struck up a 72-run partnership off 54 balls with Virat Kohli which steadied the Indian ship. He was expensive with the ball but took one wicket as well, all of which contributed to India's remarkable victory in the final. "After the T20 WC final, I never thought I would be dropped again," said Axar. India's current approach of having a flexible batting order has resulted in Axar playing in a variety of positions.

However, he has been trusted to play in and around the top order more often than not in recent games and Axar says that in those moments, the team management trusts him to provide stability. "If I've been sent up the order, that means the team trusts me and I have the talent to perform this role. When I go out to bat, I don't think I am a floater. The team management tells me that I'm not sent to blindly accelerate the scoring or play out a difficult spell or target a particular spinner. I am given a role like any other specialist batter," he said.

Parasakthi movie review: Sivakarthikeyan-starrer deserved stronger writing, Ravi Mohan steals the show



Parasakthi movie review and rating: Among the many things that director Mani Ratnam's magnum opus Iruvar (1997) etched in the minds of viewers are the lines "Udal manukku uyir thamizhukku; Ithai urakke solvoam ulagukku" (The body is for the soil, life for Tamil; let us say this loudly to the world). These lines not only highlight one's devotion to their homeland but also emphasise how interconnected one's identity is with their roots and how the mother tongue is the string that holds it all together. That's why any attempts to snap that through the imposition of another language is always met with violent reactions. As Chezhian (Sivakarthikeyan) rightly points out, the protests are "only against the imposition of Hindi; not against Hindi or its native speakers." And director Sudha Kongara's Parasakthi offers an impactful semi-fictional depiction of the anti-Hindi agitations that rocked Tamil Nadu in the 1950s and '60s.

The leader of the Purananooru Padai, a student organisation with members from various states fighting against the imposition of Hindi, Chezhian's (Che) life changes when he comes face to face with the KGB-trained, cold-blooded officer Thirunaadan (Ravi Mohan). While Che loses a dear friend during the confrontation, Thirunaadan aka Thiru ends up losing his right index finger, leaving permanent scars in their hearts. Years later, Che makes a living as a railway employee, while Thiru is still on the hunt for the masked, unidentified man (Che) who snipped his finger. Marked by inherent rage against Tamils, stemming from a disgust towards his father, Thiru is determined to suppress both – the anti-Hindi movement and smoke out Che – no matter how violent the measures he must employ. In Che's place now is his younger brother, the college-going Chinnadurai (Atharvaa), who leads the protests with the help of Ratnamala (Sreeleela), who is also Che's girlfriend, much against the former's warnings. As time passes, the agitations intensify, and Che is forced to confront his past and his mortal enemy. But it's not just a battle between two individuals; it's also a struggle between the all-powerful few and the powerless millions – a resistance against oligarchy, against attempts to usher in an unfair homogeneity, and against a state-sponsored initiative to undermine India's core principle of "unity in diversity."

Parasakthi is, without doubt, an extremely important and pertinent movie in the current sociopolitical environment, offering a reminder that history has a tendency to repeat itself, and the makers deserve credit for even considering making this film. The sheer number of dialogue mutings imposed by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) on it, thus effectively butchering the film to an extent, stands as a testament to how even an intensely cinematic portrayal of the subject can rattle the ruling class. However, had it been at least a slightly better movie, the themes Parasakthi attempts to address would have resonated more. Instead, they are drowned out by the overall lack of flair, primarily caused by mediocre writing.

The major shortcoming in the script is its lack of flow, with each scene feeling disjointed from the ones before and after, almost as if each scene exists to serve a single purpose rather than contribute meaningfully to the overall narrative. The lack of emotional impact in moments that clearly deserved it also hinders the movie from striking a chord.

For instance, in the opening sequence, we see that Che is a beloved and fearless leader. However, he soon gives up the revolution after his friend is killed during a protest. While Sudha and co-writer Arjun Nadesan stick to minimalism and use only a few creative tools to convey the impact of this incident on Che, which prompted him to back off, these elements do not land as intended, leaving the character somewhat undercooked. This issue persists across the film. From Thiru's contempt for the Tamil and servility towards authority to the Che-Ratnamala romance, we are shown only certain aspects of these, never their vital roots. While these issues could have been fixed with impactful filmmaking, Sudha Kongara manages to achieve this only rarely. The handling of the emotional moments, in particular, is too unimpressive.

However, where the writing does not play a massive role, such as in action sequences and protest scenes, Sudha elevates Parasakthi to impressive heights, offering a glimpse of what the movie could have been had it been backed by better writing. The agitation sequence leading up to the interval is supremely impressive, with almost every technical aspect reaching its peak, providing an experience we were denied for well over an hour. The same holds true for a couple of scenes in the second half. But it is the dramatic moments in between that fall flat and pull us away from the movie. While Parasakthi attempts to present itself as a docu-fiction at times, the efforts to clarify that it is more fiction than documentary have, unfortunately, backfired, weakening its essence moment by moment. For instance, while naming the cameo character played by Rana Daggubati, Michael Reddy (reminiscent of the real-life George Reddy) is a good creative choice, the unnecessary watering down of such elements – perhaps to lessen the number of controversies – has done more harm than good. Nonetheless, the movie is held together by the work of cinematographer Ravi K Chandran, production designer MR Karthik Rajkumar, and art director S Annadurai, who manage to evoke the era's ethos and the events with extraordinary power, giving the audience a sense of witnessing everything in real time. Although the colour-grading can be overbearing at times, the technicians' impressive work ensure that we don't focus on that shortcoming for too long. While GV Prakash's background score during the more mundane and romantic moments is below average, he shines in the adrenaline-fueled sequences, and his songs also deserve commendation.

Ravi Mohan steals the show as the draconian and ruthless Thiru, delivering his finest performance thus far. Although the character lacks layers and could have benefited from better development, Ravi astoundingly breathes a nefarious soul into Thiru, shining the most when he exudes and delivers a devilish aura in a calm manner, sending chills down the spines of both the characters opposite him and the audience. Although Sivakarthikeyan impresses as the revolutionary leader Che, his performance falters when he is just Chezhian – the sole earning member of his family, a caring brother, and a loving boyfriend. One of the most disappointing and costly mistakes Sudha has made in Parasakthi is perhaps casting Sreeleela as Ratnamala, a Telugu-born woman raised in Tamil Nadu who lands a job at the National Radio with her MP father's recommendation and is pro-anti-Hindi-imposition movement. There's no denying that the character had enough potential at its core, as Ratnamala isn't envisioned merely as the sole female presence in a young revolutionary man's life, as is often the custom, but is instead an active participant in the protests, and goes above and beyond for her comrades. However, beyond these few occasions, the character is weakly developed, at times bordering on traits associated with the manic pixie dream girl (MPDG) archetype. What's even worse is Sreeleela's extremely amateurish performance, which fails to appear authentic in Ratnamala's "cute" or intense moments. It is also disappointing on Sudha's part that she forced a 24-year-old Sreeleela

ing the reading of the show, was the first time I met Aryan. I was waiting to see what he does. We were 25 actors in a room, he came, started the reading and the clarity he had for each and every character, big small doesn't matter, the clarity he had was staggering. My mouth was open. I was like oh my god at 24-25, he has this kind of clarity and maturity about a project that he has written and is going to direct." Gautami admitted that many people found it difficult to believe that Aryan had directed the show himself. She addressed the speculation and praised his dedication, saying, "A lot of people asked 'has Aryan directed it himself or someone has ghost directed it?' We shot for 20 hours for that. The way he has directed it hats off to him. Let me be clear, each and everything done in the show is done by Aryan. So many of the stunts he used to do it and show actors." She further lauded Aryan's upbringing and warm nature, drawing parallels with his father Shah Rukh Khan. Gautami shared, "He is such a well brought up child. Every time I go to the Red Chillies office and if Aryan is there, he would hug me and drop me to the lift."

Recalling an incident that highlighted Shah Rukh Khan's humility, she said, "When we went for the screening of first two episodes of the show, my daughter accompanied me. She had to leave in the middle of the screening, and Shah Rukh Khan got up and walked with her to the lift. He even had a conversation with her regarding her studies and other things. There is no need for him to do all this. He doesn't know my daughter, he doesn't know me, but he still got up from his chair and took my daughter all the way to the lift, escorted her down. My daughter was nervous, trembling. There is no need of that, he is Shah Rukh Khan, but amazing. So much to learn from these people." Gautami also spoke about her experience working with Bobby Deol and how the actor reacted to Aryan's perfectionist approach. She shared, "He is calm and reserved person. We had a lot of scenes together, but he never made me feel like 'I am the Lord Bobby Deol', nothing like that, he was very normal. He used to get as irritated... Aryan is a stickler for perfection, so it was never 1-2 takes, it was always 10-15 takes. We were all at it, whether it was Bobby Deol, Manoj Bawa, or anyone."

Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan received rave reviews for his debut show The B***ds of Bollywood. Recently, Gautami Kapoor, who plays a pivotal role in the series, opened up about her experience of working with Aryan and shared how the star kid was clear-headed, confident, and hands-on from the very beginning. She revealed that Aryan was deeply involved not just in staging scenes but also in performing stunts himself and demonstrating exactly what he wanted from the actors. Speaking to Siddharth Kannan, Gautami said, "Dur-

Ranbir Kapoor doesn't like to look like a 'beast', Aamir Khan would train at 3 am, says fitness trainer: 'Amitabh Bachchan is always on time'



role is over, he moves on, and people should do the same." He emphasised, "If you want to learn something from Ranbir, it's his discipline. The man is punctual to the T." He went on to share his experiences working with other stars, saying, "I have had amazing experiences with everyone I have worked with—Ram Charan, Amitabh Bachchan, Jacqueline Fernandez. Even at this age, Amitabh Bachchan is always on time, unless he has a meeting."

Turning back to Ranbir, the trainer continued, "I can count on my fingers the number of times Ranbir has been late. And even if he's five minutes behind, he always sends a message saying, 'Sorry, I'm running five minutes late.' That's something to learn from and aspire to. He's a beautiful human being—his body language, the way he speaks... You call him 'Khandaani' for a reason. He's genuine." In the same conversation, Shivoham reflected on the dedication required in the acting profession, emphasising that success doesn't come easily. "I remember when I was working with Aamir Khan for Laal Singh Chaddha—it used to take him 2-3 hours to put on the beard and makeup. We trained at 3 AM because after that, he had to sit for makeup and do his shift." He added, "With Ranbir, if he has a 7 AM shift, he will still make time to train for at least half an hour. We set up a small gym on set so he could train during lunch." Shivoham concluded, "They are not successful because of anything other than their passion and discipline. Luck may favour you for a brief period, but after that, it's all about what you make of it. People think shooting is glamorous, but it's not—it's a lot of hard work."

Vidyut Jammwal buries himself in snow, climbs trees in the wild; fans call him a 'legend'

Vidyut Jammwal is once again making headlines for a bold Instagram post in which he is seen climbing a tree bare-bodied. Sharing the video, the actor revealed that the act was part of his yogic practice of Sahaja. The post received mixed reactions online—while some hailed him as a legend, others questioned his action. However, Vidyut has been practising this ritual for over a decade and has always remained unapologetic about it. On Saturday, the actor shared a video showing him bare-bodied while climbing a tree and later burying himself in a snow-filled region—both part of his annual routine as a Kalaripayattu practitioner.

Explaining the practice, Vidyut wrote, "As a Kalaripayattu practitioner, I delve into the yogic practice of Sahaja once a year. Sahaja means returning to a state of natural ease and instinct, fostering a deeper connection to nature and inner awareness." He further added, "Scientifically, it activates numerous neuroreceptors and proprioceptors, enhancing sensory feedback and improving balance and coordination. This leads to greater body awareness, heightened mental focus, and a profound sense of grounding."

The post drew reactions from fans as well as industry friends, including Kubbra Sait. While Kubbra commented "Maad!" in awe, a fan wrote, "Ur real life inspiring man such extraordinary man always proud as Indian and last not least such a great actor good luck." Another fan added, "Always in your own league, doing your own thing!"

Several fans also came out in Vidyut's defence, warning trolls against misinterpreting the post. One comment read: "For all the negative people: Before turning discipline into jokes or sexualising something you don't understand, pause and read the context. This is not about nudity or shock value—it's about training, awareness, and mastery over the body and mind. Mockery often comes from ignorance, and sexualisation comes from a lack of self-control—both reflect the commenter, not the practice."

When Vidyut Jammwal shared a similar post in 2023, this is not the first time Vidyut has gone viral for similar reasons. In 2023, he shared a series of pictures calling it his "retreat to the Himalayan ranges." The post showed him sitting bare-bodied, taking a dip in icy waters, and cooking his own meals. He claimed the retreat had been part of his routine for the past 14 years. "My retreat to the Himalayan



ranges—the abode of the divine—started 14 years ago. Before I realised, it became an integral part of my life to spend 7-10 days alone every year," he wrote.

That post, too, attracted severe backlash. However, Vidyut stood by it, and it still remains on his Instagram page. Speaking about the virality of such posts, Vidyut said in an interview with Faisu on his YouTube channel, "As humans, we often get used to luxury and comfort. Especially when you become an actor, you don't find time for yourself. So once a year, I take out a few days where I live in the woods. I pitch my own tent and live that life." Vidyut Jammwal has been trained in Kalaripayattu since the age of three at an ashram in Palakkad run by his mother. Before entering films, he travelled to several countries training with martial artists across disciplines, many rooted in Kalaripayattu. Kalaripayattu is one of the oldest Indian martial arts, originating on the southwestern coast of India around the third century.

Jana Nayagan vs CBFC: Kamal Haasan demands 'reasoned justification' for every suggested edit, says 'cinema lovers deserve openness'



ity to the arts and deserve openness and respect from institutions. Underlining what he termed as the need of the hour, the veteran actor wrote, "What is required now is a principled relook at certification processes with defined timelines, transparent evaluation, and written, reasoned justification for every suggested cut or edit." He also urged the Indian film industry to unite and engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue with government institutions. According to him, "Such reform will safeguard creative freedom, uphold constitutional values, and strengthen India's democratic institutions by affirming trust in its artists and its people." Kamal Haasan's statement comes a day after the Jana Nayagan hearing was pushed to January 21 by Madras HC, effectively preventing the film from releasing in theatres on Pongal. The Jana Nayagan team is currently battling a case against CBFC for delaying the issuance of the certification, which led to the abrupt postponement of the film. Notably, Parasakthi was also left in limbo until the last minute, adversely affecting its advance bookings. Sivakarthikeyan told India Today: "We received the changes at the last minute. After that, we had to make the suggested changes and upload them to QUBE. Our main focus was to release the film as we were chasing a release date. The Censor Board functions according to their own regulations, and we didn't have time to analyse whether it was an advantage or disadvantage." He added: "If we had more time, we might have explained to them the context of certain dialogues that they asked us to mute. We were running after a release date, so we ensured that the core of the story remained unaffected while implementing the cuts."

He further emphasised that cinema is a collective effort, stating, "Cinema is not the labour of an individual alone, but the collective work of an ecosystem of writers, technicians, performers, exhibitors, and small businesses whose livelihoods depend on a fair and timely process."

Highlighting the maturity of audiences, Kamal added that cinema lovers bring passion, discernment, and matu-

Bobby Deol got irritated after giving 10-15 takes for The B***ds of Bollywood, says Gautami Kapoor: 'Aryan Khan is a stickler for perfection'



Speaking to Siddharth Kannan, Gautami said, "During the reading of the show, was the first time I met Aryan. I was waiting to see what he does. We were 25 actors in a room, he came, started the reading and the clarity he had for each and every character, big small doesn't matter, the clarity he had was staggering. My mouth was open. I was like oh my god at 24-25, he has this kind of clarity and maturity about a project that he has written and is going to direct." Gautami admitted that many people found it difficult to believe that Aryan had directed the show himself. She addressed the speculation and praised his dedication, saying, "A lot of people asked 'has Aryan directed it himself or someone has ghost directed it?' We shot for 20 hours for that. The way he has directed it hats off to him. Let me be clear, each and everything done in the show is done by Aryan. So many of the stunts he used to do it and show actors." She further lauded Aryan's upbringing and warm nature, drawing parallels with his father Shah Rukh Khan. Gautami shared, "He is such a well brought up child. Every time I go to the Red Chillies office and if Aryan is there, he would hug me and drop me to the lift."

Recalling an incident that highlighted Shah Rukh Khan's humility, she said, "When we went for the screening of first two episodes of the show, my daughter accompanied me. She had to leave in the middle of the screening, and Shah Rukh Khan got up and walked with her to the lift. He even had a conversation with her regarding her studies and other things. There is no need for him to do all this. He doesn't know my daughter, he doesn't know me, but he still got up from his chair and took my daughter all the way to the lift, escorted her down. My daughter was nervous, trembling. There is no need of that, he is Shah Rukh Khan, but amazing. So much to learn from these people." Gautami also spoke about her experience working with Bobby Deol and how the actor reacted to Aryan's perfectionist approach. She shared, "He is calm and reserved person. We had a lot of scenes together, but he never made me feel like 'I am the Lord Bobby Deol', nothing like that, he was very normal. He used to get as irritated... Aryan is a stickler for perfection, so it was never 1-2 takes, it was always 10-15 takes. We were all at it, whether it was Bobby Deol, Manoj Bawa, or anyone."