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One year on, no closure for SLBC victims' families

Hyderabad: It has been a year since eight persons lost their lives when the roof of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel collapsed, yet the bodies of six victims remain unrecovered and work on the crucial irrigation project is yet to resume.

Despite the Congress government claiming to accord top priority to the SLBC tunnel works, progress has remained elusive. Workers and a tunnel boring machine (TBM) were deployed and excavation had commenced, but the project came to a grinding halt following the roof collapse at Domalpenta on February 22 last year.

Revanth Reddy Launches Training for DCC Presidents

HYDERABAD, FEB 20

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy inaugurated a training programme for DCC Presidents from both Telugu states today (Saturday). Addressing the gathering, he highlighted the programme's importance, urging participants to utilise it to enhance their opportunities. Revanth Reddy said the classes would assist them in discussing party policies and addressing public concerns. He also criticised the conspiracy to abolish reservations.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the soul of India resides in its villages and reaffirmed that Congress remains committed to Gandhi's principles. He criticised the British for avoiding force against Gandhiji and condemned those who assassinated him, labelling them as traitors. Revanth Reddy acknowledged that differences of opinion exist within the party, including on Gandhi's ideas, but warned against expelling dissenters. "Unity is key to achieving our goals," he stated. He also noted that



the Congress party's vote share has increased from 2.5% to 40% and suggested focusing on digital membership growth.

Harish Rao Calls for avoid urea shortage and subsidised equipment

HYDERABAD, FEB 20

Former Minister Harish Rao has urged Telangana to prevent a urea shortage and advocated for providing farmers with modern equipment at subsidised rates. He stated he will raise the issue of subsidies on cultivation tools in the Assembly on behalf of farmers. Rao also visited the Rythubadi Agricultural Show at NTR Maidan in Hyderabad, praising the event's potential to benefit farmers. He expressed the belief that government-organised programmes like the Agri Show are beneficial for the farming community.



Farmers across Telangana protest urea shortage, demand scrapping of app

Hyderabad: With the Yasangi season on, last year's urea shortage is back to haunt the farming community in the State, with many farmers struggling to secure sufficient urea bags. With the Congress government's app-based distribution system further complicating the ongoing shortage, they are up in arms against the government.

Demanding that the State government scrap the app-based distribution system, farmers have been staging protests across several districts. Following the conclusion of the municipal elections, many farmers complained that the government was least bothered about addressing the urea shortage.

A majority of farmers said the hardships they encountered last year were recurring this season as well. They also complained about the cumbersome process involved in booking urea online through the mobile app 'Fertilizer Booking App'. Apart from this, frequent technical glitches in the system have left them fuming.

From erstwhile Adilabad to Palamuru and from Khammam to Medak, farmers have been staging demonstrations at several places over the past couple of weeks. Despite the protests, the Congress government continues to maintain that sufficient urea stocks are available in the State. Reflecting the hardships faced by the farming community, a farmer from Sarvel village in Yadadri Bhongir district vented his ire at the Congress government on Friday for introducing what he described as an illogical and senseless measure. "I am illiterate. I cannot use a smartphone to book a urea bag. How can the government introduce such senseless measures and compound farmers' woes," Damodar Reddy said at the Farmer Producer Organisation in the village. Several farmers gathered at the centre to register their names and book urea bags online. However, due to technical glitches, they did not receive the One-Time Password (OTP) on their mobile phones. Irked by the technical snags and the government's failure to supply sufficient urea, farmers expressed anger at the officials.

Green Peace Environment & Water Harvesting Foundation Founder Meets Zaheerabad MP Suresh Shetkar

"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Bairi Srinivas Goud, Founder and President of Green Peace Environment & Water Harvesting Foundation, met Zaheerabad Member of Parliament Suresh Shetkar on Saturday. During the meeting, Srinivas Goud discussed various environmental issues, including water conservation, rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and the need for sustainable development initiatives across rural and urban areas of the constituency. He briefed the MP on the foundation's ongoing activities and proposed collaborative efforts to promote large-scale awareness programs on water management and environmental protection. He also emphasized the importance of implementing effective rainwater harvesting systems in government institutions, schools, and community spaces to address the growing water crisis. MP Suresh Shetkar appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the foundation and assured support for programs aimed at environmental conservation and sustainable water management strengthening coordination between public representatives and environmental organizations to ensure long-term ecological sustainability.



Hyderabad's Nehru Zoological Park welcomes real-life 'Rafikis'

Hyderabad: Brightly coloured mandrills have recently joined the Nehru Zoological Park's collection. They will make their first public appearance after their 15-day mandatory quarantine period. The two mandrills were brought from the Tata Zoological Park, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, to Hyderabad zoo a week ago. This is in exchange for a pair of African lions. With vibrant blue and red facial ridges, yellow beards, the mandrills, which are the largest primates and native to tropical rainforests of central Africa, are widely known for their appearance. These primates got more prominence after Rafiki, a famous character from 'The Lion King' movie.

Hyd on course to become 'Healing Capital', says Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD, FEB 20

IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu on Saturday said the State government is taking planned steps to transform Hyderabad — already a global pharma and life sciences hub — into a "Healing Capital" by integrating healthcare with data science and digital innovation. Addressing the closing session of PHUSE APAC Connect 2026 at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), the Minister said the future of healthcare would depend on the convergence of clinical science, artificial intelligence (AI) and real-world evidence.

He noted that clinical research is poised for transformative change, with technology set to play a decisive role. In this context, Telangana is building a forward-looking ecosystem to respond to future challenges and leverage emerging opportunities in healthcare. Sridhar Babu listed key initiatives including AI City, Young India Skills University, expansion of Genome Valley, strengthening of data infrastructure, citizen health profiling, a dedicated medical tourism policy and the proposed Telangana Life Sciences School.



US trade deficit widens in December; India gap hits \$58.2 billion

Washington: The US trade deficit widened sharply in December, capping a year in which America's goods gap with India reached \$58.2 billion.

The goods and services deficit rose to \$70.3 billion in December, up from \$53.0 billion in November, revised, the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis said this week.

Exports fell 1.7 per cent to \$287.3 billion. Imports climbed 3.6 per cent to \$357.6 billion.

The widening gap was driven by goods. The goods deficit increased \$15.7 billion to \$99.3 billion. The services surplus narrowed \$1.6 billion to \$29.0 billion.

In December alone, the US goods deficit with India was \$5.2 billion.

For the full year 2025, the overall goods and services deficit stood at \$901.5 billion, down slightly from \$903.5 billion in 2024. Exports rose \$199.8 billion to \$3,432.3 billion. Imports increased \$197.8 billion to \$4,333.8 billion.

The goods deficit widened \$25.5 billion to \$1,240.9 billion in 2025. The services surplus increased \$27.6 billion to \$339.5 billion.

The United States recorded a goods deficit of \$58.2 billion with India in 2025. That placed India among Washington's larger bilateral trade gaps.

By comparison, the US goods deficit stood at \$218.8 billion with the European Union and \$202.1 billion with China. It was \$196.9 billion with Mexico, \$178.2 billion with Vietnam and \$146.8 billion with Taiwan.

Exports of goods fell \$5.5 billion in December to \$180.8 billion. Industrial supplies and materials dropped \$8.7 billion. Non-monetary gold fell \$7.1 billion.

Capital goods exports rose \$2.5 billion. Semiconductor exports increased \$0.9 billion. Consumer goods exports rose \$1.8 billion, including a \$1.3 billion increase in pharmaceutical preparations.

Imports of goods rose \$10.2 billion to \$280.2 billion



in December. Capital goods imports increased \$5.6 billion. Computer accessories rose \$3.4 billion. Telecommunications equipment increased \$1.3 billion.

Industrial supplies and materials imports rose \$7.0 billion. Copper increased \$1.5 billion. Crude oil imports rose \$1.0 billion. Consumer goods imports fell \$3.5 billion.

World Moving Towards Socialism, Says CPM Leaders at Red Books Day Event

"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) stated that the world is increasingly looking towards socialism as the path for human emancipation. CPM senior leader Chintala Yadayya and Mandal Secretary N. Sabitha expressed these views while addressing a gathering at the CITU office in Ghatkesar on Saturday. The CPM Mandal Committee organized the "Red Books Day" program to mark the historic release of The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on February 21, 1848. The speakers noted that Left parties across the world have been observing Red Books Day since 2020, and from 2023 onwards, CPI(M) cadres have been actively participating in study programs as part of the observance. They said that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States had proclaimed that communism had been permanently defeated. However, they pointed to the resurgence of Left movements in several Latin American countries as evidence that the red flag continues to rise despite setbacks. Referring to the 176-year legacy of The Communist Manifesto, the leaders said Marx and Engels had foreseen the global struggle between capital and labor. They alleged that in India, religion and devotion are increasingly being commercialized for political gain. According to them, ruling forces are promoting communal polarization to safeguard corporate interests and political dominance. They criticized what they described as unfulfilled promises made to the youth in 2014, alleging that economic inequalities have deepened. They further claimed that dissenting voices, including religious figures who question commu-



nal politics, are facing attacks. In this context, they cited the recent physical attack on the priest of Chilkur Balaji Temple as an example of growing intolerance. The speakers emphasized that scientific and technological progress should serve human welfare. They described communism as a scientific approach to social development, with socialism as its ultimate goal. Marxist literature, they said, serves as an ideological tool to guide the younger generation toward social transformation. The observance of Red Books Day aims to popularize these ideas among youth and workers. CPM Mandal Committee members K. Chandramohan, Kadamanchi Yadagiri, Varikuppala Ramulu, Shivareddy, C.H. Asha Jyothi, N. Bhavani, P. Kishamma and others participated in the program.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

The return of imperial bullying in a multipolar world

The United States' military operation in Venezuela on January 3, 2026, marks a brazen violation of international law and serves as a stark reminder of unchecked power in global affairs. This audacious move executed without United Nations sanction or consultation with regional allies, harks back to an era when great powers imposed their will on weaker nations with impunity.

President Donald Trump's declaration that the US would "run" Venezuela until a "safe, proper and judicious transition", coupled with repeated references to the country's vast oil reserves, underscores the economic motives behind the intervention. This is not mere regime change; it is a revival of 19th-century imperialism, repackaged in the contemporary language of counter-narcotics, hemispheric security, and democratic restoration. The pretext — allegations of Maduro heading a "narco-terrorist" cartel — lacks publicly substantiated evidence from independent sources. By bypassing the United Nations Security Council and flouting Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, Washington has positioned itself as the self-appointed arbiter of global norms, eroding the post-World War II order designed to protect weaker states from great-power predation.

Yet, this is not an isolated American aberration in an otherwise rule-bound world. Great powers across the board have increasingly resorted to coercive tactics, exploiting asymmetries in military, economic, and technological strength to bend smaller nations to their will.

Sirpur MLA Conducts Surprise Inspection of Bhattupalli PHC

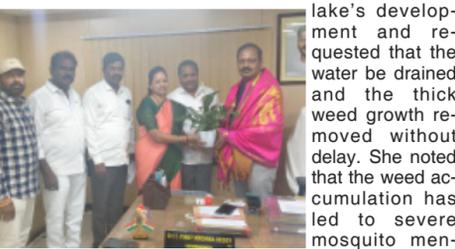
Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 21. "Dr. Palvai Harish Babu, Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Sirpur, conducted a surprise inspection of the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Bhattupalli village in



Kagaznagar mandal. "During the visit, he interacted with the Medical Officer and enquired about the overall functioning and conditions of the hospital. He directed the staff to expand outpatient services and ensure improved medical care for patients." Former MPTC Pirisingula Tirupati and Councillor Chippakurthi Srinivas, along with others, participated in the programme.

Funds Sought for Development of Chilkanagar & Beerappa Gadda Divisions: Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, Feb 21 (Indian Chronicle). "Former Corporator of Chilkanagar Division and GHMC Standing Committee member Bannala Geetha on Saturday appealed for allocation of funds for the development of Chilkanagar and Beerappa Gadda divisions. She met Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy at his office in the Tamaka HUDA Complex, where she felicitated him with a shawl and submitted a representation requesting financial support for development works. Speaking on the occasion, Geetha Praveen urged the Commissioner to take immediate steps for the beautification of Nacharam Lake in High Court Colony. She recalled that Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy had secured ₹30 crore for the



lake's development and requested that the water be drained and the thick weed growth removed without delay. She noted that the weed accumulation has led to severe mosquito menace, causing hardship to local residents, and stressed that removal works should begin on a war footing. "She also submitted a petition seeking funds for CC roads in streets where drainage pipeline works have been completed, construction of stormwater drainage pipelines, and a community hall in Chilkanagar and Beerappa Gadda divisions. Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy responded positively and assured that funds would be allocated at the earliest. BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, senior leaders Eddula Kondal Reddy, Kokonda Jagan, Muddam Srinivas Yadav, Balakrishna Goud, Shyam, Balu, and others participated in the programme.

Major Development in Asifabad Municipality – 13th Ward Councillor Disqualified



Indian Chronicle" kumram bheem Asifabad District Reporter, Jade Srinivas. February, 21. "A significant political development has taken place in the Asifabad Municipality following the elections for the Chairperson

and Vice-Chairperson posts. Gunda Sneha, Councillor of the 13th Ward, was accused of defying the party whip during the voting process. It was alleged that she cast her vote against the official directions issued by her party leadership during the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson elections. In response to these allegations, the Special Officer appointed for the elections and the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), Asifabad, issued a show-cause notice to her, seeking an explanation regarding the alleged violation of the party whip. After carefully examining her written explanation, voting records, and other relevant documents, the authorities concluded that the violation of the party whip was indeed established. Based on this finding, action was taken under the provisions of the Telangana Municipal Act 2019. "Accordingly, Mrs. Gunda Sneha has been declared disqualified from holding the position of Councillor and has been removed from her post as the 13th Ward Member/Councillor. This decision has sparked considerable political discussion within the municipality. While some view the action as a strict enforcement of party discipline, others see it as a signifi-



cant political turning point. With the 13th Ward seat now vacant, attention has shifted to the next steps, including the possibility of conducting a by-election.

Deputy Range Officer Booked in Teak Timber Smuggling Case

Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 21. "A Deputy Range Officer attached to the Balaji Anukoda beat under the Karjelli forest range has been formally charged in connection with the illegal transport of teak timber valued at approximately ₹49,000. "The issue came to light on Thursday night when villagers at Ranavelli village in Chintalamanepalli mandal stopped a tractor that was allegedly carrying teak logs. The timber, reportedly uprooted during recent strong winds and subsequently cut by smugglers, was being moved without authorization. "According



to Karjelli Forest Range Officer A. Subhash, an inquiry was initiated after the vehicle was intercepted around 11 p.m. Preliminary findings suggested that the officer, with assistance from her husband, had arranged for the timber to be transported for personal use. Following the seizure, the logs were moved to the Karjelli Forest Range Office for further examination. "Based on the investigation's conclusions, a formal case has been registered against the official, and a detailed report has been forwarded to higher authorities. Disciplinary action, including suspension, is expected within the next few days. "The incident has triggered strong reactions from local farmers, who criticized the alleged involvement of a forest official in activities that undermine forest protection. They expressed concern over the misuse of forest resources and called upon authorities to impose strict measures against those found responsible.

Fulfilling the Dream of Home Ownership for the Poor is the Core Objective of the People's Government: Government Whip Adi Srinivas.

P. S. ASHOKAN, "KARIMNAGAR BUREAU. "State Government Whip Adi Srinivas affirmed that realizing the dream of owning a house for every underprivileged family remains the foremost objective of the people's government. "A grand housewarming ceremony under the Indiramma Housing Scheme was conducted on Friday in Rudrangi Mandal of Rajanna Sircilla district. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from beneficiaries and local leaders. "Attending the event as the Chief Guest, Mr. Adi Srinivas extended his heartfelt congratulations to the beneficiaries and distributed new clothes to mark the joyous occasion. Addressing the gathering, he emphasized that providing dignified housing to economically weaker sections is a fundamental commitment of the government. "He stated that under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the government is steadfast in ensuring that every eligible family receives a respectable and permanent dwelling through



the Indiramma housing initiative. He further urged the public to make optimal use of the various welfare schemes introduced for their upliftment. "Expressing their gratitude, the beneficiaries conveyed that their long-cherished dream of owning a home had finally been fulfilled. With tears of joy, they thanked the Congress government, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and Government Whip Adi Srinivas for transforming their aspirations into reality. "The programme was attended by several dignitaries and local leaders, including Sarpanch Gandhi Narayana, Market Committee Chairman Chelukala Tirupati, Vice-Sarpanch Madishetty Abhilash, former ZPTC Gatla Meenayya, and other prominent leaders such as Erram Ganganasiah, Gaddam Srinivas, Tarre Manohar, Komire Shankar, Tarre Lingam, Palli Gangadhar, Sura Yadaiah, Akkinapelli Srinivas, Duvvaka Gangadhar, Gandham Manoj, among others. "The event stood as a testament to the government's continued commitment to social welfare, inclusive development, and the empowerment of marginalized communities.

Cotton Procurement Extended Till February End in the State

Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 21. "Cotton procurement operations in the state will continue until the end of February. "Acting on the request of the State Agriculture Minister, the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has officially extended the procurement deadline until February-end. "Under the Minister's instructions, the Agriculture Department Secretary had written a letter yesterday to the Joint Secretary of the Union Ministry of Textiles seeking an extension of the procurement

period. "Earlier, the Minister had also appealed to Union Ministers Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay to intervene and ensure an extension of the cotton procurement deadline in the state. "The Minister expressed happiness over the decision taken by the Central Government and the Cotton Corporation of India. "He urged cotton farmers to make full use of the extended deadline and sell their produce within the stipulated time.

Mother Tongue: The Priceless Treasure of Life's Stream.

P. S. ASHOKAN "KARIMNAGAR BUREAU. "On the occasion of International Mother Language Day, the Founder-President of Manthani Vidyarthi Yuvatha, Kondela Maruthi, remarked that the mother tongue is an invaluable treasure that elevates the dignity and cultural refinement of human life. He emphasized that nurturing one's native language is fundamental to preserving identity, heritage, and intellectual growth. "The celebration was held on Saturday at the local Mary Media Tricks High School, where Telugu Pandits were felicitated in recognition of their dedicated service to the promotion of the Telugu language. "The Headmistress graced the



occasion as the Chief Guest and, in her address, passionately appealed to students and educators alike to cherish and uphold their mother tongue. She underscored the pivotal role of language in shaping character, culture, and national pride. "As part of the felicitation ceremony, Telugu Pandits Mrs. Usha, Lalitha Swapna, Kavitha, and Sumalatha were honoured with shawls in appreciation of their scholarly contributions. The programme was efficiently coordinated by Manjula Teacher, who served as the event convener. "In his concluding remarks, Kondela Maruthi expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the staff and management of Mary Media Tricks High School for their continuous cooperation in organizing inspiring initiatives under the aegis of voluntary service and social commitment.

Egolapu Kumar Goud Charitable Trust Extends Support for the Marriage of an Underprivileged Girl in Peddapalli District



P. S. ASHOKAN "KARIMNAGAR BUREAU. "In a commendable act of compassion and social responsibility, the Egolapu Kumar Goud Charitable Trust extended its support to the marriage of an underprivileged girl in Peddabonkuru village of Peddapalli Mandal, Peddapalli District. "The beneficiary, Aishwarya, daughter of Velichala Nirmala and the late Gattayya Goud, hails from an economically disadvantaged family. On the occasion of her wedding, the Trust, under the leadership of its Presi-

dent Egolapu Sadaiah Goud, provided essential assistance in the form of rice and a traditional bridal saree to the bride. "Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sadaiah Goud stated that for the past 21 years, the Trust has been consistently undertaking various welfare initiatives for the upliftment of economically weaker sections across the Peddapalli Assembly Constituency. He reaffirmed the Trust's unwavering commitment to serving the needy and supporting deserving families during significant life events such as marriages. "The programme was attended by several prominent community members, including former MPTC Mittapalli Venkatesh, Ward Member Kota Rajesh Goud, Kotturi Rajayya Goud, Bongoni Raju Goud, Kotturi Kanakayya Goud, Mettu Lachayya, Thotapalli Srinivas, and others. "The gesture was widely appreciated by the villagers, reflecting the Trust's enduring dedication to humanitarian service and social welfare.

Fogging Machines Launched Under Mohammed Rafiq to Prevent Mosquitos; Inaugurated by Parameshwar Reddy

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 21 (Indian Chronicle). "With the objective of safeguarding public health in Ramanthapur, special mosquito-control measures were undertaken by installing fogging machines under the leadership of Ramanthapur Division Congress President Mohammed Rafiq. "Uppal Congress Party In-charge Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy attended the program as the chief guest and formally inaugurated the mosquito-control fogging machines. "Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy called upon youth to actively participate in public service activities and contribute to the development of society. "Ramanthapur Division President Mohammed Rafiq expressed happiness over organizing such public health initiatives and emphasized their importance for community welfare. Several locals appreciated the young leader for conducting service activities that support the health and well-being of Ramanthapur residents. "PCC representative Mohammed Tofiq, Poosa Sateyya, Naveen, Pramod, Chikka Satyanarayana, Narsimha Reddy, Ravinder Reddy, Adinarayana Goud, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Nam Raji Reddy, Bokka Suresh, Garika Sudhakar, Sandeep, Bhaskar, Mogili Lingam, Besta Bhaskar, Shag Sridhar, Samuel, MD Nayeem, Muthyala Jangaiah, Survi Santhosh, Seemakalla Jangaiah, Mittu Goud, Cable Ashok, Sachin, Ashok, Gayatri Goud, Ambika, Menga Shobha, Anita, Sunita, MD Shakeel, Poosa Balaraj, Poosa Mallikarjun, Mahesh, Ravi, Suri, Icon MD Mateen, Swami Madhu, Sudhakar, Sai, Balu, MD Jahangir, MD Mojin and others participated in the program.

Senior Congress leaders attend wedding of High Court Judge Surepalli Nanda's son

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 21 (Indian Chronicle):“The wedding of Prashanth, son of High Court Judge Surepalli Nanda, with Anupama Reddy was celebrated grandly on Saturday at Pradhan Convention, Nanakramguda. Senior Uppal Congress leaders Gaddam Ravikumar, Mekala Ramakrishna Reddy, Sridhar Reddy, Jai Ravi and others attended the ceremony and blessed the newlyweds. They also conveyed their congratulations to Judge Surepalli Nanda and his spouse Madhava Rao. Leaders from various political parties from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, MLAs, former judges, advocates, and several prominent personalities attended the wedding in large numbers.



Rotary Club of In Bhadra Sarapaka Plants 15,000 Saplings in Thalla Gommuru

“Kranthikumar Dasari | Pinapaka Constancy | February 21 | Indian chronicle : In a significant step towards environmental conservation, the Rotary Club of In Bhadra Sarapaka organized a large-scale plantation drive at Thalla Gommuru village in Burgampadu mandal, planting 15,000 saplings on Saturday. The programme was inaugurated by Rotary District Governor Mr. Ram Prasad, who graced the occasion as the chief guest and planted saplings to mark the launch of the initiative. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Ram Prasad emphasized the importance of such environmentally beneficial activities, stating that plantation drives play a crucial role in ensuring clean air and supporting biodiversity. He appreciated the enthusiastic participation of Rotary members, youth, and local residents. Rotarian Shailendra Singh, who attended as a special guest, highlighted that trees play a primary role in pollution control and maintaining ecological balance. He urged everyone to actively participate in plantation efforts and take responsibility for nurturing the saplings. Rotary Club President Mr. Rambabu, Secretary Mr. Chand Basha, and Rotarians Shyam Kiran, Bhaskar, Prafulla Kumar, Changanal Rao, Basappa Ramesh,



Rajasekhar, Satyanarayana, Muralidhar, Tirupathi Rao, and Mahesh participated in the programme. Rotaractors Vidyavani, Mallikarjun, Soumya, and others were also present. The event witnessed active community involvement, reinforcing Rotary's commitment to sustainable environmental initiatives.

Grand Welcome to Buddhist Monks' Peace March by Jai Bhim Association



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 21 (Indian Chronicle):“Members of the Jai Bhim Association extended a grand welcome in Uppal on Saturday to the Peace March (Dhamma Yatra) undertaken by Thailand-India Buddhist monks, who are travelling from Gulbarga in Karnataka to Buddhavanam at Nagarjunasagar in Telangana with a message of world peace. The Dhamma Yatra began on Saturday morning from St. John Regional Seminary Church in Ramanthapur and reached the Dr.

Babasaheb Ambedkar statue located at Knowledge Park on Uppal Ring Road. The Buddhist monks paid floral tributes at the statue. The peace march later proceeded to Mangala Granite Mart near Nagole Metro Station, where the monks took a brief rest. Members of the Dharmapada Philomath Society (DPS) and Jai Bhim Association distributed drinking water, fruits, and biscuits to the participants. Members of the Dharmapada Philomath Society (DPS), Jai Bhim Association, Buddhist devotees, Ambedkarites, and humanists participated in the march and bid farewell to the monks at Nagole Metro Station.

Two Habitual Offenders Arrested; Rs 40 Lakh Stolen Property Recovered

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Begumpet Police arrested two habitual offenders involved in a house burglary and recovered stolen gold ornaments, mobile phones, and cash worth ₹40 lakh. The case was registered following a complaint by a 60-year-old resident of Satya Krishna Siri Sampada Apartments, Begumpet. The complainant had left her flat locked on February 15 to attend a family function. The next morning, she was informed that the main gate lock had been broken. On returning home, she found the house ransacked and gold ornaments and cash stolen. Police registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and launched an investigation. On February 21, the Begumpet Crime Team apprehended two accused persons with previous criminal records. Police recovered 235 grams of gold ornaments, two mobile phones, and ₹65,000 in cash. The total value of the recovered property is estimated at ₹40 lakh. Residents have been advised to take precautionary measures to prevent property offences.



DMHO Conducts Surprise Inspections of Private Nursing Homes, Issues Strict Directives

“Kranthikumar Dasari | Pinapaka Constancy | February 21 | Indian chronicle : District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) Dr. Tukaram Rathod conducted surprise inspections at several private nursing homes in Burgampadu and Bhadrachalam towns on Saturday, issuing strict directives to ensure compliance with statutory norms and patient care standards. During the inspections, Dr. Rathod instructed hospital managements to mandatorily appoint qualified paramedical staff, nursing officers, and registered medical practitioners. He warned that any violations would attract legal action under the Clinical Establishments Act. Emphasizing ethical medical practices, the DMHO directed hospitals to provide healthcare services to poor patients with a humanitarian approach. He also ordered that treatment price lists, names of doctors on duty, and details of services offered must be prominently displayed at hospital entrances for public awareness and transparency. In a separate inspection, Dr. Rathod visited the PMP First Aid Clinic operated by Sheikh Ranjan Ali at Nagaram Colony in Palvancha. Authorities identified several irregularities, including the clinic being run by an unqualified individual, possession of injections and medical promotional brochures, arrangement of two wooden beds for patients, and availability of medical equipment such as a BP apparatus and stethoscope. A notice has been issued to the concerned individual, directing him to submit an explanation within six days. Later, the DMHO inspected the MP Banjara Sub-Centre, where he reviewed records, IEC materials, and survey forms related to the ASHA workers' "Friday Dry Day" programme. He appreciated the services of ASHA worker Mrs. Radha and instructed all ASHA staff to maintain the prescribed survey format and submit



monthly reports for regular review. Dr. Rathod also attended the retirement function of ANM Dhanalakshmi and commended her dedicated services. The programme was attended by Bhadrachalam Sub-District Medical Officer Dr. Sridhar, Tribal Sub-District Medical Officer Dr. Saidulu, medical officers from Narsapuram, DPMO Mohan, and other staff members.

Man Reported Missing in AS Rao Nagar; Police Register FIR

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“A 51-year-old man, Kanikaram Rajashekar, resident of Villa No. 86, Mythri Enclave, Yapral, has been reported missing under suspicious circumstances linked to financial distress. According to the complaint filed by his wife, Kanikaram Kiranmayi, the incident occurred on February 20, 2026. At around 11:30 a.m., Rajashekar asked his daughter to drop him near AS Rao Nagar Road, stating that he would proceed to his parents' residence in Namalagundu, Sitaphalmandi. However, he never reached his parents' house and has not returned home since. After his disappearance, Kiranmayi discovered his mobile phone and a handwritten note at their residence. In the letter, Rajashekar reportedly mentioned that he was under severe mental stress due to financial problems and felt unable to cope with the situation, indicating that he was leaving permanently. The complainant contacted his parents and friends in an attempt to trace his whereabouts, but no information about his location has been found so far. Based on the complaint, police have registered an FIR and initiated an investigation to trace the missing person. Further details are awaited.



Our survival lies in our mother tongue - language is our strength and our future - Acharya Masana Chennappa Language skills offer vast employment opportunities - Principal Dr. K. Vijay Kumar

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 21 (Indian Chronicle):“International Mother Language Day celebrations were held grandly at Uppal Government Degree College under the auspices of the Telugu Department. The Principal, Dr. K. Vijay Kumar, presided over the event, while Telugu Assistant Professor Jalda Vishwanath Kumar coordinated the program. “Speaking on the occasion, Principal Dr. K. Vijay Kumar stated that preserving linguistic diversity is the responsibility of all. He emphasized that individuals with language proficiency have wide employment opportunities in teaching, journalism, broadcasting, creative writing, translation, publicity, public relations, government administration, business, diplomacy, and tourism sectors. He further noted that skills such as report writing, essay writing, letter writing, songwriting, poetry, and blogging offer numerous career prospects. Retired Head of the Telugu Department of Osmania University, Acharya and scholar-poet Masana Chennappa attended as the chief guest. He emphasized that survival is rooted in the mother tongue and stated, “Language is our strength and our future.” He described the mother tongue as our culture, soul, and identity. Language gives form to our thoughts and meaning to our emotions. Protecting the mother tongue, he said, is equal to protecting our existence. Telugu Assistant Professor Jalda Vishwanath Kumar remarked that linguistic diversity is our strength, but the mother tongue is our foundation. He said language is the address of our identity and the vehicle of our culture, and that the future belongs to those who learn multiple languages. English faculty member Dr. G. Tirupatayya stated that language is the document of our existence and history will never forget the self-respect movements fought for language. The event was attended by Vice Principal Dr. C.H. Satyanarayana, Dr. G. Tirupatayya, P. Vijay Kumar, Dr. V. Srinivasa Rao, Dr. R. Chandrasagar, Dr. P. Venkateswarlu, along with Telugu teachers Neeraja, Shailaja, Lakshma Reddy, Krishnaiah, and Kannaya from Zilla Parishad High School, Uppal. The program began with a song on the greatness of the mother tongue sung by Kumari Gatrini. Students took a pledge to respect their mother tongue and use it in their daily lives.



Encroacher of Forest Land Sent to 13-Day Remand

“Indian Chronicle" kumram bheem Asifabad District Reporter, Jade Srinivas, February, 21 “Tiryani Encroacher of Forest Land Sent to 13-Day Remand“ A person who allegedly attempted to encroach upon reserved forest land in Tiryani was arrested by Forest Department officials and later remanded to judicial custody for 13 days. According to Forest Range Officer S.R. Srinivas, the accused, Atram Gangu of Moriguda village, tried to clear forest land for cultivation by cutting down trees within the reserved forest area. Upon receiving information, forest officials rushed to the spot and stopped the illegal activity. “During the inspection, officials found evidence of tree felling and seized the tools used for the act. A case was registered against the accused, who was subsequently produced before the court. The court remanded him to 13 days of judicial custody. Speaking on the occasion, S.R. Srinivas warned that strict action would be taken against anyone violating forest and wildlife protection laws. He emphasized that no one would be spared if found involved in illegal encroachment or destruction of forest resources. Officials also urged the public to cooperate in protecting forest wealth and to immediately inform the Forest Department about any illegal activities in forest areas.



Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy Kalyana Mahotsavam from 26th to 29th of this month

“Yellandu, February 21 (Indian Chronicle):“in the sub-division “Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy Kalyana Mahotsavam (Thalla Thirunalla) at Komminepalli-Panditapuram village in Kamepalli mandal will be conducted by Komminepalli Panditapuram Bhakta Jana Samudram under the leadership of Komminepalli Panditapuram Bhakta Jana Samudram from Thursday 26th of this month“ Former ZPTC and DCCB Director Mekala Mallibabu Yadav said that the Mahotsava will be held till Sunday, 1/3/2026 and called upon the devotees to participate in the Mahotsava in a big way. “Malli Babu Yadav along with Sarpanch Dharaavath Anuradha, Vice-Sarpanch Mallikarjuna Rao, Maddineni Ramesh Babu and Dhaniakula Madhava Rao formally launched the wall magazine of Kalyana Mahotsava at Sri

Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple. Mallibabu Yadav said that Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy was installed in Komminepalli Pandithapuram village about 200 years ago during the Kakatiya period and since then, the Kalyana Mahotsava is held every year from the ninth day after Mahashivaratri. Malli Babu Yadav called upon the people to take part in the programme and pray for the success of any programme undertaken keeping in mind Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy. In the meeting, MP Kotha Prabhakar Reddy, former MLAs Satish Kumar, Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, Ganesh Gupta, MLC Farooq, Municipal Chairperson Raja Narsu, SUDA Chairman Ravinder Reddy, Councillor Venugopal Reddy and others participated. “Pradeep Bhardwaj, Bibi Kuldeep Kaur Kang, Satnam Kaur Sohail, Jaspal Singh, Gurmukh Singh Sohail, Harpal Singh Brar, Manjit Singh Mann and others were present on the occasion.



Telangana Gurukula Common Entrance Test to be Held Across the State Today

“Indian Chronicle” kumram bheem Asifabad District Reporte,Jade Srinivas.February, 21““The Telangana Gurukula Common Entrance Test (TGCT)–2026 will be conducted across the state today (Sunday, 22nd), informed the District Gurukula Coordination Officer of Komaram Bheem Asifabad district, Ms. Sharada.The examination is being held for admission into Class V through the common entrance test, as well as to fill the remaining seats in Classes 6, 7, 8, and 9. The exam will be conducted from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.23 Examination Centres in the District A total of 23 examination centres have been arranged in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. Officials stated that all necessary arrangements have been completed for the smooth conduct of the examination.“Students are advised to download their hall tickets in advance from the official website and report to their respective examination centres on time. Candidates are requested to reach the centre at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the examination.“Important Instructions for Students“Electronic gadgets such as mobile phones,smartwatches, and calculators are strictly prohibited.“Students must carry black or blue ballpoint pens.“Bringing an exam pad is mandatory.“Candidates



must carry their hall ticket and a valid ID proof.“District Gurukula Coordination Officer Ms. Sharada urged all students to follow the guidelines carefully and write the examination peacefully.“Best wishes to all the students appearing for the examination.

MLA Sri Ganesh inaugurated the cricket tournament

“Secunderabad Cantonment. February 20 (Indian Chronicle):“The Cantonment Merger Movement is organizing the cricket tournament with the intention of merging the cantonment into the municipality and attracting the youth as part of the effort to move the Cantonment Merger Movement forward by making the youth a partner in this.MLA Sri Ganesh said that the Cantonment Merger Movement is organizing the cricket tournament. MLA Sri Ganesh, who attended the cricket tournament being held at the Bowenpally Cantonment Play Ground on Saturday as the chief guest, threw the toss and started the competition by batting. In this process, he congratulated the players of both the teams and wished them well. Speaking at the meeting organized later, he said that The Cantonment Merger Movement Cricket Tournament is being organized under the auspices of the Boenpally youth to make the cantonment youth also support and participate in the movement. The program was attended by members of the Bowenpally Market Yard Governing Council, Sai Sarath, Balwant Reddy, Maruthi Goud, Muppidi Madhukar, Sada, Rajesh Yadav, Raju and others.



Ramdas Assures Improved Results in Intermediate Exams

“Indian Chronicle” kumram bheem Asifabad District Reporte,Jade Srinivas.February, 21.““The Intermediate Annual Examinations are scheduled to be conducted from February 25 to March 16.The district has consistently secured a top position in the state in Intermediate results over the past several years.“District Intermediate Education Officer (DIEO) Ramdas expressed confidence that the district will once again achieve excellent results this year. He stated that students have been thoroughly prepared with a focused academic plan to ensure improved performance.“Although local body and

municipal elections caused some disruption to regular classes, special coaching sessions have been conducted since November to compensate for the lost time and strengthen students' preparation for the examinations.“To ensure transparency in student attendance, the department implemented a facial recognition system. As a result, attendance levels have improved significantly. With better attendance and systematic preparation, officials are optimistic about achieving even better results this year.“The DIEO conveyed his best wishes to all students appearing for the Intermediate examinations and encouraged them to perform with confidence.

Anjaneyulu Sagar inspected the construction work of Mallanna Temple in Siddiq Nagar.

“Serilingampalli Zone Feb 21: Anjaneyulu Sagar, the leader of Anjaneyulu Nagar Division, inspected the ongoing construction work of Mallanna Temple in Siddiq Nagar under Anjaneya Nagar Division. On this occasion, the committee members honored him.““He said that the temple is a symbol of our culture and traditions, a center of spirituality and traditional values, and it is the honorable responsibility of all of us to build the Tuvanti Temple in our division, and promised to provide his full support for the construction work.““Mallanna Temple Committee President Basava Raju, Siddiq Nagar Colony President Tirupati Reddy, General Secretary Ravinder Reddy, leaders Yadayya Goud, Gopal Goud, Santosh, Ramu Yadav, Ramu, Sagar Anand Committee members, colony residents and others participated in this program.



Bharatanatyam Performance Enthralls Audience at Uppal Mini Shilparamam



and the popular “Aigiri Nandini.” The presentations were performed gracefully by students Aadhya, Hamsini, Shiraja, Madhavi, Poorvika, Kaushika, Darshita, Tejashree, Adira, Deeksha, Vasavi, Manvi, and Akshita, earning appreciation from the audience.“Guests of honour Padma Kalyan, Lanka Lakshminarayana, and Lion Dr. Kusuma Bhogaraju attended the event and congratulated the performers for their dedication and artistic excellence.

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI,Uppal, February 21 (Indian Chronicle):“As part of the weekend cultural programs at Uppal Mini Shilparamam, a Bharatanatyam recital by the disciples of renowned dance guru Nirmala Prabhakar captivated the audience on Saturday evening. The performance featured a rich repertoire including shlokas, Vinayaka Stuti, Jatiswaram, Shabdham, Annamacharya Keerthana, Tyagaraja Keerthana, Shivaashtakam,



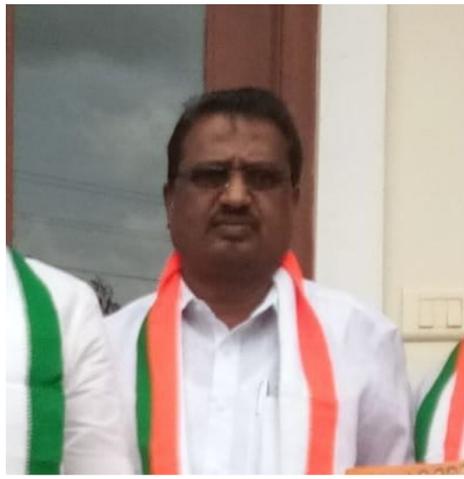
Telangana Police Sports and Games Sepak Takraw Silver for Kaleshwaram Zone

“Indian Chronicle” kumram bheem Asifabad District Reporte,Jade Srinivas.February, 21““At the Fourth Telangana Police Sports and Games being held at Gachibowli Stadium under the Hyderabad Commissionerate limits,the Kaleshwaram Zone team secured the Runner-up position in the Sepak Takraw event and won silver medals.With this achievement, three police personnel from Asifabad district AR Headquarters brought pride to the district by winning silver medals.The medal winners are:“Potta Gopi (PC 820) – Team Captain“Kiran Kumar (PC 888)“Rajesh (PC 709)“Selection for National Level“Team Captain Potta Gopi has been selected to participate in the 74th All India Police Sports Meet, scheduled to be held in Kerala from February 23 to 27.“SP Congratulates the Winners District Superintendent of Police Nitika Panth congratulated the winners on their commendable performance.She stated that achieving such success in sports competitions is highly appreciable and encouraged them to continue participating in future events and strive for greater accomplishments.“The SP further emphasized that the district police department will always remain committed to encouraging and supporting the sporting talent of police personnel.“This achievement has brought recognition and pride to Asifabad district in the state-level police sports arena.



Has the Congress Party Overlooked Telangana Activists?

- Is Rapolu Ramulu Not Deserving of the DCC President Post?



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajigiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Medchal district has witnessed growing discontent within the Congress party following the appointment of Thotakura Jangaiah Yadav as District Congress Committee (DCC) President. The exclusion of senior leader and Telangana movement activist Rapolu Ramulu from the post has triggered debate among party cadres and supporters. Rapolu Ramulu, a native of Boduppal in Medchal district, has been associated with the Telangana movement since its early days. He actively participated in protests and mobilization efforts and faced several legal cases during the

agitation period. Despite challenges, he continued his political and social work without seeking positions of power, focusing instead on strengthening the party at the grassroots level. During the period when the Congress party was out of power, Ramulu remained committed to sustaining party activities in the district. Supporters argue that he played a crucial role in keeping the party structure active and engaged with the public. In the past, Ramulu contested from the Medchal Assembly constituency as a Bahujan Samaj Party candidate and narrowly lost by a small margin of votes. Even after the electoral setback, he remained active among the people, organizing public movements and social service initiatives through a voluntary organization, earning recognition across the district. His family background is also linked to historic struggles. His mother, Rapolu Narasamma, reportedly participated as a woman activist in the Telangana armed struggle. Carrying forward that legacy, Ramulu was actively involved in organizing meetings and mobilizing public support during the Telangana statehood movement. He coordinated large public gatherings in the district and encouraged cultural activists and artists during the agitation. Recent municipal election results in parts of the district did not meet party expectations, leading to internal discussions about leadership strategy. Some party members believe that appointing a leader with grassroots support and a strong movement background could have strengthened the party further in Medchal. The decision has raised questions within party circles: Has the Congress leadership failed to recognize long-standing Telangana activists? Was Rapolu Ramulu overlooked despite his contributions and public support? The coming days will reveal whether the party leadership re-evaluates its approach in Medchal district, where leadership choices may significantly impact the party's future prospects.

Newly Elected Municipal Chairpersons and Councillors Meet Malla Reddy



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajigiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Medchal MLA and former minister Chamakura Malla Reddy met the newly elected Municipal Chairpersons and Councillors of Yellampet and Aliabad municipalities at his Boinpally camp office. The



elected representatives called on him as a courtesy visit following their recent election. On the occasion, Malla Reddy felicitated the Chairpersons and Councillors and extended his congratulations to them. He wished them success in their new roles and expressed hope that they would work towards the development and welfare of their respective municipalities.

Party Strength Needs Training Classes CM Revanth Reddy Launches “Sanghatan Srijan Abhiyan

“?? YS Sharmila: Leaders Must Build Strong Organizational Structure ?? DCC Presidents from AP & Telangana Attend“Indian Chronicle Vikarabad District, Babar (Feb, 21)“Vikarabad District, Ananatagiri Harita Resart The 10-day special training camp for District Congress Committee (DCC) Presidents from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana under the “Sanghatan Srijan Abhiyan” program kicked off with grandeur on Saturday.“Chief Minister Revanth Reddy graced the occasion as chief guest.“Other Dignitaries Present:- TPCC President & MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud“- APCC President YS Sharmila“- CWC Member Challa Vamsi Chand Reddy“- AICC In-charge Secretary Sachin Sawant“- Ministers: Sridhar Babu, Ponnamp Prabhakar, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy“- Govt Advisor: Vem Narender Reddy“- MLA: Rammohan Reddy“- Others“CM Revanth Reddy's Address: “Cadre training is essential for party strengthening.““DCC Presidents are bridges to carry party ideology to village level — they must lead in resolving public issues.“He urged them to play a key role in effectively delivering govt welfare schemes to people.“TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud: “Sanghatan Srijan Abhiyan will give new direction to Congress Party.““Only through coordination, discipline & action can the party grow stronger.“APCC President YS Sharmila: “Congress



leaders from both states must share experiences and work towards building a strong organizational structure.““She emphasized mutual learning for better party functioning.“Training Camp Details:“Organized under the leadership of:- Program Chairman“- Organizing Secretary Vamsi Chand Reddy“- Chairman MLA Rammohan Reddy““Over 10 days, participants will receive comprehensive training on:“Leadership skills,“ Public grievance redressal,“Election strategies,“ Media management,“ Other vital topics

How the NGT was alerted to illegal Anandapur warehouses years before the deadly fire



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Last month, a massive fire at two illegal warehouses in Anandapur under the Baruipur police district in West Bengal claimed 25 lives. While arrests were made and compensations paid, questions were also raised over how such illegal constructions were allowed in the wetlands. It has now emerged that a green activist and an individual who owns a property just a few steps away from the warehouses had separately moved the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Eastern Zone in this regard in the last few years. In 2023, Ankur Sharma, a green activist and advocate, moved the NGT against illegal filling of the East Kolkata Wetlands — an internationally recognised Ramsar site. According to Sharma, close to 88.52 acres of the wetlands were being filled and sold off as residential plots. In the petition, Sharma alleged that “land sharks in collusion with government officials have challenged the authority of the international convention and thus the existence of East Kolkata Wetlands. Due to such rampant encroachment of the East Kolkata Wetlands, it is slipping into a state of ‘extinction.’”

He had also questioned the role of the local administration, as electric supply lines and electric poles were erected by West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited in the wetlands. Sharma alleged that the local body also constructed or extended approach roads to the wetlands, thus enabling land sharks to sell the wetlands by filling them or draining them completely.

In January 2024, after hearing all sides, the NGT formed a committee to inspect the site in question and submit its report within four weeks with regard to the allegations made. The Committee had submitted a report to the statutory body stating that close to 600 illegal constructions had been found. Subsequently, demolition orders were issued, but the matter is still pending before the NGT. After that, in September 2024, an individual who had bought close to six acres of land in Najirabad, Anandapur, where the fire incident occurred, complained to the NGT.

According to Captain P Bhowmick, who had purchased land in the area, he had written to the NGT seeking

steps to save Nazirabad village, which falls under the East Kolkata Wetlands Conservation area (South 24 Parganas, Karimpur Mouja, Sonarpur Block). Thereafter, the NGT had taken suo motu cognizance of the case. In an order given in 2025, the NGT stated, “In another e-mail dated 04.07.2024 sent to the Office of the Tribunal addressed to the Pollution Control Board (PCB) (Copy of which has been sent to this Tribunal), it is alleged that several new concrete/metal Hanger construction are going on in full swing; private telephone tower constructions are in progress; Cold Storage Hanger is in progress which is a fishery in nature having an area of about 100 bighas and the nature of the land has been changed from fisheries to Shali land by dumping old building debris within 1 year.” The Tribunal had constituted a committee with a direction to visit the site in question and submit its fact-finding report.

The date of inspection of the site was set in January 2025, one year before the fateful night. A report was submitted by the Block Land and Land Reforms Officer (BL&LRO), Sonarpur, South 24 Parganas, dated March 4, 2025, which shows several plots in the East Kolkata Wetland Management Authority area having illegal constructions. The Tribunal, while disposing of the matter in its order stated, “Therefore, dispose of this Original Application with a direction to the East Kolkata Management Authority and the District Magistrate & Collector, South 24 Parganas, to take steps forthwith to remove all encroachments in the East Kolkata Wetlands and removal of all the constructions from the various L.R. Nos. and R.S. Nos. mentioned in the Report of the BL&LRO, Sonarpur, South 24 Parganas.”

While the Tribunal had ordered the removal of all the encampments on the wetlands, locals stated that nothing happened on the ground. After the fire incident, once again an application was filed with the NGT (Eastern Zone), alleging illegal filling, conversion, and commercial exploitation of wetlands in Karimpur Mouza under Narendrapur Police Station in the South 24 Parganas. Advocate Ankur Sharma has sought directions to safeguard wetlands from encroachment, contamination, and pollution. He also petitioned for an immediate stop to all construction and filling activities in the area and to order the demolition and removal of illegal constructions, subject to the findings of a committee. He stated that the ecology of the East Kolkata Wetlands is being systematically degraded due to illegal filling, draining, and conversion of wetlands in and around Karimpur Mouza. Speaking to The Indian Express, environmentalist S M Ghosh said, “The wetlands, which are like the kidney of Kolkata, are further drying up. The rainwater harvesting... is also lost due to 60 per cent concretisation. The wetlands also work as a ‘carbon sink’, which helps in reducing air pollution, but as we lose the wetlands, the air pollution will rise, and the ecological balance will also be lost.”

Mysuru man arrested for forging documents, audio clips to defame senior government officer

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Bengaluru police Bengaluru city cyber crime police officials collected digital evidence submitted by the complainant and examined the content uploaded on Facebook, including the disputed audio clip. A Mysuru social activist has been arrested for allegedly creating forged documents and fabricated audio clips to defame a senior government officer on social media, officials said on Friday. The police identified the accused as Snehmayi Krishna.

D B Natesh, KAS, a former Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) commissioner, had lodged a complaint alleging that unidentified people had morphed his photographs, prepared fake documents, and created fabricated voice recordings, which were later circulated on Facebook with the intent to tarnish his reputation. Following his complaint, a case was registered on February 18.

During the course of the investigation, Bengaluru city cyber crime police officials collected digital evidence submitted by the complainant and examined the content uploaded on Facebook, including the disputed audio clip. This allegedly led them to Krishna. After obtaining a search warrant from the jurisdictional court, the police conducted a



search at Krishna's residence in Mysuru and seized materials allegedly linked to the offence. Police said he was issued a notice to appear before the Cyber Crime police station and was subsequently questioned in connection with the case, following which he was arrested. “We have secured digital evidence and seized certain materials during the search. Further investigation is underway to ascertain the extent of circulation of the defamatory content and whether others were involved in creating or sharing it,” a police officer said.

11 Bangladeshi women staying illegally among 22 detained from brothel in Budhwar Peth



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Pune City Police detained 22 women, including 11 Bangladeshi nationals staying illegally in the city during a raid on a brothel in the Budhwar Peth area in the early hours of Wednesday. Based on a tip-off, teams from the Faraskhana and Khadak police units conducted a coordinated raid at the establishment. Speaking to The Indian Express, Deputy Commissioner of Police Krushikesh Rawale said, “Search operations were carried out, and teams from Faraskhana and Khadak units carried out a coordinated raid in a brothel in Budhwar Peth early Wednesday and detained 22 women, out of which 11 were Bangladeshi nationals.”

Of the 22 women detained, 11 produced valid Indian identity documents. The remaining 11 were found to be Bangladeshi nationals, six of whom admitted their nationality during questioning, while the identity of the other five was confirmed through document verification. Several of the women were also found carrying fake Aadhaar cards and other forged residential documents. Rawale added that such operations would continue. “Similar enforcement drives will continue to curb illegal activities and ensure strict action against offenders,” he said. Investigations in the current case are underway. On February 11, the Crime Branch and Zone One of Pune Police had conducted a combing operation in the Budhwar Peth area. Teams searched 41 buildings between midnight and 4 am, questioning more than 700 residents and visitors during the operation. Two Bangladeshi women were detained, four minor girls were rescued, and

seven grams of hashish, along with drug injections, were seized during the drive. The Pune Police have initiated legal procedures and further verification processes, and a case has been registered against the detained women at Faraskhana police station under relevant sections of law.

End of a literary era: Bengali author ‘Shankar’ passes away at 92

Indian express Author Mani Shankar Mukherjee was born in Bongaon under the present-day North 24 Parganas district in 1933. Eminent Bengali writer Mani Shankar Mukherjee passed away at the age of 92 on Friday. He was suffering from age-related issues and was admitted to a private hospital in Kolkata recently.

Condoling his demise, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote on her X handle, “I am deeply saddened by the passing away of renowned Bengali writer Mani Shankar Mukherjee (Shankar). With his passing, a bright star in the world of Bengali literature has fallen. ‘From ‘Chowrang’ to ‘Kato Ajanare’, from ‘Simabuddha’ to ‘Janaaranya’ — his timeless creations have fascinated Bengali readers for generations. His writings have revealed the untold stories of the common man’s struggle for life. His in-depth research and books, especially on Swami Vivekananda, are invaluable resources to us. His passing is an irreparable loss to our cultural world. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his beloved family and countless admirers.” Union minister and BJP leader Sukanta Majumder also wrote on his X handle, “I am deeply saddened by the passing of Mani Shankar Mukherjee (Shankar), one of the most popular writers of Bengal. His outstanding literary works — Chowrang, Jana Aranya, Kumkum Prabhu, etc., have enriched the reading community of Bengal and inspired generation after generation.

BJP’s Prabhakar Shinde, Rajashree Shirwadkar to helm BMC’s standing and education committees



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

The BJP’s Prabhakar Shinde and Rajashree Shirwadkar were on Friday elected unopposed as chairpersons of the civic standing and education committees, two key Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) bodies that shape policies related to its financial health and the management of the 400-plus educational institutions under its jurisdiction.

The two candidates were elected unopposed as the Shiv Sena (UBT), which is the second largest party in the BMC, did not field any candidates. Shinde, a five-time corporator for nearly three decades, entered the BJP in 2017—

the same year he was appointed as the group leader of the party. He started his political career in 1976 by joining the undivided Shiv Sena. In 1994, he was elected a member of the Kamgaar Sena, the workers’ union in the Brihanmumbai Electricity Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking and the BMC. Two years later, he was elected as the chairperson to the committee. Between 2002 and 2006, he also served as the Shiv Sena leader of the House. Meanwhile, Shirwadkar has been a three-time corporator since 2012. During her stint in the BMC, she has served as the chairperson for the civic women and children’s welfare committee twice. In 2017, she was also inducted into the civic standing committee.

As per the current strength, the standing committee is set to have 26 seats—10 from the BJP, seven from the Shiv Sena (UBT), four from the Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), three from the Congress and one each from the AIMIM and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS). Meanwhile, the education committee will have 22 seats, of which nine are from the BJP, six from the Shiv Sena (UBT), three from the Shiv Sena-NCP coalition, two from Congress and one each from the AIMIM and MNS. In addition to this, four nominated corporators will be inducted into the education committee, of which two are from the BJP, and one each from the Shiv Sena and Shiv Sena (UBT).

Rohtak MDU Vice Chancellor Rajbir Singh’s tenure ends in turmoil; Governor hands charge to KU counterpart



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

The closing weeks of Rajbir Singh’s tenure as MDU vice-chancellor were marked by a standoff with the Haryana Government over the issuance of appointment letters to 11 faculty members. The closing weeks of Rajbir Singh’s tenure as MDU vice-chancellor were marked by a standoff with the Haryana Government over the issuance of appointment letters to 11 faculty members. (Source: Facebook/mduniversity)

Haryana Governor Ashim Kumar Ghosh, on Friday, gave Kurukshetra University Vice-Chancellor Professor Som Nath Sachdeva the additional charge of Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak, replacing Rajbir Singh, whose tenure ended amid a series of controversies and a standoff with the government. Prof Sachdeva’s tenure will begin on February 21 until the “regular Vice-Chancellor is appointed”.

The closing weeks of Singh’s tenure were marked by a sharp confrontation with the state’s higher education department over the issuance of appointment letters to 11 faculty members — four professors and seven associate professors. On January 14, 2026, the Haryana Government directed the university not to make new appointments or hold Executive Council (EC) meetings to approve such appointments without prior approval. The directive also stated that no appointment orders should be issued and that no selected candidates should be allowed to join until the government made a decision. Despite these instructions,

Singh allegedly convened the 304th EC meeting on February 18. The state government, in a communication dated February 17 from the additional chief secretary of the higher education department, asked the MDU vice-chancellor and the registrar to postpone the meeting.

The government alleged that an earlier 302nd EC meeting had already been held in violation of instructions to reschedule it, and that appointment letters had been issued in violation of explicit directions. It also pointed out that the minutes of the 302nd meeting had not yet been approved and cautioned against acting on its agenda items. The situation escalated when Singh suspended MDU Registrar Dr Krishan Kant for complying with the state government’s directive to defer the February 18 meeting. The suspension triggered immediate intervention from the Haryana Governor in his capacity as Chancellor. On February 19, the Governor revoked the suspension order, reinstated Kant, and declared the February 18 EC meeting “illegal,” effectively nullifying its proceedings. Rajbir Singh’s critics alleged that the vice-chancellor attempted to push through the disputed appointments just days before the end of his second term. A senior EC member, speaking on condition of anonymity, claimed that the February 18 meeting was convened to confirm the minutes of the earlier session in which the appointments had been approved, despite clear government instructions to the contrary.

In September 2025, members of the Bhagat Singh Chhatar Morcha staged a protest at the MDU vice-chancellor’s official residence, alleging misuse of university resources and staff. The student group accused him of running an unauthorised “lowerpot factory” from the campus and diverting university funds, charges that further intensified scrutiny of his administration. With Singh’s tenure concluding amid administrative and legal questions, the Haryana Government’s decision to hand over the additional charge of MDU to the Kurukshetra University vice-chancellor is being seen as an interim arrangement until a regular appointment is made. The status of the disputed faculty appointments and the outcome of the pending inquiries are likely to remain key issues for the incoming administration.

Four Indian Youth Congress workers detained for protesting inside AI Summit venue, raising slogans against PM Modi



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

The Delhi Police have detained four Indian Youth Congress (IYC) workers who allegedly breached the security ring and entered Bharat Mandapam during the ongoing AI Impact Summit while chanting slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday. According to police, the detainees were wearing T-shirts with the Prime Minister’s picture printed on them, which they had concealed under their jackets and sweaters. They removed these items soon after entering the AI Expo Hall inside the venue.

The IYC is the youth wing of the Congress. Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Devesh Mahla said the individuals were immediately apprehended by the security personnel deployed at the premises. “We are conducting legal proceedings against the four and trying to ascertain the involvement of others,” Mahla said. He added that they had entered the premises after registering themselves through a QR code. Police said those detained have been identified as Krishna Hari (35), National Secretary of the of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC), and a resident of Bihar; Kundan Yadav, also from Bihar; Ajay Kumar; and Narasimha Yadav, National Coordinator of the IYC.

The incident occurred at 12.30 pm, when a group of six-eight men wearing jackets and sweaters entered Hall Number 7. Police sources said it appeared to be a planned protest. Some of them even removed their jackets and T-shirts, partially undressing during the protest. The Delhi Police have taken the detainees to Tilak Marg Police Station for further questioning, sources added.

In a statement, IYC president Uday Bhanu Chib said

at the AI Summit, the frontal organisation “raised its voice and protested against the compromised Prime Minister who has compromised the nation’s identity”. In the statement, Chib said the IYC “made it clear that the youth of the country will no longer remain silent”. “The ‘PM is compromised’ is not just a slogan, but the anger of millions of unemployed youth. This trade deal with the US is a betrayal of the interests of our farmers and the public, which will only benefit the US. Peaceful protest is our right in a democracy, and we will continue to raise the voice of the youth,” he said. Chib added that the IYC is not against the AI Summit but is against any compromise with India’s interests. “When the country’s farmers are being compromised, anti-India trade agreements are being signed, and youth are being pushed into hate politics while keeping them unemployed, should we remain silent? This country belongs to 1.4 billion citizens.” Asad Rehman is with the national bureau of The Indian Express and covers politics and policy focusing on religious minorities in India. A journalist for over eight years, Rehman moved to this role after covering Uttar Pradesh for five years for The Indian Express. During his time in Uttar Pradesh, he covered politics, crime, health, and human rights among other issues. He did extensive ground

BRS targets Kadiyam Srihari over remarks on KCR

Hyderabad: Calling Station Ghanpur MLA Kadiyam Srihari a political opportunist, former MLA Nannapaneni Narendar targeted him for his recent statements against BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Rao. He said Srihari had no values and shifted loyalties multiple times for personal and political gains.

Addressing a press meet at Telangana Bhavan on Friday, Narendar objected to Srihari’s remarks against the BRS chief who earned people’s respect through the Telangana statehood movement and governance. However, he said Srihari who enjoyed key positions in the BRS regime, shifted to the Congress immediately after the latter came to power.

Will double rural job from 100 to 200 days if BJP voted to power in Bengal, Rs 3 Lakh housing aid: Suwendu Adhikari



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Asserting that the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) will be in the opposition bench after the Assembly elections in West Bengal, Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari on Friday said that the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process is an indicator of what is likely to happen in the upcoming polls. "Trinamool Congress will become an opposition party in West Bengal in April," Adhikari said, while addressing BJP's 'Parivartan Sankalp Sabha' (resolution for change meeting) at Chanchal in Malda district. "Bihar ki jeet hamari hai, ab bangal ki bari hai" (the victory in Bihar is ours, now it is Bengal's turn)," he added.

Adhikari claimed the TMC had rigged votes and used Bangladeshi infiltrators to win the 2024 elections, but the BJP would ensure their defeat in 2026. "By rigging votes, looting booths, and using the votes of Bangladeshi infiltrators, the gap between us and them in the 2024 elections was 4 million (40 lakhs). However, in the first jolt of the SIR, 5.8 million (58 lakh) names have been removed. More names of Rohingyas and infiltrators will be removed from the voter list," he said. "You have seen the trailer in Delhi of what the SIR is going to be. The TMC's second-in-command is already saying they don't accept this voter list. After February 14, everyone in the TMC will be saying the same thing," Adhikari added. Assembly elections in West Bengal are due in the first half of this year. The Calcutta High Court had granted permission for this BJP meeting, but with certain conditions.

While addressing the gathering Adhikari mentioned: "Despite the court's order, the TMC tried to block our meeting. I have held 104 meetings with the court's permission, and we will continue to fight." Adhikari criticized the TMC government, alleging corruption and misuse of funds meant for welfare schemes. He said that the money meant for the 100-day work scheme, toilet construction, and the Awas Yojana has been looted. He further claimed that "these funds have even reached the hands of Bangladeshi infiltrators". The senior BJP leader has promised to extend the 100-day work scheme to 200 days and provide Rs 3 lakh for building houses under the Awas Yojana if the party comes to power in West Bengal. "If the BJP takes office in the state, the number of working days under the central government's 100-day work scheme (MGNREGA) would

be doubled to 200 days. Additionally, he assured that the allocation of funds for building houses under the Awas Yojana would also be increased to 3 lakhs. When the BJP comes, there will be a real change in the lives of the poor," he said.

Adhikari also promised better welfare schemes for the people if the BJP comes to power in Bengal, saying that the TMC is spreading lies that the 'Lokkhir Bhandar' scheme of the Mamata Banerjee government for giving monetary support to women will be stopped by the party. "Keep your 100-day work cards ready; bring the BJP to power, and you will get 200 days of work. There are only four months left, do not worry. In 2024, with the chant of 'Jai Jagannath,' a BJP government was formed in Odisha. This time, there will be a change in Bengal as well," the BJP leader said. Suwendu Adhikari designated West Bengal as "the homeland for Bengali Hindus" and referred to the attack on Malda Uttar BJP MP Khagen Murmu in Jalpaiguri in October last year to state that the party cannot allow such spilling of blood to continue on the soil of the state. Khagen Murmu of the BJP is the MP for the North Malda Lok Sabha constituency. "He went there to provide relief, not to seek votes. Khagen Murmu's blood shall not go in vain," Adhikari said. "Sanatani Hindus have united in two places in this state - North Malda and Nandigram. If Sanatanis come forward inspired by North Malda, the BJP will win not 200, but 220 seats," he added. Adhikari referred to attacks on Hindus during the anti-Waqf Amendment Act violence in Murshidabad in early 2025, stating that the "need of the hour" was to "unite the Hindus statewide". He drew parallels between the killings of the father-son duo, Chandan Das (40) and his father Hargobind Das, in the violence-hit Samsanganj area of Murshidabad district in April last year and that of Dipu Chandra Das in Bangladesh in December, criticizing the TMC's handling of such incidents. He also referenced the historic conquest of "Anga-Banga-Kalinga", targeting the TMC on multiple fronts.

Suwendu Adhikari, now a key BJP leader, previously oversaw TMC operations in Malda and Murshidabad for over 3 years. While TMC struggled to gain traction in Malda, Adhikari successfully turned Murshidabad into a TMC stronghold. Adhikari who has become the face of Bengal BJP defeated Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the last elections and is now targeting Malda and Murshidabad for BJP in 2026. Suwendu Adhikari also fired back at TMC's Malda district president Abdur Rahim Bakshi, who had earlier threatened to block his entry into the district. Adhikari recalled his past association with Bakshi, saying, "

When I was a TMC observer, Rahim Bakshi used to open my car door. Now, I'll ensure he's defeated." Challenging Bakshi's defeat in Maltipur, he said, "I don't know who will win in Maltipur. But I will not let Rahim win. If TMC nominates him in Maltipur, I will ensure his defeat. I know the mantra of how to defeat him. In this district, the fight will be between the Left-Congress alliance and the BJP. We are leading in six seats here. I hope we will get two more."

SHRC directs Thane Collector to pay compensation to man whose plot was acquired for govt project

EMS News Agency, Jan 27

Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission, MSHRC, The commission in its order mentioned that it had earlier asked the collector to conduct a fact-finding inquiry into the matter and submit a report. The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission (MSHRC) last month directed the Thane Collector to pay compensation to a Kurla resident whose plot was allegedly acquired for a government project but was not paid compensation. The order was made available on Thursday.

The complainant, Mohd Shaikh, approached the commission stating that his property bearing Plot No. 111 at Mauje Balyani in Kalyan Taluka comprising his house and shop were taken up for the Mumbai-Vadodara Ramay Alignment. He alleged that since he was not paid any com-

pensation, he was left without any source of income following which he approached the MSHRC. The commission in its order by chairperson Justice AM Badar mentioned that it had earlier asked the collector to conduct a fact-finding inquiry into the matter and submit a report. The order mentioned that the collector neither carried out the inquiry nor appeared before the commission. The commission mentioned that in the instant case in absence of rebuttal by the Collector, Thane to the averment made in the complaint it needs to be held that property of the complainant is compulsory acquired by the state without payment of any compensation. The order further mentioned that it needs to be ordered to the Collector, Thane to pay fair compensation to the complainant as per the existing law viz. The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013.



ing at BMC-owned parking facilities and said redeveloped buildings would follow a one-flat-one-parking norm. BEST bus fares would be reduced and simplified into flat slabs such as Ra 5-10 and Rs 15-20 to make public transport affordable. The leaders also stressed pedestrian facilities, promising better footpaths and protection of open spaces. "Footpaths are not optional. Citizens must get safe space to walk," Aadiya Thackeray said. A climate action plan aimed at improving air quality and reducing pollution was also part of the agenda. "Mumbai has to breathe freely. We cannot ignore the environment anymore," he said. Among other promises announced were 100 units of free electricity, efforts to keep water charges stable, improved power supply in eastern and western suburbs through BEST, crèches in every Assembly constituency, international-standard public toilets, and a new cancer hospital in Mumbai with a focus on early detection. Speaking at the workshop, Amit Thackeray said, "There is too much arrogance in power today. This election is about breaking that arrogance and bringing the focus back on Mumbai and its people." Aadiya Thackeray also spoke about Mumbai's status as the country's financial capital and said the alliance would push for control over around 1,800 acres of land held by the Mumbai Port Trust. A party functionary said the promises made by Amit And Aadiya were concentrated on the BMC and was focused on briefing the candidates workers to use it for the campaigning.

Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar lands in controversy after Oppn demands criminal case



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Maharashtra Congress on Friday demanded a criminal case against Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar over a video in which he is allegedly threatening opposition candidates while they are filing nomination papers. The State Election Commission (SEC) on Thursday wrote to Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner Bhushan Gagrani seeking a report on the complaints filed by candidates against Narvekar.

"Narvekar's conduct is objectionable and amounts to a violation of the Model Code of Conduct, a criminal case should be registered against him. Further, as many as 70 officers and employees from his office are actively participating in the election campaign of candidates who are his relatives, cases should also be registered against all of them

for violating the Model Code of Conduct and strict action should be taken," said Maharashtra Congress president Harshwardhan Sapkal. The video that has surfaced on social media shows Narvekar purportedly saying, "How can you have police protection and still want to protest here? I will have to remove your protection tomorrow." Narvekar is then heard instructing one of his colleagues to call the joint commissioner of police (protection), Mumbai, and saying, "On what grounds have you been given police protection? There should be no security for you. You don't deserve it."

Earlier, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut claimed CCTV footage linked to filing of nominations on December 30 at the RO office had gone missing. "This is a very serious matter. What answer will Rahul Narvekar give me? His political journey began in the Shiv Sena. As per my information, CCTV footage after 4 pm (on December 30) has been removed. How can the Assembly Speaker's CCTV footage go missing," Raut asked. Another former MP Haribhau Rathod too claimed that Narvekar objected to his presence when he had gone to file his son's nomination in Colaba for the civic polls. Narvekar rejected the charges levelled by the Opposition parties and insisted it was his responsibility to take note if any individual tried to pressure others, but denied any wrongdoing. "When I accompanied BJP's official candidates to the returning officer's office, some people gathered outside and were creating a scene. I requested the police to warn them. I know nothing more about the incident," Narvekar said. He denied any role in the missing CCTV footage, saying, "If I was not there, how will I appear in any footage? Such baseless allegations have no meaning."

'Ever seen dead walking the ramp?': TMC's Abhishek kicks off 'Abar Jitbe Bangla' yatra with EC poser



EMS News Agency, Jan 27

Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Friday started his month-long 'Abar Jitbe Bangla' (Bengal Will Win Again) yatra from Baruipur of West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district, targeting the Election Commission over the issue of "flesh-and-blood" people being declared dead in the draft voter list during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in the state. With the state headed for the Assembly elections in three months, the three-time Diamond Harbour MP's statewide yatra is being seen as an attempt to reach out to voters and galvanise the party's rank and file. Addressing the rally in Baruipur, the 38-year-old MP, nephew of TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and seen as the party's second-in-command, made three persons allegedly declared dead in the draft voter list walk the "ramp", saying, "We may question why we got this ramp made. It was built to make these three ghosts walk. Have you ever seen the dead walk the ramp? They are flesh-and-blood citizens of Bengal, cruelly declared dead by the EC just because they dared to vote against the BJP's anti-Bangla tyranny." The names of the three who walked the "ramp" were revealed as Manirul Mollah and Maya Das of Metiabruz and Harekrishna Giri of Kakdwip in the district.

Banerjee added, "It's not just three or four cases. There are at least 24 people in South 24 Parganas who are alive but were shown as dead in the draft voter list. The conspiracy to disenfranchise the people of Bengal stands exposed. As long as we are there, we will not allow a person's right to vote to be taken away." "These people (BJP and EC) defame Bengal by claiming it is full of the Rohingyas and Bangladeshis. When I asked Gyanesh Kumar (Chief Election Commissioner) how many Bangladeshis and Rohingyas were removed from the electoral rolls in the state he started pointing fingers at me. I told him to put his finger down, telling him 'you are nominated and I am elected'," the TMC leader told the gathering.

He further said, "Here, people are dying and Gyanesh (Kumar) is expecting we would go to meet him with flowers. This is TMC. This time I went to Delhi but what will you do Smt Mamata Banerjee goes there next time?" Setting the tone for the upcoming Assembly polls, he said, "This election is not just to defeat them but to teach these anti-Bangla people a lesson. Nearly 1.36 crore people are being forcibly summoned (for SIR hearings) by sending notices. If the BJP has enmity with us, let them send notices to me and other

Trinamool leaders. How dare they send notices to people like this? They have declared a war against the people of Bengal without winning Bengal." Hinting at visiting the EC's headquarters in the national capital again on the alleged flaws in the SIR process, the MP said, "I left the people who were in the field today, people who were on both sides of the road when we came from Patuli. If one third of them go to Delhi, Gyanesh Kumar and (Union Home Minister) Amit Shah will be washed away. They won't be seen." Over the next one month, the TMC leader will hold roadshows, public meetings and community interactions across the state as part of the 'Abar Jitbe Bangla' yatra, a party leader said.

Navi Mumbai set to get its first IMD observatory; enhance coverage of region, Raigad district

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Officials said that while the METAR services for aviation has been made functional at Navi Mumbai, work is underway to establish a full fledged traditional observatory alongside the aerodrome meteorological station (AMS). Officials said that while the METAR services for aviation has been made functional at Navi Mumbai, work is underway to establish a full fledged traditional observatory alongside the aerodrome meteorological station (AMS). (Express Photo) Tucked within the Navi Mumbai International Airport premises, Navi Mumbai is set to get its first India Meteorological Department (IMD) weather observatory in what seeks to enhance weather observations and forecasts for the extended Raigad district. The region's first observatory is being developed as an ancillary to the IMD's newly launched aerodrome meteorological station (AWS), which was operationalised on December 25 when the airport commenced commercial operations.

While the aerodrome station involves monitoring of equipment on the airport runway and publishing of METAR that facilitates smooth aviation services, the upcoming observatory will be equipped with traditional equipment such as wind profilers and automatic weather stations to provide accurate local forecasting and readings for entire Raigad district. Launched in December 2025, the AMS is situated inside the premises of the Navi Mumbai International Airport allowing IMD officials to track data and generate a Meteorological Aerodrome Report (METAR) which enables pilots to make informed decisions during landing and takeoff. According to officials, the METAR furnishes details pertaining to the visibility along the runway, temperature, atmospheric pressure, wind speed and directions amongst other weather observations which are crucial for the take-off and landing of aircraft.

Bikram Singh, director of IMD Mumbai, told, "The METAR report being generated at the Navi Mumbai aerodrome station is crucial for aviation purposes to ensure safe takeoff and landing situations. We look at various parameters ranging from wind speed to visibility which can impact flight services. The METAR product generated at the station is shared with the Air Traffic Control, who further



share this crucial information with the pilots to ensure that they can make an informed decision." Singh said that while the METAR reports are published every 30 minutes, other reports crucial to aviation services ranging from terminal aerodrome forecast (TAF), aerodrome warning and SIGMETs are generated by the Aerodrome Meteorological Office (AMO) situated at the Mumbai airport in Santacruz.

Officials said that while the METAR services for aviation has been made functional at Navi Mumbai, work is underway to establish a full fledged traditional observatory alongside the aerodrome meteorological station (AMS). At present, there are two observatories in Mumbai, in Colaba and Santacruz each, while the next IMD observatory is situated in Ratnagiri district.

The lack of an IMD observatory for the Navi Mumbai region has been subject to criticism. After the IMD drew flak for failing to issue timely alerts for heatwave when 14 people died of heatstroke while attending a rally, an automatic weather stations (AWS) was opened in Kharghar. But, a dedicated observatory for the region was missing.

To bridge the gap, the weather bureau is now constructing an observatory which seeks to boost forecasting in the region. "With the opening of the aerodrome station, we are already generating daily observations for the region. After Mumbai, the next IMD observatory lies in Ailbaug. This new observatory will not only support aviation services but also provide enhanced forecasting for Navi Mumbai and Raigad district," said an official from the IMD aerodrome station.

China taxes condoms, contraceptive drugs in bid to spur birth rate



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

China removed a three-decade-old tax exemption on contraceptive drugs and devices from January 1 in new steps to spur a flagging birth rate. Condoms and contraceptive pills now incur value-added tax of 13%, the standard

rate for most consumer goods. The move comes as Beijing struggles to boost birth rates in the world's second-largest economy. China's population fell for a third consecutive year in 2024 and experts have cautioned the downturn will continue.

China exempted childcare subsidies from personal income tax and rolled out an annual childcare subsidy last year, following a series of "fertility-friendly" measures in 2024, such as urging colleges and universities to provide "love education" to portray marriage, love, fertility and family in a positive light. Top leaders again pledged last month at the annual Central Economic Work Conference to promote "positive marriage and childbearing attitudes" to stabilise birth rates. China's birth rates have been falling for decades as a result of the one-child policy. China implemented from 1980 to 2015, and rapid urbanisation. The high cost of childcare and education as well as job uncertainty and a slowing economy have also discouraged many young Chinese from getting married and starting a family.

Trump says U.S. will intervene if Iran violently suppresses peaceful protests

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday (January 2, 2025) said that if Iran shoots and violently kills peaceful protesters, the United States of America will come to their rescue. "We are locked and loaded and ready to go," he said in a Truth Social post. Iran Supreme Leader adviser Larijani says Mr. Trump should know that U.S. interference in Iran protesting issue is equivalent to chaos across entire region



day over the government's handling of a sharp currency slide and rapidly rising prices. Iran's economy has struggled for years since the U.S. reimposed sanctions in 2018, after Mr. Trump withdrew from an international nuclear agreement during his first term.

Mr. Trump's comment follows the deaths of several people as Iran's biggest protests in three years over economic hardship turned violent across multiple provinces. People walk past closed shops, following protests over a plunge in the currency's value, in the Tehran Grand Bazaar in Tehran, Iran, on December 30, 2025. The clashes between protesters and security forces mark a significant escalation in the unrest that has spread across the country since shopkeepers began protesting on Sun-

Don't need treaty with Dhaka to push back 'illegal immigrants', says Himanta



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday (January 1, 2026) said his government would not wait for a repatriation treaty between India and Bangladesh to intensify the pushback of "illegal immigrants" under a new policy framework. He exuded confidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would form the government for the third consecutive time in the State and continue with its agenda of development and safeguarding the interests of indigenous peoples. Mr. Sarma said some 2,000 foreigners who stayed illegally in Assam were pushed back over the past few months. They included 18 sent across the India-Bangladesh border on Wednesday (December 31, 2025).

ers' agitation from 1979 to 1985, the Assam Accord prescribed March 25, 1971, as the cut-off date to detect and deport "illegal immigrants", irrespective of their faith. "The Centre and the Assam government decided that a person would lose the right to live in India after being declared a foreigner. The Supreme Court also said the district commissioner has the authority to order the expulsion of such people," Mr. Sarma said.

"Developed State" The Chief Minister said Assam has been recognised as the fastest-growing State in the country. "India's growth rate between 2020 and 2025 was 29%. Assam's growth rate during the same period was 45%. We are heading towards becoming a developed State," he said, adding that the per capita income increased at a rate of 54%.

"These are not tall claims, but data provided by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The growth is evident from investments in major projects, such as the ₹27,000-crore Tata semiconductor plant, the ₹10,601-crore fertilizer plant in Namrup, and a ₹3,200-crore thermal plant at Chapar," he said. Mr. Sarma outlined a slew of infrastructure projects which include the 32 km elevated corridor near Kaziranga National Park, estimated to cost ₹6,957 crore and scheduled to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 17 or 18. The Prime Minister is also expected to lay the foundation stone of the proposed railway line and allied infrastructure from western Assam's Kokrajhar to Bhutan's Gelephu. Another mega project in the pipeline is the ₹22,000-crore twin-tube tunnel under the Brahmaputra River connecting Gohpur on the northern bank to Numaligarh on the southern bank. "This was initially a road project, but the Prime Minister advised us to add railways," the Chief Minister said. Justice for Zubeen Mr. Sarma said Assam, despite the growth chart, was left poorer in 2025 by the death of cultural icon Zubeen Garg.

"Our government is committed to ensuring justice for his family. We will appoint a special public prosecutor, assisted by a team of three to four criminal lawyers, on January 12. The government will also approach the Gauhati High Court to set up a special court exclusively for the case, aimed at expediting proceedings and ensuring transparency," he said, lauding the Special Investigation Team (SIT) for filing the charge sheet without delay. Garg died on September 19, 2025, while swimming in the sea a day before he was scheduled to perform at a cultural festival in Singapore. On January 14, a Singapore court is likely to open a coroner's inquiry into his death. On the recent killing of Tripura student Anjel Chakma in Uttarakhand's Dehradun, the Chief Minister said people in mainland India should be educated about the northeast to avoid such incidents in the future. The culprits should be booked and given severe punishment, he said.

"If the eviction of foreigners from 1.45 lakh hectares of government land was the hallmark last year, 2026 will be marked by the number of foreigners expelled," the Chief Minister told journalists during the customary New Year interaction. He thanked the Centre for playing an active role in the pushback. Mr. Sarma attributed the drive to the revitalisation of the Immigrants' (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950, with a standard operating procedure for swift action, allowing the District Commissioners to issue orders for suspected foreigners to leave within 10 days, or order expulsion within 24 hours if they cannot prove citizenship. Undocumented migrants leaving via eastern border tripled in 2025 compared to 2024, government data show

"We are not talking about a repatriation treaty (with Bangladesh), and we don't need it. Just pushing back will be the new way to deal with foreigners," he said, announcing the government's resolve to intensify the identification and deportation of such people over the next five years. The Chief Minister said he was confident that Assam would be able to evict 10,000 to 15,000 foreigners every year from 2026. He said that the Assam Accord of 1985 has no guidelines on how "illegal immigrants" are to be driven out following detection. "People declared foreigners were kept at a designated jail under detention, but they managed to walk out on bail earlier," he said. Signed in August 1985 between the Centre and organisations spearheading the anti-foreign-

India, Pakistan exchange lists of nuclear installations, prisoners

GNS News Agency, Feb 21 Continuing an over three-decade practice, India and Pakistan on Thursday (January 1, 2026) exchanged a list of their nuclear installations under a bilateral pact that prohibits the two sides from attacking each other's atomic facilities. The exchange of the list came even as the ties between the two countries remain under deep freeze following four-day military hostilities last May. The two countries also exchanged a list of prisoners under the consular access agreement signed on May 21, 2008. "Pakistan and India exchanged the lists of their respective nuclear installations pursuant to the agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between Pakistan and India signed on 31st December 1988," Foreign Office spokesman Tahir Andrabi said at the weekly press briefing. He said that the list of nuclear installations and facilities was handed over to the representative of the Indian High Commission in the Foreign Office. Mr. Andrabi said that both countries also exchanged the lists of prisoners in each other's custody through diplomatic channels. "The government of Pakistan today handed



over a list of 257 Indian prisoners, including 199 fishermen and 58 other civilians in Pakistan's custody, to the High Commission of India in Islamabad," he said. Andrabi said that sharing the list is consistent with the bilateral agreement, and the two countries are obligated to exchange the list of prisoners twice a year, at the start of January and July.

How language became a battleground in Assam



Decades after blood was spilt on the streets of southern Assam's Silchar, a new academic study examines how language, power and identity converged to produce one of the State's most volatile conflicts. The study, published in Contemporary South Asia, analyses the 1961 violence to argue that the crisis was not inevitable but the result of political choices, policy failures and deep-seated historical anxieties. It contends that language in Assam has never been merely a means of communication but has functioned as a marker of belonging and, at times, a trigger for violence.

The authors of the study are Md. Chingiz Khan of the Centre for Comparative Religions and Civilisations at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Ravi Shankar of the School of Global Affairs at B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi, and Bharti Shokeen of Sri Karan Narendra Agriculture University, Jobner, Rajasthan. The study traces the flashpoint to 1961, when the Assam government amended its Official Language Act to recognise Assamese as the sole official language, while allowing limited use of Bengali in parts of the Barak Valley. The decision triggered widespread protests across the region. Firing by security forces at demonstrators in Silchar left 11 people dead on May 19, 1961, a chapter that remains deeply etched in the collective memory of the Barak Valley.

The study argues that reducing the episode to an "Assamese versus Bengali" conflict obscures its deeper complexity. Assam, it notes, has long been a multilingual and multi-ethnic society, home to diverse communities, whose coexistence was disrupted by rigid language policies. "An intersectional approach, considering temporality, ethnicity, region, culture, and politics, offers a more nuanced understanding [of the issue]. Assam's identity has been shaped by centuries of migration, cultural exchange,

and layered histories, making rigid categorisations reductive," the study observes.

The study underlines the decisive role of colonial policies in shaping linguistic hierarchies. British administrators classified and ranked languages through censuses and surveys, transforming fluid identities into rigid categories. The imposition of Bengali as the language of administration in 19th century Assam marginalised Assamese speakers in courts and government employment. When Assamese later regained official status, the balance shifted, fuelling resentment among Bengali speakers, particularly in Bengali-majority regions such as Cachar. According to the study, language became closely tied to access to power. Official recognition translated into employment opportunities, control over land records and political influence. Communities that felt excluded came to view language policy as an existential threat. In Cachar, where Bengali speakers formed an overwhelming majority, the enforcement of Assamese was perceived as cultural domination. In the Brahmaputra Valley, concessions to Bengali speakers were seen as undermining Assamese identity.

The study notes that the violence of 1961 reflected both popular anger and institutional failure, with the Centre and the Assam government underestimating the depth of the crisis. Interim measures such as the Shastri Formula failed to address underlying tensions. Political parties were divided, bureaucracies were paralysed, and sections of the media, particularly newspapers published from Calcutta, were accused of aggravating the situation.

Beyond communal binaries The study rejects the notion that the movement was communal in nature. Protesters on all sides included Hindus, Muslims and tribal groups, underscoring that language solidarity often cut across religious lines. This, the authors argue, exposes the limitations of narratives that frame the conflict as Hindu versus Muslim or indigenous versus migrant. It also draws attention to smaller linguistic communities whose concerns were marginalised as Assamese and Bengali groups competed for dominance. Tribal languages, the study notes, faced the risk of gradual erosion amid the larger struggle. The authors conclude that the fault lines exposed in 1961 continue to shape contemporary debates around citizenship, belonging and indigeneity, particularly in the context of the National Register of Citizens and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. The lesson, they argue, is that imposing monolingual solutions in a linguistically diverse society is a recipe for unrest.

Iran government building attacked as top prosecutor responds to protests

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

A government building in southern Iran was attacked on Wednesday (December 31, 2025), authorities said, as the country's top prosecutor warned of a "decisive response" to any attempt to create instability after days of economic protests. Spontaneous protests, driven by dissatisfaction at Iran's economic stagnation, began on Sunday (December 28, 2025) in Tehran's largest mobile phone market, where shopkeepers shuttered their businesses, and have since drawn in students across the country.



"A portion of the provincial governors' office door and its glass were destroyed in an attack by a number of people," said Hamed Ostovar, the head of the judiciary in the city of Fasa, as quoted by the Justice Ministry's Mizan agency, without specifying how the attack was carried out. The attack came after the country's prosecutor general said the protestor's economic concerns were legitimate, but warned action would be taken if necessary.

"Peaceful livelihood protests are part of social and understandable realities," Mohammad Movahedi-Azad told state media. "Any attempt to turn economic protests into a tool of insecurity, destruction of public property, or implementation of externally-designed scenarios will inevitably be met with a legal, proportionate and decisive response." His comments came days after the Mossad intelligence agency of Iran's arch-foe Israel posted on social media that it was "with you on the ground" in a message to Iranian protesters. Posting on its Persian-language X account, the spy agency encouraged Iranians to "go out into the streets together". Iran, which does not recognise Israel, has long accused it of conducting sabotage operations against its nuclear facilities and assassinating its scientists.

Fighting for food The rallies have since built momentum, with students at 10 universities in the capital and in other cities, including Iran's most prestigious institutions, joining in on Tuesday (December 30, 2025).

The vice-president of the University of Tehran, Mohammad Reza Taghidokt, told the Iranian Students' News Agency that four students were arrested on Tuesday (December 30, 2025) and released overnight. Nevertheless, the protests remain limited in number and concentrated in central Tehran, with shops elsewhere in the sprawling metropolis of 10 million people unaffected.

Before the attack in Fasa, Iranian media had not reported any new protests on Wednesday (December 31,

2025). Iran's economy has been in the doldrums for years, with heavy U.S. and international sanctions over Tehran's nuclear programme weighing heavily on it.

The currency, the rial, has also plunged in recent months, losing more than a third of its value against the U.S. dollar since last year. Some basic necessities are becoming unaffordable for a portion of the population, which has been suffering from international sanctions against Iran for decades. "Everyone here is fighting for a scrap of bread," said one protester interviewed Tuesday (December 30, 2025) by the daily newspaper Etemad. Last-minute bank holiday Schools, banks and public institutions were closed on Wednesday (December 31, 2025) for a bank holiday, with officials saying the directive was due to the cold weather and the need to save energy. The capital's prestigious Beheshti and Allameh Tabataba'i universities announced that classes would be held online throughout next week for the same reason, the state-run IRNA news agency reported.

The authorities have not linked the bank holiday to the protests. Tehran is experiencing daytime temperatures in the low single digits, which is not unusual for the time of year. Weekends in Iran begin on Thursdays, while this Saturday marks a long-standing national holiday. Iran is no stranger to nationwide protests, but the latest demonstrations have not come close to the last major outbreak in 2022 triggered by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a young Iranian woman. Her death in custody after being arrested for allegedly violating the strict dress code for women sparked a wave of anger across the country.

Several hundred people were killed, including dozens of members of the security forces. There were also widespread protests in 2019, sparked by a sharp increase in the price of petrol.

America turns inward—what Trump's new National Security Strategy means for the world, and India

I just finished reading all 33 pages of America's latest National Security Strategy, published on December 4 and formally submitted to the US Congress. This annual document is not just a routine bureaucratic exercise; it is a window into how Washington sees the world and how it intends to engage with it. Read against the backdrop of the intense geopolitical churn of the past year, the document clearly signals a recalibration — if not a quiet retreat — of American global ambitions under the Trump administration.

At the outset, one striking conclusion emerges: the United States appears to have adjusted itself to a transformed geopolitical environment. The tone is pragmatic, transactional, and inward-looking, markedly different from earlier strategies that spoke the language of global leadership, a rule-based order, and collective responsibility. A region-wise reading of the document — covering the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia — reveals how Washington's priorities have shifted. The Western Hemisphere: Security Begins at Home The most pronounced focus of the strategy is the Western Hemi-

sphere, particularly Latin America. Here, the US identifies three primary threats: illegal migration, drug trafficking and transnational crime. This emphasis aligns closely with President Trump's domestic political narrative and explains his recent remark, on December 19, that he does not rule out the possibility of war with Venezuela. The document also sends a clear warning to "non-hemispheric competitors" — a thinly veiled reference to China — to stay out of the region. In invoking this stance, the US appears to be dusting off an old doctrine with modern intent: Latin America is once again being defined as America's exclusive strategic backyard. This reassertion suggests that Washington's global engagement will now be selective, beginning with the protection of its immediate neighbourhood rather than distant theatres. Europe occupies an interesting and somewhat unexpected space in the strategy. The document makes an explicit reference to the Monroe Doctrine, first articulated in 1823 by President James Monroe, which warned European powers against interference in the Americas while promising reciprocal restraint by the US in European colonies.

Tamil Nadu government seeks IIT-M's assistance to study ill effects of microplastics on human health



Chevanan Mohan, Rahul Balaji and M. Santhanaraman that the Division Bench had come across an interim report of a research undertaken by PSG Institute of Medical Sciences and Research in Coimbatore.

The report stated that microplastics were small plastic fragments and they comprise several elements, including Bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical compound used in the production of plastics. BPA is an endocrine disruptor, and its presence in the environment raises concerns about potential health impacts, the report added. Since BPA could interfere with hormone functions, the institute had decided to measure its levels in cord blood so that it could serve as a valuable biomarker for epidemiological studies examining the long-term health effects of prenatal BPA exposure and help in the regulation of BPA in consumer products used by pregnant women. The study participants were pregnant women whose informed consent was obtained before collecting the samples. After delivery, the leftover cord blood was collected and analysed. The analysis of 10 samples found the BPA concentration to range from 0.43 to 1.1578 µg/kg body weight (bw) in the cord blood samples. "The average concentration was 0.7194 0.2 µg/kg body weight. As per current guidelines, these concentrations were above the recommended tolerable daily intake (TDI) value of 0.2 ng/kg bw/day," the report read. Shocked to know about it, the judges said: "If plastics can pollute even the placenta of a mother, then the authorities concerned must look into the issue with the seriousness it deserves." The judges suo motu impleaded the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry as well as the State health department as respondents to one of the cases pending before them and directed both of them to study the ill effects of microplastics on human health before taking policy decisions on the issue.

The Tamil Nadu government has informed the Madras High Court of having requested the Indian Institute of Technology -Madras (IIT-M) to conduct a scientific study regarding the harmful effects of microplastics on human health due to consumption of food products such as milk, coffee, tea and hot sambar sold in plastic pouches. A special Division Bench of Justices N. Sathish Kumar and D. Bharatha Chakravarthy was informed that Health Secretary P. Senthilkumar had written a letter to Additional Advocate General (AAG) J. Ravindran on Thursday (January 22, 2026) informing about the request made to IIT-M for conducting a study on the subject.

The letter read that, pursuant to the insistence of the court to conduct a detailed research regarding the effects of microplastics on human health, the Commissioner of Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration department had sought the assistance of IIT-M to undertake a detailed study. It was while hearing a batch of environment-related cases with the assistance of amici curiae T. Mohan,

Vitamin D deficiency: why are Indians deficient of this sunshine vitamin

Vitamin D is often called the "sunshine vitamin" — and with good reason. Our bodies can produce it when exposed to sunlight, and it seems to play an essential role not only in bone and mineral metabolism, but in immunity, and even mood regulation. Even though Vitamin D can be produced in the body, there seems to be widespread deficiency of this vitamin at a global level, and even more so in the countries such as India that have plenty of sunshine.

Understanding Vitamin D Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin along with Vitamin A, Vitamin K and E. Unlike water-soluble vitamins such as Vitamin B, fat-soluble vitamins are less easily excreted in urine and are more likely to cause toxicity due to poor excretion in urine if taken in larger than required levels. Vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol): Generally, vitamin D levels are very poor in vegetarian diets. It is found in small amounts in almonds and mushrooms. Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol): Found in large concentrations in animal products such as fish, egg, liver etc.

Once in the body, Vitamin D2 and D3 are converted into calcidiol (25-hydroxyvitamin D) in the liver, the form measured in blood tests, and then into calcitriol in the kidney, which is the active molecule in the body. The complexity of this pathway partially explains why Vitamin D levels are low even though it can be produced in the body. Daily requirement of Vitamin D in children and adults is 600-800 IU/day; in the elderly population, it is around 800-1000 IU/day depending on the risk profile, and in pregnant women, it is 1000-1200 IU/day. These levels are identified through a consensus by expert groups, based on the absorption of calcium from the intestine, increases in parathyroid hormone levels as an expression of altered bone mineral metabolism, and by increased fractures in the elderly. Deficiency definitions vary in different guidelines, however according to a consensus statement, the following blood levels have been identified. Vitamin D insufficiency is common globally. In India, vitamin D levels <20 ng/dl are present in 30–50% population, higher than what is seen in developed countries such as the U.K. or U.S. A probable reason for this is poor exposure to sunlight, atmospheric pollution, vegetarian diets and lack of fortification of dairy products in the country. Research over the past few decades has expanded our understanding of the importance of Vitamin D



far beyond the skeletal system. Vitamin D receptors are found in almost all human tissues, indicating its influence on multiple organ systems. These extra-skeletal effects impact immunity, cardiovascular health, metabolic function, and even mental well-being. However, in extra-skeletal effects, there is no causal association established between Vitamin D deficiency and these diseases. Vitamin D deficiency, however, has a well-established association with poor balance and muscle weakness. Many studies have found associations between falls and low Vitamin D levels in older adults. Vitamin D also plays a role in modulating both innate and adaptive immunity. Deficiency has been linked to increased susceptibility to infections, including respiratory tract infections and tuberculosis. Vitamin D deficiency has also been implicated in cardiovascular disorders and metabolic disorders such as diabetes mellitus. However, these associations have not yet been shown to be causatively linked, and further research may be needed.

Treatment of Vitamin D deficiency In many countries, mandatory food fortification has been noted to be a cost-effective strategy to control widespread vitamin D deficiency. But this strategy mandates widespread availability of testing for Vitamin D levels across the country to detect toxicity, which is currently not available in India. Testing and treating is an alternative strategy. A follow-up blood test is typically done 2–3 months after starting supplementation. This article was first published in The Hindu's e-book Care and Cure.

France probes deaths of two babies after powdered milk recall

France's Health Minister sought to reassure consumers that all suspicious infant formula had been withdrawn, as an investigation began into the deaths of two babies who drank possibly contaminated powdered milk. The infant formula industry has been rocked in recent weeks by several firms recalling batches that could be contaminated with cereulide, a toxin that can cause diarrhoea and vomiting. The potentially contaminated milk has been "withdrawn" from the market, Health Minister Stephanie Rist said.

In particular, Nestle pulled batches of infant milk in several European countries on January 6. French investigators are looking into the cause of death of two infants who allegedly consumed Nestle milk. One was a two-week-old who died on January 8 in Bordeaux, southwest France, after drinking milk from the now-recalled batches, a prosecutor in the city said on Thursday. The second, aged just 27 days, died on December 23 in the western city of Angers, the local prosecutor said. The mother contacted the authorities this week, saying her baby had drunk Nestle milk from one of the lots removed from the market. At this time, there was no established causal link between the formula and their deaths, according to French authorities. Nestle told AFP on January 23 that it would cooperate with the probes, adding there was "no evidence" at this stage linking its products to the infant deaths.

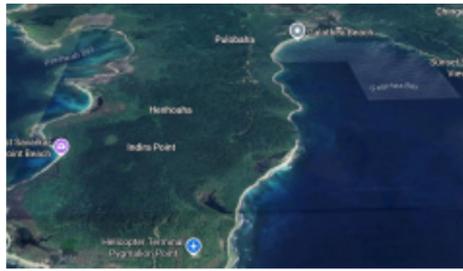
In another recall, Danone said it would "withdraw from targeted markets a very limited number of specific batches of infant formula" to comply with the latest guidance from local food safety authorities. A source close to the matter said the move followed changes introduced by authorities, notably in Ireland. Danone later told AFP in a statement it was voluntarily recalling two batches in France as a precaution "in light of new recommendations from a European authority". It comes after Singapore authorities on Saturday recalled Dumex baby formula, a brand owned by the French food giant.

French group Lactalis has also said it was recalling batches in France and other countries over worries they contained cereulide. Lactalis did not name the supplier behind the tainted ingredient. Outside France, countries concerned included Australia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo-



Brazzaville, Ecuador, Spain, Madagascar, Mexico, Uzbekistan, Peru, Georgia, Greece, Kuwait, the Czech Republic and Taiwan, a Lactalis spokesperson told AFP. Infant botulism outbreak in U.S. linked to whole-milk powder in formula In the U.S., authorities have linked an outbreak of infant botulism across several states, caused by ByHeart's formula to whole-milk powder, sourced from a supplier, the Food and Drug Administration said on Friday, January 23, 2026. A sample of ByHeart's Whole Nutrition formula tested positive for Clostridium botulinum, matching a culture taken from an affected infant, the FDA said. The samples also matched isolates of organic whole-milk powder sourced from a ByHeart supplier. Fifty-one cases have been identified in 19 states, the latest on December 10, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. All of New York-based ByHeart's infant formula products have been recalled. Infant botulism occurs when babies ingest spores of the bacterium Clostridium botulinum, which can grow in their immature digestive systems and produce the toxin. Symptoms include constipation, poor feeding, loss of head control and difficulty in swallowing. In severe cases, infants can develop breathing problems. "While these results advance FDA's understanding of the outbreak, FDA's investigation is ongoing to determine the source of contamination," the agency said in a statement. The FDA and the CDC did not identify the supplier.

Nicobar Tribal Council says it is being pressured to sign 'surrender certificate' for ancestral tribal lands



With some sections of the 92,000 crore Great Nicobar Island mega-infrastructure project "hearing approval", members of the Tribal Council in Little and Great Nicobar on Thursday (January 22, 2026) alleged that they are being pressured by the district administration to "surrender our ancestral lands" to make way for the project. Parts of the project in Galathea Bay, Pemmaya Bay, and Nanjappa Bay require the diversion of forest lands on which the indigenous Nicobarese people had been living before the 2004 tsunami.

In an online briefing to journalists, Tribal Council members said they had been called for a January 7 meeting with Nicobar district administration officials, where they were orally asked to sign a "surrender certificate", giving up their ancestral tribal lands. Hours after the briefing, they were summoned for another meeting where they were asked if they would give up their claims on a portion of their lands if they were allowed to resettle villages destroyed by the tsunami on a different section of the coast. The Deputy Commissioner of Nicobar, Amit Kale Marutirao, and Assistant Commissioner (Campbell Bay), Keshav Narendra Singh, have not responded to The Hindu's requests for comment.

"Nothing for future generations" At [the January 7] meeting, a few officials of the district were present along with a representative of the administration's Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti. We were shown various maps regarding the project, and we were asked about our opinion on the development project. And then we were asked to sign the surrender certificate," Tribal Council chairman Barnabas Manju said, adding that the meeting, held at the Andaman Public Works Department guesthouse in Nicobar's Campbell Bay, lasted about 10 minutes. The Tribal Council members told the officials that they would have to discuss it amongst themselves. At the press briefing, Titus Peter, 1st Captain of Pulobhabhi village and a member of the Council, said, "We cannot sign a surrender document like this. It is our ancestral tribal land. We will have nothing for the future generations." Mr. Manju noted that it had been 21 years since they were displaced by the 2004 tsunami and are yet to hear from the administration about their requests to return to the location of their ancestral villages that had been destroyed by the tsunami. Surrender template Council members said they were not told any specifics about the "surrender certificate", though Mr. Manju noted that "the officials said they would help us draft it if needed." The Tribal Council is the apex representative body of the Nicobarese community, which is recognised as a Scheduled Tribe.

Four days before the meeting with district officials, a Council member received a WhatsApp message, suggest-

SIR in West Bengal done in hurry, may jeopardise democratic participation: Amartya Sen



Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has voiced deep unease over the SIR process in West Bengal, warning that the exercise is being conducted with "undue haste" and may jeopardise democratic participation, particularly with the assembly elections approaching in a few months. The 92-year-old economist, speaking to PTI during an interview from Boston, reflected on the democratic value of electoral roll revisions and the circumstances under which they can strengthen voting rights.

He stressed that such an exercise must be conducted with care and adequate time, conditions he believes are "missing" in Bengal's case. "A thorough review of electoral rolls done carefully with adequate time can be a good democratic procedure, but this is not what is happening in West Bengal at this time," Mr. Sen said. "The SIR is being done in a hurry, with inadequate time for people with voting rights to have sufficient opportunity to submit documents to vindicate their entitlement to vote in the coming Assembly elections. This is both unjust to the electorate and unfair to Indian democracy," he said. Drawing from his own experience during the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bengal, Mr. Sen said time pressure was evident even among poll officials. "Sometimes, the officials of the Election Commission of India (ECI) themselves seem to lack enough time.

"When they questioned my right to vote from my home constituency in Santiniketan — from where I have voted earlier, and where my name, address and other details are registered in official records — they questioned me about my deceased mother's age at my date of birth, even though, as a voter herself, my mother's details, like mine, were stored also in their own official records," he said. The celebrated economist went on to describe the documentation challenges he encountered, noting that these difficulties are common for many Indians born in rural areas. "Like many Indian citizens born in rural India (I was born in the then village of Santiniketan), I do not have a birth certificate, and my eligibility to vote required further paperwork to be presented on my behalf," he said. Although the issue was eventually resolved for him, Mr. Sen expressed concern for citizens who lack similar access to assistance. "Even though I could happily say (like the Beatles) — 'Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends' — I worried about others who do not have so many loyal friends. My friends helped me to get through the rigid gates of the formidable ECI," he said.

The nonagenarian was summoned for a hearing after a "logical discrepancy" was flagged by the ECI over an age difference between him and his mother, Amita Sen, in the electoral rolls. Asked whether the SIR could politically ad-

ing a template for a "surrender certificate" addressed to the Chief Secretary of the A&N administration, and requesting a meeting to discuss the terms for such a surrender. "It is not clear what parts of our ancestral land the officials are referring to. Our understanding is that they want the surrender certificate to mention areas that are covered under what used to be our villages before we were displaced by the tsunami," said Mr. Peter, pointing to the west coast on a map of Great Nicobar Island. These villages include Chingeh in Galathea Bay along the south-eastern coast; In Haeng loi in Pemmaya Bay, and Kokeon, and Pulo Pakka in Nanjappa Bay, both along the west coast of the island.

Compromise offer Hours after the press conference, Tribal Council members were called for another meeting in the Office of the Assistant Commissioner in Campbell Bay. "At the meeting, we were told that Old Chingeh in Galathea Bay is already going to be subsumed by the project. We were asked if we would be willing to give up our demands for this part in Galathea Bay if the west coast villages are re-settled. We were then told that another meeting will happen by 28th of this month," Mr. Manju told The Hindu on Thursday (January 22, 2026) evening. Earlier this week, the Union Shipping Ministry informed the A&N administration of "ground visits" being planned for the International Container Transshipment Port segment of the project, which is "hearing approval". Last week, countering a petition challenging the project's forest clearances in the Calcutta High Court, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change said that the Union Territory's administration is yet to submit compliance with all conditions set out in the Stage-I clearance, which include the settlement of forest rights. This compliance would be necessary for final approval for the project, the Ministry said. In August 2025, the Tribal Council had complained to Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram that the A&N administration had made a "false representation" to the Centre about having identified and settled the forest rights of local residents under provisions of the Forest Rights Act in 2022. In fact, FRA processes had "not even been initiated," the Council said.

"If the administration's claim that our forest rights have been settled is true, then why are they asking us to sign documents like a surrender certificate?" Mr. Manju asked on Thursday (January 22, 2026). Clearances challenged in court The Great Nicobar Island project includes a transshipment port, an airport, a power plant, and a township. The project, being developed by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation, will be taking up about 13,000 hectares of forest land of the Great Nicobar Island, according to Government responses in Parliament. While the environmental clearances granted to the project are being challenged before a Bench of the National Green Tribunal, the challenge to the forest clearances is being heard in the Calcutta High Court. Last November, the NGT reserved its order on the petitions challenging the environmental clearances. The Calcutta High Court has posted the matter before it for "final hearing" in the week beginning March 30 this year. Last year, when the Tribal Council wrote to the Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi had also written to the Tribal Affairs Minister, seeking the government's attention to the demands of the people that they be relocated to their ancestral villages.

vantage any political party in West Bengal, Mr. Sen said he could not offer a definitive assessment, underlining that democratic integrity should remain paramount. "I am not an election expert, so I cannot answer the question with certainty. I have been told by those who seem to know more, that the BJP will benefit from the under-accounting. I don't know whether that is true, but the real point is that the ECI should not insist on a faulty arrangement and force our proud democracy to commit an unnecessary error, no matter who benefits," he said.

On sections of society that are most vulnerable to being excluded during the SIR, Mr. Sen pointed to the structural disadvantages faced by poorer citizens. "An obvious answer must be the underprivileged and the poor. The documents needed for being allowed into the new electoral roll are often difficult to obtain for the underdogs of society." The class bias that may show up in the necessary requirement of getting and showing particular documents in order to qualify to enter the new voters' list will tend to work against the indigent," Mr. Sen said.

Trump sues JPMorgan for \$5 billion, alleges the bank closed his accounts for political reasons

President Donald Trump sued banking giant JPMorgan Chase and its CEO Jamie Dimon for \$5 billion on Thursday (January 22, 2026) over allegations that JPMorgan stopped providing banking services to him and his businesses for political reasons after he left office in January 2021.

The lawsuit, filed in Miami-Dade County court in Florida, alleges that JPMorgan abruptly closed multiple accounts in February 2021 with just 60 days notice and no explanation. By doing so, Mr. Trump claims JPMorgan and Mr. Dimon cut the President and his businesses off from millions of dollars, disrupted their operations and forced Mr. Trump and the businesses to urgently open bank accounts elsewhere.

"JPMC debanked [Mr. Trump and his businesses] because it believed that the political tide at the moment favoured doing so," the lawsuit alleges. In the lawsuit, Mr. Trump alleges he tried to raise the issue personally with Mr. Dimon after the bank started to close his accounts, and that Mr. Dimon assured Mr. Trump he would figure out what was happening. The lawsuit alleges Mr. Dimon failed to follow up with Mr. Trump.

Further, Mr. Trump's lawyers allege that JPMorgan placed the President and his companies on a reputational "blacklist" that both JPMorgan and other banks use to keep clients from opening accounts with them in the future. In a statement, JPMorgan said it believes the suit has no merit. Mr. Trump threatened to sue JPMorgan Chase last week at a time of heightened tensions between the White House and Wall Street. The President said he wanted to cap interest rates on credit cards at 10% to help lower costs for consumers.

Judicial removal — tough law with a loophole



removing the judge from his office'. It also provides for the enactment of a law by Parliament for regulating the procedure relating to the investigation of charges against the judge and for the presentation of an address to the President seeking his removal. This Act provides for a motion to be submitted to either the Speaker (Lok Sabha) or the Chairman (Rajya Sabha) signed by Members of either House. The Act requires not less than 100 Members of the Lok Sabha to sign the notice of motion if given to the Speaker and not less than 50 Members of the Rajya Sabha to sign the notice if given to the Chairman. The motion seeks to present an address to the President for the removal of the judge. The Act in fact introduces a procedure under which the motion given notice is required to be admitted by the Speaker/Chairman in the first place. The Act further says that the Speaker/Chairman may even disallow the motion.

Of course, he will consider materials available to him and may also consult such persons as he thinks fit before admitting or rejecting the motion. The most crucial thing about this procedure is that if the Speaker/Chairman refuses to admit the motion, no further action will be taken in the matter and the motion will lapse. This procedure needs closer examination. The Act does not mention the conditions of admissibility of the motion, which is the case in respect of all motions and resolutions under the Rules of Procedure of the Houses of Parliament. It may be noted here that the Speaker/Chairman while admitting or disallowing the motion under this Act is not performing the duty as the Presiding Officer of the House. On the contrary, he acts as a statutory authority and thus performs a statutory Act. Still, the basic conditions of admissibility of the motion need to be spelt out. Otherwise, the action of disallowing the motion may attract the charge of arbitrariness especially when the Speaker is performing a statutory act. It is another matter that since disallowing the motion is a statutory Act, as distinct from a legislative Act performed in the House, it can be challenged in court.

Where the flaw lies as a matter of fact, the charges against a judge are thoroughly investigated by a committee appointed by the Speaker/Chairman consisting of a judge of the Supreme court, the Chief Justice of a High Court and a distinguished jurist. This action is taken after the motion is admitted by the Speaker/Chairman. This will be a detailed investigation done by very experienced judicial officers. So, what exactly will be the examination which the Speaker/Chairman will do at the first stage? It may be mentioned here that under the law, the preliminary examination by the Speaker/Chairman is of such crucial importance that if the notice of motion signed by as many as 100 or more Members of Parliament is disallowed without assigning any reasons, the whole exercise which is undertaken by Parliament for the impeachment of a judge under a constitutional provision becomes infructuous because the motion does not survive. This points to a serious flaw in the law. Article 124(5) does not refer to any specific motion which is required to be admitted or disallowed by the presiding officer of the House. It may be noted here that under Article 61, there is a provision for a resolution which is mandatorily to be moved. But this Article does not empower the Speaker/Chairman to refuse to admit it on any grounds. In fact, Article 124(5) which empowers Parliament to make a law to "regulate the procedure for the presentation of an address" and for "investigation and proof of the misbehaviour or incapacity of a judge" does not leave any space for the Speaker/Chairman to refuse admission of the motion. Proof of misbehaviour is to be established through investigation which is to be done by the high-level committee appointed by the Speaker/Chairman. So, obviously, there is no ground on which a motion signed by as many as 100 Members of Parliament (MP) can be rejected at the threshold. There is no reason to think that the MPs who move a motion for impeaching a judge will do so without being serious about it. But there is every reason to think that a motion for impeaching a judge is most likely to be disallowed at the threshold if the government does not want it. Thus, the operation of a serious constitutional provision for removing an unworthy judge can be thwarted by the whims of a government.

Should corruption charges need prior sanction? | Explained



The story so far: A two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court has delivered a split verdict on the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (PCA, 1988) that requires prior approval from the appropriate government before investigation into any offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant in discharge of official functions.

What is the PCA, 1988?

The Central government had constituted a committee on prevention of corruption under the chairmanship of K. Santhanam in 1962. The Santhanam committee submitted its report in 1964. It resulted in the strengthening of laws dealing with bribery and criminal misconduct. Finally, a comprehensive act was enacted to consolidate the law relating to prevention of corruption in the form of PCA, 1988. The PCA, 1988 provides for punishment with respect to offences committed by public servants while performing public duties. 'Public servant' includes any government or local authority employee, any Judge, any person who holds an office by virtue of which he is required to perform a public duty etc. 'Public duty' means a duty in the discharge of which the government, the public or the community at large has an interest. The type of offences punishable under the PCA, 1988 include bribery, undue advantage without consideration, criminal misconduct etc.

What is Section 17A?

Section 19 of the PCA, 1988 requires prior sanction from the appropriate government before prosecution of a public servant in a court of law. However, it was felt that there needs to be a distinction in dealing between intentional corruption and decisions taken in good-faith that could potentially go wrong. Officers become reluctant to take bold and timely decisions because of fear of wrongful prosecution. In order to address this issue, the Parliament inserted Section 17A through an amendment of the PCA in the year 2018. This section requires prior approval from the appropriate government for initiating an inquiry or investigation into any alleged offence committed by a public servant which is relatable to any recommendation made or decision taken

by a public servant in discharge of official function or duties.

What were earlier rulings?

In Vineet Narain versus Union of India (1998), the Supreme Court struck down an executive order, referred to as 'Single Directive', issued to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), that required prior sanction of the designated authority before initiating investigation against certain categories of public servants. Subsequently, in 2003, Parliament amended the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act (DSPE Act), that governs the functioning of the CBI. Section 6A was added to this Act that required prior approval of the Central government to initiate any investigation against officers at the rank of Joint Secretary or above. This was also struck down by the SC in Dr Subramaniam Swamy versus Director, CBI (2014) as violative of Article 14 of the Constitution that guarantees equality before law.

What is the current split verdict?

The current verdict of a division Bench of the Supreme Court is on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) against the Union of India. Justice K. V. Viswanathan held that the requirement of obtaining prior approval before initiating investigation was necessary in order to protect honest officers from vexatious and frivolous complaints. His judgment cautioned that a 'play-it-safe syndrome' may set in the bureaucracy if such a protection was not available. However, he held that the constitutional validity of Section 17A would be sustained only if the approval is provided by an independent agency and not by the government itself. His order read Section 17A in conjunction with Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 and held that the approval should be provided by the appropriate government based on a binding opinion given by Lokpal and Lokayuktas in respect of Central and State government employees respectively. Justice B. V. Nagarathna on the other hand held that Section 17A was unconstitutional and tantamount to 'Old wine in new bottle' that was struck down in earlier cases by the court. She held that Article 14 requires intelligible differentia and rational nexus to the legislative object, and that Section 17A fails on both counts. She held that adequate protection for honest officers in the form of prior sanction from the government before prosecution by a court is already available under Section 19 of the PCA. This matter will now be heard by a larger Bench for a conclusive decision. Meanwhile, there are two systemic reforms that are warranted. First, there must be swift disposal of cases and handing over punishments for guilty public servants that would act as a deterrent against corruption. Second, penalty may be imposed for false and malicious complaints. This would act as a deterrent against habitual and vexatious complaints.

Almost half of Kyiv without heat, power, after Russian attack

An overnight Russian bombardment left thousands of residential buildings in Kyiv without heating and water in -14C temperatures when the Ukrainian capital was already scrambling to restore vital utilities destroyed in earlier attacks. The barrage of hundreds of drones and missiles, which targeted energy facilities across Ukraine, killed at least one 50-year-old man near Kyiv. AFP journalists in the capital heard air raid sirens and explosions as Ukrainian air defence systems responded to the drones and missiles.

Sheltering in a metro station in the centre of Kyiv, Marina Sergienko, a 51-year-old accountant, said she thought the repeated Russian strikes, which have left millions in the cold and dark over recent weeks, had a clear purpose. "To wear down the people, push things to some critical point so there's no strength left, to break our resistance," she told AFP, taking cover alongside dozens of other Kyiv residents bundled in hats and coats. Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga lashed out at Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying: "War criminal Putin continues to wage a genocidal war against women, children and elderly." He said Russian forces had targeted energy infrastructure overnight in at least seven regions, and urged Ukraine's allies to bolster its air defence systems.

"Support for the Ukrainian people is urgent. There will be no peace in Europe without a lasting peace for Ukraine," he said on social media. Mr. Zelenskyy suggested he would skip the ongoing World Economic Forum in Switzerland to deal with the aftermath of the strike. But he kept open the possibility of going to the gathering of world leaders in the Swiss resort of Davos if agreements with the United States on possible post-war economic and security support were ready to be signed.

Russia fired some 339 long-range combat drones and 34 missiles in the overnight barrage, Kyiv's air force said. Mr. Zelenskyy, who had recently complained of slow arms deliveries, said Ukraine had received a shipment of ammunition for air defences systems just one day before the attack. The bombardment came around 10 days after the most significant Russian strike on Kyiv's energy grid since its invasion almost four years ago. That strike, at dawn on January 9, left half the capital without heating and many residents without electricity for days in sub-zero temperatures. Most of the buildings cut off on Tuesday



(January 20, 2026) were those affected on January 9. Schools have been closed until February and street lights dimmed in a bid to preserve energy resources. "After this attack, 5,635 residential buildings are without heating," Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram — about half the capital's apartment blocks. Much of Kyiv was also without running water, he added. "Almost half of Kyiv is in blackout right now," Deputy Foreign Minister Mariana Betsa confirmed. Authorities in the western region of Rivne said a separate attack there had damaged "critical infrastructure", leaving 10,000 households without power. The head of the southern Odesa region added that Russian drone had crashed into a residential building and energy facilities had been hit.

And in the eastern Poltava region, local authorities said an attack had sparked fire at an industrial facility. Russia has been pounding Ukraine's energy system since the start of its invasion, in what Kyiv says is an attempt to sap morale and weaken Ukrainians' resistance. The Kremlin says it only targets Ukrainian military facilities and has blamed the continuation of the war on Kyiv for refusing to accept its peace demands. The Russian defence ministry said on Tuesday (January 20, 2026) it had carried out strikes on facilities that support Ukraine's military. The International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for two top Russian military officials over the attacks on Ukraine's energy grid. The court said it constituted a war crime as it was designed to harm Ukrainian civilians. Due to war-time sensitivities, Kyiv does not say which energy facilities have been damaged or destroyed in Russian attacks.

India, Spain must pool resources, capabilities to fight terrorism together: President Murmu

Asserting that India and Spain have a shared position on countering terrorism, which remains a serious threat to global peace and stability, President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday (January 21, 2026) said that both countries must pool resources and capabilities to fight terrorism together in all its forms. During a meeting with Jose Manuel Albares, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, who had called on Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, she said that relations between India and Spain go back centuries, enriched by trade, culture and shared values of democracy and pluralism.

The president said that as strong adherents to multilateralism, India and Spain must work together on multilateral platforms such as the United Nations and G-20 to further their shared goals of peace, prosperity and stability across the world. Ms. Murmu underlined that India and Spain have a shared position on countering the menace of terrorism, which remains a serious threat to global peace and stability. She said that both nations must pool their resources and capabilities to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The president highlighted the growing economic ties

between the two countries, noting expanding trade and investment opportunities. She said that Spain's strengths in engineering, railways, renewable energy, urban services, and defence aerospace complement India's development priorities, according to a statement issued by the president's office. Murmu expressed confidence that with the signing of the India-European Union (EU) free trade agreement, the trade relationship between the two countries will further be strengthened. The E.U. is India's biggest trade partner, with bilateral trade in goods recording \$135 billion in the financial year 2023-24. She said that India's relationship with Europe and the European Union is growing steadily, and that "we are looking forward to welcoming the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission as Chief Guests for our 77th Republic Day". Top European Union leaders Antonio Costa and Ursula von der Leyen will grace India's Republic Day celebrations on January 26, and the two sides are set to seal the much-anticipated free trade deal the next day. Additionally, Ms. Murmu noted that 2026 marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Spain, which will be celebrated through the India-Spain Dual Year of Culture, Tourism, and Artificial Intelligence.

Japan pauses restart of world's biggest nuclear plant



dents oppose the restart, while 37% support it, according to a survey conducted in September. "It's Tokyo's electricity that is produced in Kashiwazaki, so why should the people here be put at risk? That makes no sense," Yumiko Abe, a 73-year-old resident, told AFP this week during a protest in front of the plant. Earlier this month, seven groups opposing the restart submitted a petition signed by nearly 40,000 people to TEPCO and Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority, saying that the plant sits on an active seismic fault zone and noted it was struck by a strong quake in 2007.

Reliance to buy sanctions-compliant Russian oil in February and March, sources say

Reliance Industries Ltd, operator of the world's largest refining complex, is set to receive sanctions-compliant Russian oil in February and March after a one-month pause, four sources familiar with the matter said.

Reliance last received Russian crude in December after securing a one-month U.S. concession that allowed it to wind down dealings with the sanctioned Russian oil producer Rosneft beyond a November 21 deadline. Like other Indian refiners, Reliance will buy Russian oil from non-sanctioned sellers, the sources said, without elaborating on the number of February and March cargoes that the refiner has booked. It is not clear if the private refinery will continue to buy Russian oil beyond March. Despite Reliance's return, India's overall Russian oil imports are expected to stay subdued through February and March, the sources added. Reliance had been importing Russian crude under a long-term agreement with Rosneft for 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) for its 1.4 million bpd Jamnagar refinery complex in Gujarat. The European Union has said from January 21 it will not take fuel produced at refineries that received or processed Russian oil 60 days prior to the bill-of-lading date. Reliance has said it will process the cargoes that arrived after November 20 at its India-focused 660,000 barrels per day plant, allowing it to continue selling fuels to the EU from its 704,000 bpd export-oriented refinery.

The restart of the world's largest nuclear power plant was suspended in Japan Thursday (January 22, 2026) just hours after the process began, its operator said, but the reactor remained "stable". Operations to relaunch a reactor at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant in Niigata province, closed since the 2011 Fukushima disaster, began late Wednesday (January 21, 2026) after it received the final green light from the nuclear regulator despite divided public opinion.

"An alarm from the monitoring system... sounded during the reactor startup procedures, and operations are currently suspended," Takashi Kobayashi, a spokesperson for operator Tokyo Electric (TEPCO), told AFP. The reactor "is stable and there is no radioactive impact outside", he said, adding that the operator is "currently investigating the cause" of the incident and is unable to say when operations will resume. The restart, initially scheduled for Tuesday (January 20, 2026), had been pushed back after a technical issue related to a reactor alarm was detected last weekend - a problem that was resolved on Sunday (January 18, 2026), according to TEPCO. Kashiwazaki-Kariwa is the world's biggest nuclear power plant by potential capacity, although just one reactor of seven was restarted. The facility was taken offline when Japan pulled the plug on nuclear power after a colossal earthquake and tsunami sent three reactors at the Fukushima atomic plant into meltdown in 2011. However, resource-poor Japan now wants to revive atomic energy to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and meet growing energy needs from artificial intelligence.

Kashiwazaki-Kariwa is the first TEPCO-run unit to restart since 2011. The company also operates the stricken Fukushima Daiichi plant, now being decommissioned. Public opinion in Niigata is deeply divided: Around 60% of resi-

RIL, Jio to pump Rs 10 lakh cr to make AI affordable: Ambani



Reliance Industries (RIL) and Jio will invest Rs 10 lakh crore over seven years as the conglomerate looks to play a major role in India's AI transformation and make AI affordable and accessible for citizens, RIL Chairman and MD Mukesh Ambani said on Thursday. According to Ambani, after connecting "India to the Internet era", Jio will connect the country to the "intelligence era" by reducing the cost as "dramatically" as the company did for mobile and internet data earlier.

At the India AI Impact Summit, he announced Jio Intelligence—RIL's AI-focussed arm—will build India's sovereign compute infrastructure, and the conglomerate will partner with best tech companies globally not as importers of AI, but as "co-architects of a new AI century".

On the investment announcement, he said, "This is not speculative investment. It is not for chasing valuation. This is a patient, disciplined, nation-building capital, designed to create durable economic value and strategic resilience for six decades to come," he said. Likening AI to Akshaya Patra, Ambani said it offers limitless augmentation in knowledge, efficiency, and productivity.

A central question around AI today, he said, is whether it will concentrate power in the hands of a few or will it democratise opportunity for all, and added that India believes in the latter—a future where AI is "available, affordable, and beneficial to all". He also said that success of the AI movement globally hinges critically on cooperation and

sharing "be it chips or rare earths" and not hoarding, and that India has a unique strength in that context as it serves as a "vital bridge" between the Global South and Global North.

Ambani asserted India will emerge as "one of the greatest AI powers" in this century as no other country can match its strength in "demography, democracy, development, digital infrastructure, data generation, and AI harvest". Emphasising that Jio will deliver AI to Indians at highly affordable prices, Ambani said, "... Jio will do so with the same reliability, quality, scale, and extreme affordability that transformed connectivity. India cannot afford to rent intelligence. Therefore, we will reduce the cost of intelligence as dramatically as we did the cost of data." Ambani said Jio Intelligence will build India's sovereign compute infrastructure through "three bold initiatives"— gigawatt-scale data centres, ready green power surplus, and a nationwide edge compute.

"We have already started construction on multi-gigawatt, AI-ready data-centres at Jamnagar. Over 120 MW will come online in the second half of 2026 this year, and a clear path to gigawatt-scale compute for training and large-scale inference... We have an in-house energy advantage with up to 10 GW of ready green-power surplus, anchored by solar in both Kutch and Andhra Pradesh," Ambani said. "An edge-compute layer, deeply integrated with Jio's network, will make intelligence responsive, low-latency and affordable—close to where Indians live, learn and work... Our resolve is clear: make intelligence as ubiquitous as connectivity," he added. The RIL chairman said Jio Intelligence is guided by five "non-negotiable principles", including a commitment to multilingual AI capability across all Indian languages and a promise that AI will create new high-skilled work opportunities rather than displacing jobs. The other principles include making AI accessible to agriculture and informal sectors, and small businesses, keeping "responsibility, security, data residency, and trust as Jio's core guarantees", and building a deep partnership ecosystem with Indian enterprises, startups, and top technology and research institutes.

Artificial General Intelligence on the horizon within 5 years: Google DeepMind CEO

Google DeepMind CEO, and one of the world's foremost AI scientists, Demis Hassabis told delegates at the India-AI Impact Summit that artificial general intelligence (AGI) could be achieved within the next five years, marking what he described as a "threshold moment" for AI and human progress. "...in 2026, we're at another threshold moment where AGI, artificial general intelligence, is on the horizon, maybe within the next five years," Hassabis said.

AGI is a theoretical form of AI that possesses the ability to understand, learn, and apply knowledge across a wide variety of tasks at a level equal to or exceeding human capabilities. Unlike current Narrow AI designed for specific tasks, AGI is pegged to generalise knowledge across domains, exhibit common sense, and solve novel problems autonomously.

Hassabis said advances in foundational models and autonomous AI systems are progressing rapidly. He said these technologies could reach a level of general capability comparable to human intelligence much sooner than many expect. He placed AGI in the context of major historic shifts, comparing its potential impact to foundational breakthroughs like fire and electricity. He said AGI might deliver roughly 10 times the impact of the Industrial Revolution, but unfolding on a much shorter timescale.

While largely optimistic about the benefits, he high-



lighted risks such as misuse by malicious actors and the growing autonomy of AI systems, urging global cooperation on safety standards, biosecurity and cybersecurity before powerful general-purpose AI systems become widespread. Hassabis also praised India's growing role in the global AI landscape, citing strong talent, energy and research momentum in the country's technology hubs. He reiterated DeepMind's plans to expand partnerships with Indian institutions, industry, and government agencies, including collaborations on research, education, and deployment of AI tools. On Wednesday, Google DeepMind said it will partner with various Indian government institutions to offer them its frontier AI models.

India needs its own critical AI infra at scale to avoid fragility: Jeet Adani



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is going to redefine sovereignty going forward and thus India must build its own critical AI infrastructure instead of relying on infrastructure overseas, Jeet Adani, Adani Group executive director and son of Gautam Adani, said. He emphasized that the \$100-billion worth of AI infrastructure investment announced earlier this week by the ports-to-renewables conglomerate is to ensure that India's AI future is "secured, sovereign, and built at national scale".

Addressing the India AI Impact Summit, Adani prescribed three pillars of sovereignty he believes will "define India's AI century"— energy sovereignty, compute and cloud sovereignty, and services sovereignty. "In earlier centuries, nations built steel plants and shipyards. In the digital age, nations invested in semiconductor ecosystems. In today's AI age, sovereign compute capacity becomes strategic infrastructure. It matters where compute resides, under whose jurisdiction it operates, and who controls access. Cloud sovereignty does not mean isolation. It means autonomy," Adani said.

He stressed that India must host critical AI workloads domestically, build data centre ecosystems at scale, and ensure access to domestic high-performance compute for the country's startups, academia, defence, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors. "If intelligence infrastructure is concentrated externally, strategic leverage concentrates externally. And external concentration creates national fragility. In earlier centuries, nations have built navies to secure trade routes. Today, we have to build a sovereign compute to secure intelligence routes," he said. Underlining that energy sovereignty translates into "intelligence sovereignty", Adani emphasised that in today's AI era, power grids and data grids become inseparable and India must press ahead with renewable energy expansion.

"AI is written in code. But it runs on electricity... If a nation's energy systems are fragile, its intelligence systems are fragile... India's renewable expansion across solar, wind, storage is no longer just a climate policy, it's a strategic

infrastructure policy," Adani said. "So, what will be different in India because of this? Renewable clusters will co-locate with AI data centres. Industrial corridors will integrate energy and compute planning. Storage and grid stability will become national priorities."

On services sovereignty in the AI age, Adani noted that while India's information technology revolution made it a global services powerhouse, much of the productivity dividend was captured by other countries, and argued that the AI revolution offers a "once-in-a-century opportunity" to change this. He insisted AI must first serve as a "force multiplier" for Indian citizens before it becomes a "margin multiplier" for others.

"Our AI must first amplify our Indian productivity—enhance our agricultural resilience, personalise our education at massive scale, optimise our networks of logistics and ports, improve our energy and distribution efficiency, modernise our manufacturing competitiveness, expand our healthcare diagnostics across rural India, and deepen our financial inclusion across Tier 2 and 3 towns and villages," Adani said. Talking about the Adani group's recently announced \$100-billion investment to build a sovereign, green-energy-powered AI infrastructure platform, he said that it is not just a data centre expansion but the trigger for a 5-gigawatt and \$250-billion integrated energy-and-compute ecosystem "engineered to anchor India's intelligence revolution". "By integrating renewable energy, grid resilience, and hyperscale compute into a unified architecture, this commitment ensures that India's AI future is not only powered but secured, sovereign, and built at national scale," Adani said.

Nissan launches Gravite 7-seater MPV at introductory price of Rs. 5.65 lakh in India

Hyderabad: Nissan Motor India on Tuesday launched the all-new Gravite, a 7-seater MPV, at an introductory price of Rs. 5.65 lakh (ex-showroom). Unveiled in Udaipur, the Gravite marks the beginning of the company's renewed product push in India.

Inspired by India and made in India at its alliance partner's facility in Chennai, the Gravite is positioned as a spacious, versatile and practical family mover with a strong road presence.

'Waking up the muscles': How Soha Ali Khan reboots her fitness and sweats out the jet lag after a holiday; ways women in their 40s can find balance



Resuming workouts after a break or vacation often feels harder than expected, and Soha Ali Khan's experience captures this common reality. The actor, who is back home after a rejuvenating holiday in Japan, shared a glimpse of her gym workout, which consisted of circuit strength training. "The first workout after a break is the hardest—and that's why I chose circuit strength training! Waking up all the main muscle groups and sweating out the jet lag," the 47-year-old shared in a post on Instagram.

After a period of rest or reduced activity, the body undergoes short-term changes in muscle strength, cardiovascular endurance and neuromuscular coordination. "During vacation, activity levels tend to be lower, meals may be different, and sleep patterns can shift. These changes are perfectly natural, but they mean that when you return to your usual workout, the body isn't immediately ready to perform at the same level it was before the break," explained consultant dietitian and fitness expert Garima Goyal.

'I went to rehab, to fix myself': Anurag Kashyap reveals how prolonged stress due to failing work projects led to a heart attack; why this is a warning for every professional

Periods of prolonged stress due to professional disappointment can take a serious toll on one's health. In a recent interview, filmmaker Anurag Kashyap spoke candidly about how years of professional frustration and personal strain affected his health and well-being. Reflecting on the collapse of a long-gestating project, he told The Hollywood Reporter, "I was only grieving over Maximum City. I was frustrated with Maximum City because the investment in that was so much. Because I'd been attached to Maximum City since 2009, when Danny Boyle was producing it. Slumdog Millionaire writer was writing it, and he wanted me to direct it at that time." He also recalled the project's development process and creative disagreements, saying, "It got India all wrong. Anything based in India, I won't do it in English. So, I've been walking the same path."

The stress surrounding the shelving of the project coincided with a difficult period in his personal life. With encouragement from his daughter, Kashyap told The Hollywood Reporter that he chose to enter rehab and focus on recovery. "I went to rehab, to fix myself—and I fixed myself." Around that period, he also suffered a leg injury that left him confined to bed for months. Because he was on blood thinners, he says surgery wasn't possible. Eventually, work found its way back into his life in an unexpected manner. He recalls, "Luckily, Zoya Akhtar called me. She said, 'Will you play yourself in Made in Heaven?'. Though he first turned down the offer, explaining his condition—"I said, 'I'm lying in bed, my leg is gone, I'm in a wheelchair,'"—Akhtar had a simple solution: "We'll put the wheelchair in the scene." In a 2022 interview with SCREEN, he also described how unhealthy coping habits developed during this period, leading to rapid weight gain and further complications: "My daughter was very worried. She sent me to rehab. I went to the rehab to fix myself, and I fixed myself. But I got a tear in my right leg in the rehab while playing cricket. And because of being on blood thinners, I couldn't go for surgery. I couldn't walk and was on a wheelchair. I was on bed rest for months."

But how can prolonged professional stress translate into serious physical health issues?

Sonal Khangarot, licensed rehabilitation counsellor and psychotherapist, The Answer Room, tells indianexpress.com, "Prolonged stress, disappointment, or unresolved grief keep the body in a chronic 'threat mode.' The brain repeatedly activates the fight-or-flight system, releasing stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Over time, this constant activation raises blood pressure, strains the heart, disrupts sleep, and weakens immunity."

Anurag Kashyap's health battles shed light on the link between professional disappointment and physical collapse. Anurag Kashyap's health battles shed light on the link between professional disappointment and physical collapse. He adds that stress can also "alter appetite and metabolism,

According to her, the first few sessions after a vacation can feel tougher because your muscles and heart have to re-adapt to the load and intensity of exercise, especially in the 40s. "Muscle fibres that were previously conditioned lose some of their efficiency relatively quickly when not challenged, and the cardiovascular system—which adapts to demands like walking, running or gym work—becomes slightly less responsive after a period of inactivity. As a result, movements may feel heavier, breathing may feel more laboured, and fatigue can set in sooner than it used to," Goyal said. Another factor is psychological. "Expectations of performance are often set by how you felt before the break, so when your first workout doesn't feel as strong or smooth, it feels harder than it actually is. This mismatch between expectation and current reality can make the session feel more challenging, even though your body is just recalibrating." It's also important to consider recovery rhythms. A break typically alters sleep patterns, hydration and even metabolic signals in the body. When you step back into a rigorous routine without easing in gradually, the nervous system—which coordinates movement, timing and effort—hasn't yet re-engaged efficiently, noted Goyal. Understanding that this initial difficulty is temporary and normal can make the transition back into training more encouraging. "Instead of trying to match pre-vacation performance right away, easing into workouts with shorter sessions, moderate intensity and mindful movement helps the body reinstate strength, endurance and coordination more effectively. Within a week or two of consistent effort, the heart rate stabilises, muscles regain confidence, and workouts begin to feel familiar again," said Goyal.



leading to weight gain, emotional eating, or insulin resistance." Grief that is suppressed rather than processed often shows up as fatigue, body pain, breathlessness, or frequent illness because the nervous system never fully settles. "People may cope through smoking, alcohol, inactivity, or irregular routines, which further harm cardiovascular and respiratory health. Emotionally, hopelessness and burnout reduce motivation to seek care or maintain healthy habits," notes the expert.

Warning signs that suggest support is urgently needed Khangarot states. "When coping behaviours shift from occasional relief to patterns that harm functioning, it signals urgent need for support. Key warning signs include rapid increase in alcohol or food use, needing more to feel relief, or using these behaviours daily to manage emotions. Noticeable withdrawal from work, family, or social contact; neglect of hygiene, sleep, or responsibilities; and persistent irritability, hopelessness, or numbness are red flags." She adds that physical changes like sudden weight gain or loss, chest tightness, breathlessness, frequent illness, or blackouts also indicate risk. Emotional indicators include loss of interest in previously valued activities, intense guilt or shame about coping habits, or inability to stop despite consequences.

Steps to rebuild physical and mental health after a period of burnout Khangarot recommends starting with a medical and psychological check-in. "A doctor can assess sleep, heart health, nutrition, or medication needs, while therapy helps process grief, shame, or chronic stress patterns. Structured routines are next—regular sleep times, simple home-cooked meals, hydration, and 20–30 minutes of light movement like walking or stretching rebuild nervous system stability." Reduce harmful coping gradually. She notes, "Replace alcohol or overeating with grounding habits such as journaling, breathing exercises, or short check-ins with a trusted friend. If dependence is significant, join guided programs or support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous."

Why you should tear your baggage tag 'vertically' after a flight

On Instagram, Ariya recently shared an informative video on baggage tags issued by airlines, saying, "The tags that you get to put on suitcases, you should not just take them off and throw them away. Here's why. You see, these bar codes contain all of your personal information. You might want to keep those, as your information is on them. Your credit card information, your address, all of it on it. Don't know how or if anybody has the capability to access it, but the world we live in." But how much of her claim is valid? According to aviation expert Amit Mittal, the fear around credit card exposure is largely misplaced. "The barcode on your luggage tag does not contain your credit card information," he clarifies. "It primarily contains a 10-digit numeric code known as the License Plate Number or LPN. This number acts as a pointer to the airline's internal database."

What details does a bar code entail?

Mittal explains that the typically encoded information includes the LPN, flight number, destination airport code, and the Passenger Name Record (PNR)—a six-character booking reference. "The barcode itself is not a storage device of detailed personal data. It links to backend systems," he says.

Can someone access your details?

An average person scanning the barcode with a smartphone will not see sensitive financial data. "At most, they may retrieve your last name and PNR," Mittal notes. "Even if someone attempts to access the 'Manage Booking' portal, credit card numbers are masked, CVV is never visible, and passport numbers are partially hidden." However, he adds a note of caution: "While the aviation system remains secure, basic booking details could potentially be viewed if someone misuses the PNR and surname combination." Is throwing the tag away risky?

"From an aviation security standpoint, discarding the tag does not threaten aircraft safety," Mittal explains. "But from a personal privacy perspective, it's always better to dispose of it responsibly." He also highlights an operational reason to remove old tags. "Leaving previous barcodes attached can confuse automated scanners, causing unnecessary system load or even baggage misrouting," he says.

Best practice for travellers Mittal recommends a simple solution: "Once you reach home or your hotel, remove the tag and tear vertically through the barcode. This makes it unreadable to optical scanners." Alternatively, shredding or blacking out the PNR and name with a permanent marker works well.

T20 World Cup: Why India have to face fellow group-toppers in Super Eight | ICC's seeding rule explained



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

India have gone through to the Super Eights of the 2026 T20 World Cup as the top-ranked team in Group A and yet, a look at their upcoming fixtures show that every single team they will be facing are those that have also finished top of their respective group. This is different from what is usually the case in international tournaments across both team and individual sports – a participant tends to face teams who have finished with lower ranks in the previous stage and thus, at least on paper, have favourable chances of progressing further.

In the 2026 T20 World Cup, India are in the same group as Zimbabwe (winners of Group B), West Indies (winners of Group C), and South Africa (winners of Group D). The other team consists of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England and New Zealand, all of whom have finished second in the aforementioned groups. This is a by-product of the International Cricket Council (ICC) assigning seedings to teams based on their T20I rankings before the tournament itself.

ICC's seeding system for the 2026 T20 World CupThe eight seeded teams based on their ICC rankings before the

tournament. (Screenshot: ICC website) The eight seeded teams based on their ICC rankings before the tournament. (Screenshot: ICC website)

The top eight teams in the ICC men's T20I rankings were seeded as the top two teams in each of the four groups in the group stage. Among these, the top ranked India were assigned as A1, that is the first team in Group A, second-placed England were assigned C1, third-placed Australia were B1 and fourth-placed New Zealand were D1. In the Super Eights, the ICC was more specific with the seedings. India were to be the first-placed side in Group 1, designated as X1; X2 was given to Australia. West Indies were X3 while South Africa were X4. Group 2 seedings were England (Y1), New Zealand (Y2), Pakistan (Y3) and Sri Lanka (Y4). If any of these teams failed to make it to the Super Eights, the team that made it at their expense is assigned their seeding in the Super Eights. It thus means that Zimbabwe took seeding assigned to Australia in Group 1 of the Super Eights. The format according to the ICC's playing conditions. (Screenshot: ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 Playing Conditions PDF) The format according to the ICC's playing conditions. (Screenshot: ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 Playing Conditions PDF) The seedings thus made a team's final ranking in the group stage effectively irrelevant. West Indies and South Africa were always meant to be in Group 1 if they qualified, even if they finished second in their respective groups. Zimbabwe took Australia's seeded spot and hence would've been in Group 1 regardless of whether they finished first or second in Group B. This is the second time that this sort of a seeding system has been implemented in this tournament, with the first instance of it being in the last edition that was co-hosted by the USA and the West Indies. At the time, the three teams in Group 1 apart from India were Afghanistan, Australia and Bangladesh. While Australia had also finished top of their Group, Bangladesh and West Indies had finished second.

Australia level series as Indian women slide to 19-run defeat in second T20I

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Canberra: A record opening stand between Georgia Voll and Beth Mooney paved the way for Australia to level a three-match T20I series with a 19-run victory against India in the second match here on Thursday. Voll and Mooney added 128 runs for the first wicket to register Australia's highest opening stand against India in T20Is, with the hosts posting 163 for 5. India, despite making a sparkling start to the chase, crumbled in the end to finish at 144 for nine. Ashleigh Gardner claimed 3/22, while Kim Garth, Annabel Sutherland and Australia captain Sophie Molineux took two wickets each. The series-deciding third T20I will be played at the Adelaide Oval on Saturday. India were 65/1 in the ninth over when their slide began as the visitors lost six wickets for seven runs towards the end. India were off the blocks quickly as Shafali Verma's early fireworks was followed by Smriti Mandhana opening up. The two Indian openers put on 54 in the powerplay to put the team on track of the chase.

But Molineux applied the brakes when she pinned Shafali leg-before for a 23-ball 29 (5 fours) and Gardner got the key wicket of Jemimah Rodrigues (4). India's run-rate slowed down with the two consecutive wickets and a third followed soon when Mandhana was caught sharply down the leg by Mooney off Garth. With India struggling at 71 for three, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (30) and Richa Ghosh (19) joined forces and did well to add 55 runs for the fourth wicket.

However, the asking rate kept moving up which in turn forced the Indians to take unwanted risks. Harmanpreet was caught by her counterpart Molineux off Garth on the penultimate ball of the 17th over at extra cover, and three balls later, Ghosh was stumped off Gardner. India's hopes suffered another big blow when Gardner had Deepti Sharma (0) caught by Sutherland in the 18th over, with India slipping to 128 for six.

Earlier, Voll (88) and Mooney (46) recorded the best-ever opening partnership for Australia of 128 runs against



India as the hosts posted 163 for five. Arundhati Reddy, who saw a catch being dropped off her final ball in the innings off Ashleigh Gardner (10 not out), once again delivered the goods dismissing both the Australian openers to return 4-0-30-2.

Voll and Mooney bettered the first-wicket stand in women's T20Is for Australia against India, which was of 115 runs set by the pair of Alyssa Healy and Mooney in March 2020 at Melbourne. With the right-handed Voll taking charge of the scoring from the word go, the senior pro Mooney played a perfect second fiddle but missed her milestone by a narrow margin. Voll made the most of some wayward bowling from Indians to strike 11 fours and one six, scoring 88 off only 57 balls. She picked gaps with precision and displayed an array of strokes on either side of the wickets to get her runs. Mooney was caught at mid-on by Shafali Verma off Arundhati on the penultimate ball of the 15th over. The left-handed opening batter struck four fours during her 39-ball knock for 46 runs. Brief Scores: Australia Women 163 for 5 in 20 overs (Georgia Voll 88, Beth Mooney 46; Arundhati Reddy 2/30) beat India Women 144/9 Harmanpreet Kaur 36; Ashleigh Gardner 3/22) by 19 runs.

Karnataka beat Uttarakhand in semis, to face Jammu and Kashmir in Ranji final



GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Lucknow: Karnataka entered the Ranji Trophy final after a hiatus of 11 years, advancing by virtue of a first innings lead from their drawn semifinal match against Uttarakhand here on Thursday. Karnataka will face Jammu and Kashmir in the title clash at Hubballi from February 24. Resuming the fifth and final day from their overnight 299 for six, Karnataka lost the remaining four wickets quickly to get bowled out for 323 for an overall lead of 826 runs.

Uttarakhand fought through fifties by Avneesh Sudha (66), Sachin Rawat (53 not out) and Abhay Negi (57 not), thwarting Karnataka's ambitions for an outright win. They finished their second innings at 260 for six. However, the massive first innings lead was enough for them to ensure a passage to the final. Karnataka were pressing for an outright win after reducing Uttarakhand to 156 for six mid-way through the second session.

But Negi and Rawat hung in there, adding 104 runs for the seventh wicket before both the captains decided to shake hands some 30 minutes after tea. Now, Karnataka will eye their ninth Ranji Trophy title, and the last of which came in the 2014-15 season under the leadership of R Vinay Kumar. In fact, Karnataka had then achieved the rare distinction of becoming the second domestic side after Mumbai to win all three the titles twice in as many seasons.

Following their success in the 2013-14 season, Karnataka grabbed the Ranji, Irani and Vijay Hazare trophies in the 2014-15 season as well. Robin Uthappa led the

run-chart with 912 runs while Vinay was the leading wicket-taker along with Mumbai's Shardul Thakur — 48 wickets. KL Rahul, Karun Nair, Mayank Agarwal and Shreyas Gopal are the only four survivors in the current Karnataka squad from that period of dominance. On that other hand, Jammu and Kashmir will eye their maiden Ranji title, having reached the final for the first time in six decades.

Five Osmania varsity players in South Zone squad for Vizzy Trophy

GNS News Agency, Feb 21

Hyderabad: Five players from Osmania University have been selected to represent South Zone in the Vizzy Trophy cricket championship to be held in Goa from March 1 to 7. The players are Paras Raj, Anvith Reddy, Dharmapuri Sathwik, S Vamshi Kumar and VM Danush. It may be mentioned here that Osmania University won the recent South Zone inter-university cricket championship. And, this victory carries special significance as it marks a remarkable resurgence for Osmania University cricket, as it had won the trophy after 26 years.

"Their selection to the South Zone squad is a matter of immense pride and a historic milestone for the University, reflecting the depth of talent and the high standards maintained by the cricket programme," Prof K. Deepla, Secretary of Inter-university tournaments, OU, and Director of DPE, OU, said in a media release. "The University expresses its sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor and the entire administrative leadership for their constant encouragement, strategic guidance, and unwavering support extended to the sports department. Their commitment to strengthening sports infrastructure and promoting competitive participation has significantly contributed to this achievement," Dr Deepla said.

Surgical instrument found in woman's abdomen 5 years after surgery in Kerala



Kochi: An artery forceps was found inside the abdomen of a Punnappra native, five years after she underwent surgery at Alappuzha Medical College in Vandanam, relatives said on Friday.

Usha Joseph was shifted to a private hospital in Kochi on Friday to undergo a procedure to remove the surgical instrument. According to relatives, Joseph underwent surgery for the removal of a uterine fibroid at the medical college on May 2021. However, after the surgery, she had been suffering from recurring abdominal pain, her son Shibin told reporters. Though she approached doctors at the same hospital multiple times, the cause of the pain was not identified, he alleged. Recently, Joseph consulted a doctor, suspecting that the pain was due to a kidney stone, who advised an X-ray examination, he said.

Shibin said the X-ray reportedly showed an artery forceps, after which doctors at the medical college offered to remove it next week. "However, we do not want any further issues and moved to a private hospital. The doctors here will scan and locate the exact position and will perform the surgery soon," Shibin said. He said the family wants the instrument to be removed from his mother's body at the earliest and alleged that doctors at the medical college had said no compensation would be paid for the error.

"The doctors at the medical college told us that we can lodge a complaint if we want to. We have now decided to file a complaint at the Ambalapuzha police station," he said. Meanwhile, Dr Lalithambika, a retired surgeon at Alappuzha Medical College, against whom the family had raised allegations of surgical error, told reporters that she did not perform the surgery. "The surgery happened just before my retirement, when I was not attending any major cases. As the unit chief, my name was recorded. Also, the surgery happened during the COVID period, and I was engaged with it," she said. She also denied allegations that she took money from patients before surgery. "I did not take any money from patients for any surgery. You can ask any patient I attended," she said.

She said it was not a scissor but a mosquito forceps

of very small size that was seen in Joseph's body. "It is a magnified view in the X-ray. A mosquito is a small surgical tool used to clamp small blood vessels. No doubt that it should not happen," she said. She attributed the error to a system failure in a government hospital. "Usually, the floor nurse should write down the instruments used for surgery on a board and count them when the procedure is completed. However, in government hospitals, there are no floor nurses and no such practice is followed," she said. Lalithambika said Joseph had undergone surgery earlier as well and it needs to be examined whether the instrument remained in the body from that procedure. This instrument can remain in the body for as long as 20 to 30 years," she said. Health Minister Veena George said officials who were part of the surgery and are currently in government service will be suspended as part of the inquiry. According to her, a preliminary inquiry was conducted into the matter and a report was submitted to the Director of Medical Education (DME). "It is a painful incident that should not have happened. Based on the preliminary inquiry report, the DME has formed an expert committee comprising senior doctors to conduct a detailed inquiry into the incident," she said. She said expert doctors from Kottayam and Thiruvananthapuram Medical Colleges have been deputed to Alappuzha Medical College as part of the inquiry. "The team is expected to give a detailed report soon. Based on the report, all legal steps will be taken without any leniency. The report will also be forwarded to the police for legal proceedings," she said.

George said she had spoken to Joseph's family, who also told her about consulting the concerned doctor at her residence. "As part of the inquiry, it will also be checked whether such a consultation has happened. The allegation by the family shows that after availing non-practising allowance, they are engaged in medical practice at home," she said. Responding to Dr Lalithambika's remarks about system failure at government medical colleges, the minister denied the allegation. "It is a guideline of the WHO that is followed by all hospitals. Government hospitals are operating in accordance with all the guidelines. It is easy to put the blame on the system," she said. George said the claim made by Dr Lalithambika itself amounts to a violation of norms. "How can a surgery be conducted without a scrub nurse? If such a surgery were to happen, that itself would be a violation. The doctor claimed that she does not remember the patient but is sure she would not conduct the surgery. This itself is suspicious," George said. She said such errors would not be tolerated, recalling that a similar incident was reported in 2017. George said doctors cannot trivialise the incident by claiming that such equipment can remain in the body for a long time. "A medical board will also be constituted as it happened a few years back, and currently she is admitted to a private hospital," she added.

13th Ladakh Marathon to be held from Sep 10 to 13, registrations begins

New Delhi: Ladakh Marathon, the world's highest AIMS-certified marathon, will return for its 13th edition in 2026, taking place amid the stark and rugged terrain of Ladakh from September 10 to 13. Registrations for all six races of the Ladakh Marathon, including the curated Silk Route Ultra (122km) and Khardung La Challenger (72km) ultra races, opened on Thursday and can be applied to through the official website. Beyond the two ultras, the event will feature the Marathon (42km), Half Marathon (21km), 11.2km Run, and the 5km Run for Fun.

Age eligibility ranges from 12 years for the 5km to 24 years for the Silk Route Ultra, calculated as of September 13, 2026. All timed races require qualifying performances achieved within the prescribed window to match the rigour demanded by racing at over 11,500 feet in thin air. Acclimatisation is compulsory for all runners, with ultra runners required to arrive in Leh at least 10 days before race day in order to participate.

The Khardung La Challenge and Silk Route Ultra remain application-based and strictly capped. Climbing to 17,618 feet at Khardung La, these races are reserved for runners with proven marathon and ultra-distance credentials, subject to document verification and mandatory medical clearance. Speaking on the announcement, Chewang Motup Goba, Chairperson of the High Altitude Sports Foundation and founder of the Ladakh Marathon, said, "Running in Ladakh is not defined by distance alone. At this altitude, every step is shaped by terrain, thin air, and the mountain's terms. It demands preparation, discipline, and respect for conditions that are far beyond the ordinary. The eligibility criteria are therefore not procedural; they are protective.



They ensure that every runner who stands on that start line has proven capability, understands the risks, and is ready for one of the toughest endurance challenges in the world."

In 2025, the Ladakh Marathon, including the ultras, saw participation from at least one runner representing each of India's 36 States and Union Territories for the first time, underlining its place as a truly national endurance platform set in the Himalayas. Furthermore, runners carry personal hydration packs, biodegradable rice-husk cups replace disposables at aid stations, and steel serveware and reusable canvas bags have replaced paper plates and plastic giveaways. The Ladakh Marathon also deploys dry pit sanitation systems along the course to minimise water usage, a conscious step in a region where water scarcity is emerging as a defining challenge of the future. Together, these measures reinforce that at high altitude, sport and environmental responsibility must go hand in hand.

Australia were nowhere near good enough, selections were strange: Michael Clarke

Michael Clarke has criticised Australia's disappointing T20 World Cup campaign, calling the team "nowhere near good enough" and questioning key selection decisions, including the handling of Steve Smith in Sri Lanka conditions. The lowest point for Australia at the ongoing T20 World Cup was their loss to Zimbabwe by 23 runs, which on the heels of their loss to co-hosts Sri Lanka by eight wickets, spelt doom for their campaign. Talking about Australia's World Cup in Sri Lanka, Clarke said: "Extremely disappointing. But I will say that I can guarantee you the players will be feeling it as much as, if not more than, the rest of us. Sometimes when you have bad losses—and I was a part of a few when I played—you can have this assumption that the players don't really care. The players would be fuming, there's no doubt about it, and they would have been committed to this tournament, but our performance has been terrible."

The Australian squad has been ravaged by injuries, but Clarke said that they still had enough to make it out of the group stages. "Yes, we've had injuries. When players, captains, or coaches do the media afterward, they will obviously mention the injuries, and there's nowhere to hide there. We've had plenty of those, but we were nowhere near good from the first ball of the tournament. Now, we've got one game to go and we're on a plane home," Clarke said before training his gun at the selection decisions of Australia.

"I think some of the decision-making around the selections was interesting, to be polite, but extremely strange. I think we missed Mitch Marsh, our captain, at the start of the tournament. Having that injury at that time was tough; I thought he'd been playing really good T20 cricket and his

tactical leadership has been very good. Marsh opening the batting was important for us as well. When he came back in for that last 'must-win' game, he played well; he and Travis Head got us off to an absolute flyer. Having him in the team from the start of this campaign would have been important," Clarke added. But Clarke made his displeasure known about the Steve Smith situation that has become a major talking point in Australia after their inability to make it out of the group stages. Smith was initially not part of the Australian side travelling to Sri Lanka and India, but later called in as a replacement for Josh Hazlewood.

"Regarding the Smith thing: I'll say it again—if you're going to select him in the squad, how is he not in the starting eleven? This is where I think common sense doesn't seem to be as common as it should be. Playing in Sri Lanka is different from playing in India, Australia, or South Africa. I don't think you can say Steve Smith is just an opening batter in T20 cricket. If you're playing in Australia or South Africa or England, I agree. But playing in the subcontinent—particularly Sri Lanka—he is our best player of spin. He can bat three, four, five, or six.

He's our best fielder and can field anywhere. If needed, he could even bowl some part-time overs. "Even if he wasn't going to open, I'm okay with the selectors going with Mitch Marsh and Travis Head. They have been our opening batters for the last couple of years, and they played beautifully. But Smitty could have played in that middle order because he's our best player against spin in those conditions. "I talk about this all the time: just because you make runs in the BBL (Big Bash League) doesn't mean you naturally go into the Australian eleven. Opening the batting in the BBL is a different role than batting at four, five, or six for Australia.

Debuted at 16, delivered Bollywood's first Rs 100cr hit; top star quit films to marry entrepreneur with Rs 1,300cr net worth



film to cross Rs 100 crore net domestically. Asin was undoubtedly among the most sought-after actresses of the 2000s. She went on to work with several A-listers in Hindi cinema. Asin starred opposite Salman Khan in London Dreams and Ready, and was also part of multistarrers like Housefull 2 and Bol Bachchan. She worked with Akshay Kumar in Khiladi 786. Her last film was Abhishek Bachchan and Rishi Kapoor's All Is Well in 2015, after which she bid adieu to the film industry.

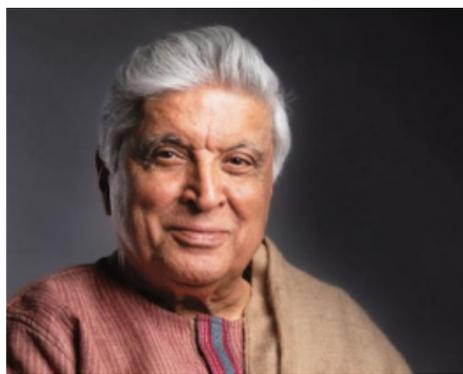
Who is Asin's husband and his net worth

A year after her final film, Asin tied the knot with Rahul Sharma, co-founder of Micromax, in 2016. The couple welcomed their daughter, Arin Rayn Sharma, in 2017.

Micromax is among the first Indian multinational manufacturers of consumer electronics and home appliances and is one of the few homegrown affordable mobile brands. As per a report by The Economic Times, Rahul started the company after taking a small loan of Rs 3 lakh from his father in 2000. The company entered the mobile phone business in 2008 and soon became one of the largest Indian manufacturers of low-cost phones. Rahul Sharma is a mechanical engineering graduate from Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University and also holds a commerce degree from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. As per his LinkedIn profile, apart from co-founding Micromax, Rahul has also co-founded two other startups — Bhagwati Products Limited, a manufacturer and assembler of innovative electronic items and telecommunication devices, and MiPhi Semiconductors Private Limited. He has also launched Revolt Intellincorp, India's first AI-based electric motorcycle brand. Rahul recently appeared on Nikhil Kamath's podcast. According to reports by Forbes and GQ India, Rahul Sharma's net worth is reportedly estimated to be around Rs 1,300 crore.

Rahul Sharma's anniversary post Recently, Rahul Sharma shared never-seen-before photos from his and Asin's Christian wedding on the occasion of their 10th anniversary. He also penned a sweet note for Asin, calling her the "co-founder of everything that matters in my life." She's the incredible co-founder of everything that matters in my life, and I'm fortunate to be cast as a co-star in hers! He wrote, "10 blissful years... She's the incredible co-founder of everything that matters in my life, and I'm fortunate to be cast as a co-star in hers! Happy 10th anniversary, my

'Dhurandhar is a great film': Javed Akhtar heaps praise on Ranveer Singh actioner, says called Aditya Dhar to congratulate him



Javed Akhtar said: "I saw Dhurandhar, it's a great film, very well made. I found the number of the director and I called him, and congratulated that young man who has made this film. It's a good film, a very well-made film." Interestingly, Akhtar has also been making headlines recently for a separate reason. With the release of the war film Border 2 around the corner, the lyricist revealed to India Today that he was approached by the makers to write additional lyrics for the film's songs, including "Ghar Kab Aaoge" and "Jaate Hue Lamho". However, he declined the offer, calling the trend of adding lyrics to existing popular songs an act of "intellectual and creative bankruptcy." "They did ask me to write for the film, but I refused. I really feel this is a kind of intellectual and creative bankruptcy. You have an old song, which did well, and you want to put it out again by adding something? Make new songs or else accept that you cannot do the same level of work. Whatever is bygone, let that be. What is the need to recreate it?" Dhurandhar's release was followed by Sriram Raghavan's Ikki, and the two films were frequently compared on social media. While Ikki faced criticism for being "too pacifist" in its intent, Dhurandhar was widely lauded for its bold and unflinching take on the state of affairs with Pakistan. Addressing these comparisons and the online trolling faced by Ikki, writer Pooja Ladha Surti responded in an exclusive conversation with SCREEN. She said, "I wouldn't want to pit one against the other. Both films are wildly different and inhabit complex worlds. In a democracy, there should be room for both Dhurandhar and Ikki to coexist."

Needless to say, Aditya Dhar's Dhurandhar has created havoc at the box office. It is equally unsurprising that the film has drawn unanimous praise from across the Hindi film industry. From Ram Gopal Varma and Karan Johar to Aditya Chopra and Anurag Kashyap, there appears to be no major voice left untouched by the impact of the film. Joining this growing list of admirers is veteran screenwriter and lyricist Javed Akhtar, who recently lauded Dhurandhar and revealed that he was so impressed by the film that he personally reached out to director Aditya Dhar to congratulate him.

In a conversation with Zoom, while praising the film,

Vijay Varma poses with golden toilet in Amitabh Bachchan's home Jalsa as he takes part in 2016 Instagram trend

Joining the ongoing viral trend, Vijay Varma also went down the memory lane to share glimpses of his year 2016. In his carousel of pictures, one of the moments caught widespread attention of fans, which was his selfie at veteran superstar Amitabh Bachchan's home Jalsa. The actor's photo with Amitabh's 'golden toilet' has left fans amused and intrigued to see more.

Taking to his Instagram handle, Vijay called 2016 a milestone in his journey. Along with the post, he wrote a description of every picture in the caption. It read, "2016 was sort of a milestone year for me.. I got to work with Big B and Shoojit da on the movie Pink with the lovely cast and crew. Met god @sachintendulkar. Took selfie with a golden toilet at Bachchan's. Made gym buddies @sanyamalhotra_ and @fatimasanashaikh. Met my hero @irrfan. Worked on Yaara with @tigmanshuldulia sir with @mevidyutjammwal and @teamitsadh. Music video Naina Bawre with my friend @reemsen and overall goofed around with my newfound mini fame."

The post also revealed his special encounters with people from that year, including cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar and actor Amitabh Bachchan. He called the cricketer 'God' and shared bonding moments with Sanya Malhotra and Fatima Sana Shaikh during their gym sessions. Another photo also showed him posing with late actor Irrfan. In the series, one of the selfies was with a golden toilet and chair in the background. He had mentioned that it was actually taken in a washroom in the Bachchan's Mumbai house. "That golden toilet," an amused fan wrote. Another commented, "First time Vijay saw a luxury toilet and wanted to take a selfie with that." "Golden toilet is the main character," a comment read. "All of them are fine, but



I don't understand what is the use of the chair beside the toilet yet," another person noted. Meanwhile, on the work front, Vijay Varma was last seen in Gustaakh Ishq, alongside Naseeruddin Shah and Fatima Sana Shaikh. The actor will next feature in Amazon Prime Video web series Matka King. It also stars Kritika Kamra, Sai Tamhankar and Gulshan Grover.

Bridgerton showrunner on casting Banita Sandhu in Season 3: 'Her effervescence and glow came off the screen immediately'

Jess Brownell has been working at Shondaland for 18 years now. She served as the showrunner of Bridgerton Season 3 and the upcoming Season 4, and even relocated from the US to London for that. In an exclusive interview with SCREEN, she spills some beans on the next instalment, reacts to criticism towards Season 3, and reveals what she's learnt from visionary creator Shonda Rhimes.

Bridgerton Season 4 is going into the Downton Abbey zone by exploring the dynamics between the elite living upstairs and the working class in the basement. How do you think that'll shake things up? It shakes things up in a major way. We've always had a presence of the downstairs staff, but haven't explored their stories in depth. So, this season broadens their world, and adds a level of depth and texture. And class also provides a major obstacle and stakes to the main romance between Benedict (Luke Thompson) and Sophie (Yerin Ha) this season.

Speaking of romance, there was a bit of criticism towards Season 3 that it wasn't romantic enough. Do you agree with that criticism?

I don't agree with the criticism. Everyone has a different connection with each season. There are people who really see themselves in the relationship in Season 1, in Anthony (Jonathan Bailey) and Kate (Simone Ashley). And there are people who see themselves in the wish fulfillment of the guy you've always had a crush on but has friend-zoned you, finally see you in a romantic way. This season has a different kind of love connection. It's about forbidden romance. I'm excited for even more people to find alignment with what they consider romantic.

Bridgerton has been known widely for colourblind casting. But as a white woman, you've also brought your queer identity to the show in the form of Francesca (Hannah Dodd). How important was that for you?

For me, it has more to do with this being a show where more and more people can see themselves represented. Bridgerton is known, in many ways, for its inclusivity. It felt like queerness was one area where people weren't given enough opportunity to see themselves represented, especially in leading characters. The fact that I'm queer is a plus, like a sprinkle on top, in the way that I do understand how to write those stories. But it's not the main driving reason for



that choice.

You've worked all your career at Shondaland. What have you picked up from creator Shonda Rhimes' vision that you've incorporate into your own?

Shonda has a knack for telling unexpected stories. My training in writing has been rooted in structure in a big way, following the beats of a story. But Shonda challenges me to think out of the box. She pushed me to think about what I'd want to see as a viewer rather than just writing what it feels like should happen. That creates many more talk-worthy moments that surprise people and make them swoon. Bridgerton creator Shonda Rhimes and showrunner Jess Brownell. Bridgerton creator Shonda Rhimes and showrunner Jess Brownell.

It was a pleasant surprise to see our very own Banita Sandhu as Sita Malhotra in season 3. How did you cast her?

I remember seeing Banita's tape and her effervescence and glow came off the screen immediately. We were looking for fresh faces for our debutantes and she was someone that captured the screen. She is a wonderful addition to our group of debutantes, and we're so lucky to have her on the show. You relocated to London to work on the past two seasons of Bridgerton. Has that helped you to know the fragrance and history of the land that Bridgerton belongs to? I've been in London for four years now. It's funny because Bridgerton is such a fantasy of London.

Brooklyn Beckham's father-in-law built an empire worth \$1.6 billion, more than double of David and Victoria Beckham's net worth

The drama surrounding the Beckhams has reached unprecedented heights, with Brooklyn Beckham's latest statement about his mother, Victoria Beckham, taking the internet by storm. David Beckham's son has now cut all ties with his parents and seems to be enjoying life with his wife, actor Nicola Peltz, and her parents, Nelson Peltz and Claudia Heffner. While the Beckhams are considered one of the most sought-after families in England, Brooklyn's new family and home also have quite a rich history.

Who is Nelson Peltz?

Father of Nicola and two of her siblings, Nelson dropped out of Wharton to become a ski instructor. However, instead of conquering hills, he found himself driving trucks for his father's food distribution company. Along with his brother, Robert Peltz, Nelson expanded the company for the better. During the 70s, the brother acquired several other food companies and soon went public. However, after an industry-wide crash, they had to rebuild their business.

With his partner Peter May and an investment vehicle they owned, the duo acquired new companies such as Tri-angle Industries and Snapple. The latter they bought from Quaker Oats and later sold it to Cadbury. Through their company Trian Partners, Peltz and May also acquired 15% of the fast food brand Wendy's in 2005. Peltz stepped down as the chairman of the corporation in 2024. He also serves as the non-executive director of Unilever. Through all these companies which Peltz bought and sold, he built a billion-dollar empire. According to reports by Forbes, the businessman is worth \$1.6 billion (Rs 14k crore). He has two kids from his first marriage and three from the marriage with Claudia.

Brooklyn has made it clear that he does not want to reconcile with his family and had earlier even sent them a legal notice, which directed them to make contact only through lawyers. However, the Beckhams have three more children: Romeo, Cruz and Harper. According to Celebrity Net Worth, both David and Victoria Beckham are worth \$450



million (Rs 4000 crore) each, and both have built that net worth all by themselves. While Victoria had some backing from her parents, who made it big during the tech boom of the 1980s, she forged her own path as a singer and fashion designer. Her time with the girl group Spice Girls brought her global fame, which helped her transition into designing. David, on the other hand, came from a much more humble background. His mother was a hairdresser, and his father worked as a kitchen fitter. His football career had him playing for teams like Manchester United, Real Madrid, AC Milan, PSG, and LA Galaxy. David established himself as one of the best wingers to ever grace the game, and that skill earned him big and lucrative contracts. He currently owns a sizeable chunk of the Inter Miami football club, which features players like Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez.

Jodie Foster was mauled by a lion as a 9-year-old; recalls camera crew running away: 'It picked me up and...'

The set of a movie can very quickly turn into a dangerous place when there are stunts or difficult physical actions involved. A lot can go wrong, and for actor Jodie Foster, something went terribly wrong on the sets of the Bernard McEveety directorial Napoleon and Samantha. Apart from Foster and Michael Douglas, the 1972 film also starred a lion, which is a pet in the film. However, during the shoot, the lion suddenly decided to take matters into its own hands and attack Foster, scarring her for life. The actor shared this story during an interview with W Magazine. She started reciting the terrible incident and said, "I was mauled by a lion when I was eight and a half or nine. The lion picked me up, shook me around, moved me horizontally, and then dropped me. I had two perfect punctures on one side and then two perfect punctures on the other, on my hip. But as the years have gone on and we get bigger, you know, who even knows where they are anymore? They kind of just move around." The actor continued and said, "I was in shock, so I don't really remember that much. I remember the event. I



saw his mane come forward, and I had worked with the lions, but when he picked me up, he picked me up and then moved me sideways and shook me around.