


OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



15-12-2025
Total pilgrims: 70,251
Tonsures: 26,862
Hundi kanukalu: 4.66 CR
Waiting Compartments: 31

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens). 15 H



NATION | NEWS

Rahul Gandhi warns poll commissioners as Congress protests alleged vote manipulation



WORLD | NEWS

Trump repeats criticism of killed Hollywood director Rob Reiner



SPORTS | NEWS

Fernandes 'hurt' Man Utd 'want-ed him to go' to Saudi

INBRIF

Soldier dies in explosion in J&K's Kupwara

SRINAGAR : A soldier was killed in an explosion in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, officials said on Tuesday. Officials said that the soldier died on Monday in an explosion in Putaha Khan Gali of the Trehgam area of the district of the Line of Control (LoC).

The soldier has been identified as Havaldar Zubair Ahmad of J&K Light Infantry (JAKLI). "The injured soldier was rushed to a military hospital in the Drugmulla area of Baramulla district, but doctors said he was dead on arrival," officials said.

The officials said that the explosion occurred during road construction in the area, and the soldier was accidentally critically injured in this blast.

At least six killed in small plane crash in Mexico

MEXICO CITY : At least six people were killed after a small aircraft crashed in the municipality of San Mateo Atenco in Mexico's central State of Mexico, local authorities said.

Adrian Hernandez Romero, the state's civil protection coordinator, told reporters that 10 people were on board the aircraft, including the pilot and co-pilot. The victims have not yet been identified, he said.

Hernandez said the private jet had registered eight passengers and two crew, but hours after the crash only seven bodies had been recovered. He said the plane had apparently tried to land on a soccer field but hit the metal roof of a nearby business, starting a large fire.

Mathura fog: 13 dead, 25 injured in Yamuna Expressway pile-up

MATHURA (TSIT): Thirteen people died of burns, and 43 sustained injuries when a vehicle pile-up in dense fog on the Yamuna Expressway here early Tuesday turned into an inferno, according to police. Eight buses and three smaller vehicles collided with each other in the thick fog around 4.30 am, the officer said. The incident occurred under the Baldev Police Station jurisdiction.

Some vehicles also caught fire. All injured have been sent to the hospital," Mathura Senior Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar said. Two of the deceased were identified as 44-year-old Akhileendra Pratap Yadav, a resident of Prayagraj, and 75-year-old Rampal, from Maharajganj district. Baldev Police Station SHO Ranjana Sachan said.

Revanth seeks FM support for residential schools

HYDERABAD (TSIT) : Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Tuesday met Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi and urged her to extend support for the establishment of Young India Integrated Residential Schools (YIIRS).

The Chief Minister informed the Union Minister that the State government plans to set up 105 YIIRS across Telangana.

According to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), he highlighted that through the YIIRS, quality education would be provided directly and indirectly to nearly four lakh students.

The Chief Minister also stated that the construction of the YIIRS and other educational institutions would involve an expenditure of Rs 30,000 crore. He requested the Union Finance Minister to exempt the loans raised for this purpose from the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) limits, considering the large-scale investment in education infrastructure.



CM Revanth Reddy sought Union support and FRBM exemption for the ₹30,000 crore Young India Integrated d Residential Schools project and pressed for an IIM, Kendriya Vidyalayas, and Navodaya Vidyalayas in Telangana.

ment in education infrastructure. Congress MPs Kiran Kumar Chamala, Dr Mallu Ravi, Suresh Shetkar, and Anil Kumar Yadav accompanied the Chief Minister.

In September, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka had

met FM Sitharaman and had sought special financial support and FRBM exemption for the Rs 30,000 crore YIIRS programme in the state.

Vikramarka, who is also the state Finance Minister, had also explained that this Rs

30,000 crore initiative will transform education and nutrition for lakhs of children, empower marginalised communities, and strengthen India's demographic dividend.

The Union Finance Minister was also urged to give FRBM exemption for this long-term human capital investment. She was told that the programme was launched to address the challenges of quality education and nutritious food for students.

Revanth meets Sonia, presents 2047 Vision Document



HYDERABAD (TSIT): Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy met Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi in Delhi and presented her the Telangana Rising 2047 Vision Document. He briefed her on the Telangana Rising Global Summit-2025, welfare schemes, ongoing development measures, and future plans.

Sonia Gandhi appreciated the government's performance and Revanth Reddy's vision, wishing him success in leading the state's growth in line with the vision document. The roadmap aims to transform Telangana into a \$3 trillion economy by 2047, with a \$1 trillion interim milestone by 2034, through a three-zone strategy: CURE (urban), PURE (peri-urban), and RARE (rural-agro).

PM Modi lauds Jordan Crown Prince for youth and innovation efforts

AMMAN, (TSIT) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Jordan's Crown Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II on Tuesday, and lauded his contributions to areas like youth development, sports, space, innovation and furthering the welfare of people with disabilities.

"During my Jordan visit, I've interacted extensively with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II. His passion towards Jordan's progress is clearly visible. His contributions to areas such as youth development, sports, space, innovation and furthering welfare of persons with disabilities are truly remarkable. My best wishes to him in his pursuits to strengthen Jordan's growth trajectory," PM Modi posted on X.

In a special gesture, Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II personally drove PM Modi to the airport and saw him off as he departed for Ethiopia.

Earlier in the day, the Crown Prince drove PM Modi to the Jordan Museum in Amman as Vice-Chair of the facility, Princess Sumaya bint El Hassan gave them a special tour of the museum.

"Exploring ancient links between India and Jordan! Vikas bhi Virasat



bhi! PM Narendra Modi and H.R.H. Crown Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II visited the Jordan Museum, reflecting on shared civilisational links and the centuries-old connections between India and Jordan. They were given a special tour of the museum by HRH Princess Sumaya bint El Hassan, Vice-Chair of the Jordan Museum," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson posted on X. "In a special gesture, HRH Crown Prince personally drove PM Narendra Modi to the Jordan Museum," he added. PM Modi also

addressed the India-Jordan Business Forum and highlighted areas where the two nations can deepen trade, business and investment cooperation. Apart from King Abdullah II, the Crown Prince also attended the event.

The Prime Minister on Monday met King Abdullah II at the Al Hussein Palace, and proposed that both countries should aim to enhance bilateral trade to \$5 billion. PM Modi also called for collaboration between Jordan's digital payment system and India's United Payments Interface (UPI).

'Insult to Mahatma Gandhi' Oppn protests outside Parliament against move to replace MGNREGA

NEW DELHI: The Opposition on Tuesday staged a protest outside Parliament, holding placards and raising slogans against the Centre over its move to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Raising slogans such as "Gandhiji ka ye apman, nahi sahega Hindustan" and "Mahatma Gandhi Amar Rahe", Opposition parliamentarians accused the BJP-led Centre of removing the name of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, from the rural employment scheme.

Opposition MPs objected to the renaming of the flagship employment programme and marched within the Parliamentary premises to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi, where they continued their protest.

The demonstration followed the introduction of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G), 2025, a Bill that seeks to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.



Opposition MPs protested outside Parliament, accusing the Centre of insulting Mahatma Gandhi and attempting to dilute MGNREGA by renaming it under a new rural employment Bill.

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan introduced the Bill in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, triggering sharp reactions from Opposition members who questioned the rationale behind removing Mahatma Gandhi's name from a landmark welfare scheme that has been in

existence for nearly two decades.

"The truth is that under the pretext of changing the scheme's name, they want to scrap it. Why do they want to change the name of this scheme? Mahatma Gandhi is the Father of the Nation," Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra told reporters during the protest.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, speaking to IANS, questioned the logic behind the "renaming" exercise. "How will the change in the name benefit the farmers of the country? This politics of changing the name first started in Uttar Pradesh, and now it has arrived in Delhi also," he said.

34 Maoists surrender in Bijapur with Rs.84 lac bounty

RAIPUR/BIJAPUR : In a significant victory for anti-Naxal operations, 34 Maoist cadres, including 7 women, surrendered before senior police and CRPF officials in Bijapur district on Tuesday, carrying a combined bounty of Rs 84 lakh. The surrendered cadres, primarily from the South Sub-Zonal Bureau, also include members linked to the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC), Telangana State Committee, and Andhra-Odisha Border (AOB) Division. Key figures include a Divisional Committee Member (DVC) from the Keralapal Area Committee with a Rs 8 lakh bounty, several PLGA (People's Liberation Guerrilla Army) members, Area Committee Members (ACMs), platoon leaders, militia commanders, and frontal organisation office-bearers like DAKMS and CNM presidents.



TELANGANA PANCHAYAT POLLS

KTR accuses Congress MLAs of high-handedness

HYDERABAD (TSIT): Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday accused the ruling Congress party legislators of arrogance of power and high-handedness.

He asserted that funds for Gram Panchayats and welfare schemes like Indiramma Houses are public money and not the personal property of Congress leaders.

Addressing a felicitation ceremony for newly elected



Sarpanches, Upa-Sarpanches and Ward Members from Khanapur and Shadnagar constituencies at Telangana Bhavan, KTR urged local body representatives to stand firm against political intimidation.

Taking strong objection to the threats issued by Congress MLAs, KTR stated, "We are witnessing a disturbing trend where MLAs are threatening the electorate and elected representatives with life-threats. Let it be clear: Indiramma

Houses and developmental funds are not the personal inheritance or 'Jagir' of these leaders.

They are merely trustees of public wealth. The authority to identify beneficiaries lies with the Gram Sabhas and Sarpanches, as enshrined in the Constitution." KTR further mocked the financial state of the Congress administration, noting that several MLAs are reportedly writing to the World Bank or pleading for funds on public platforms.

EDITORIAL

IndiGodot: What We Wait for When We Wait for Change

December 2025, airports across India, those monuments to aspiration, transformed overnight into something resembling a Beckettian staging of waiting. In Beckett, you wait for Godot; here, thousands of passengers found themselves sitting on marble floors, staring at departure boards that had stopped pretending to mean anything. IndiGo, the airline that flies more than half of India, had cancelled over a thousand flights in a single day. Videos circulated on social media – this is part of our new national pastime, documenting indignities on phones that cost more than most Indians earn in six months. They showed passengers howled at airline staff who were either struggling too or had clearly stopped listening hours ago. Families camping under airport lights. Not because these passengers were entitled to perfection, but because a promise of reliability had been sold as infrastructure, and when that promise failed, it revealed not the vulnerability of those sitting on the floor, but the fragility of the machine that had been built above them.

The Official Story Which Nobody Believes But Everyone Repeats

The explanation was bureaucratic and therefore boring. New flight duty time limitations, FDTL in the jargon, designed to keep pilots from being worked to death. These were not draconian rules, but night landings capped at two instead of six, 48 hours of weekly rest among other things. Kind of regulation that shouldn't cause chaos unless someone decides not to prepare for it. But when you're that big, when you own that much of the sky, caring perhaps becomes optional. IndiGo called it a "reboot." Corporate speak for when you've made a mess and need to pretend it was intentional. A cleansing ritual to realign crew and machines. Very spiritual. Very necessary. Very needed. Very conveniently timed. And then, right on schedule, the DGCA folded. A soft exemption was granted till February 2026. The new rest requirements, designed to keep pilots from flying while half-alive and half-dead, effectively neutered.

In any other country this might be called corporate blackmail. A monopoly leveraging its stranglehold on national mobility to force a regulatory rollback. In India it's called Tuesday. Another day, another capitulation. The market barely blinked. IndiGo's stock dipped marginally, then resumed its upward drift, almost smugly. Investors knew what passengers didn't, this wasn't a failure. This was a demonstration. A flex. When you control 60% of the market, when you own the slots and terminals and routes and manpower, you're not really a company anymore. You're a microstate. You can stall the arteries of national mobility to make a point. You can perform a crisis, watch the regulators scramble, and emerge with exactly the exemption you wanted. Perhaps one can call it brilliant, in a sociopathic sort of way.

What IndiGo revealed, perhaps unintentionally, perhaps not, is that the infrastructure of this nation is not a shared inheritance. It's a gated commons, and when the gate malfunctions and the privileged briefly find themselves outside, the panic is treated as a national emergency.

The Gated Commons and Who Gets to Use the Gate

But what stays with me, what I can't quite shake, is the sight of the elite stranded. Not because their suffering is trivial, but because it exposes how selectively the nation recognises suffering at all.

Aviation in India caters almost entirely to an urban, upper-caste, mostly English-speaking population. It is still a privilege masquerading as normalcy. Less than 5% of Indians have ever been on a plane. In a country of 1.4 billion, the flying class i.e. less than 5% is a rounding error. This is the demographic that also often functions as the soft extension of the political regime. These are people who truly believe and imbibe the shining India narrative, because they are the ones shining.

Editorial

WHEN INVESTIGATION ITSELF BECOMES A VIOLATION OF RIGHTS



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

Narco Test and the Constitution: Rights, Morality and Justice

The Supreme Court's re-declaration of involuntary narco-analysis tests as unconstitutional is a significant reassertion of the Constitution's supremacy in Indian democracy. This decision is not limited to a single technique of criminal investigation, but raises profound questions about the punitive power of the state, the dignity of the individual, and the moral compass of the justice system. A fundamental principle of modern criminal justice is that the fundamental rights of citizens cannot be compromised even in the name of crime control.

Narco testing is essentially a process in which an accused or suspect is administered special chemical drugs to weaken their consciousness, enabling them to answer questions without resistance. It is often presented as a technique for "unearthing the truth." However, any path to the truth that is unconstitutional, inhumane, and unscientific cannot be a path to justice. The Indian Constitution has established clear boundaries to balance the relationship between the state and citizens, violations of which are unacceptable under any circumstances.

Article 20(3) of the Constitution provides the right to protection from self-incrimination. This means that no person can be compelled to give evidence against himself. Involuntary narco-analysis is a direct violation of this right, as it attempts to extract information from a person against his or her will. In the landmark judgment of *Selvi v. State of Karnataka* (2010), the Supreme Court clear-

ly stated that techniques like narco-analysis, brain mapping, and polygraph are unconstitutional if conducted without consent. This judgment is not merely a legal interpretation, but a declaration of the protection of constitutional morality. Article 21, which provides the right to life and personal liberty, takes on an even broader meaning in the context of narcotic testing. The right to life is not limited to physical survival but also includes dignity, mental autonomy, and privacy. Controlling a person's consciousness by injecting them with chemical substances is a serious encroachment on their physical and mental liberty. The Supreme Court has, from time to time, interpreted Article 21 to state that every action by the state must be "just, reasonable, and reasonable." Narcotic testing fails this criterion.

Narco testing also raises numerous questions from a judicial perspective. Under the Indian Evidence Act, only evidence obtained voluntarily and reliably is admissible. Statements made during narco testing are neither completely voluntary nor scientifically reliable. Under the influence of drugs, a person's memory, imagination, and external suggestions become intertwined. Accepting information obtained in such a situation as truth is inviting judicial error. For this reason, the Supreme Court has refused to accept the results of such tests as evidence.

Another serious constitutional problem concerns the concept of "consent." Supporters argue that a narco test can be conducted if the accused consents. However, the question of how free and voluntary consent is given in custodial conditions is complex. Power imbalances are inherent in police custody. Consent given under fear, pressure, and uncertainty about the future cannot be considered genuine consent. The Supreme Court has also recognized that the reliability of consent obtained in custody is questionable.

Narco testing raises profound ethical questions, not just constitutional considerations.

Human dignity is central to modern human rights discourse. Depriving a person of consciousness, chemically controlling them, and extracting information from them violates their dignity. This approach reduces the individual to a "means," whereas the Constitution considers the individual to be the "goal." Philosophically, this process also separates a person from their will and conscience, which is unacceptable in any civilized society. From a scientific perspective, the reliability of narcotics testing also faces serious questions. The notion that a person under the influence of drugs will only tell the truth is a myth. Medical science suggests that such drugs impair a person's judgment, leading them to interpret imaginary events as real. Sometimes, the interrogator's questions influence responses, revealing not the truth but the investigator's expectations. Thus, narcotics testing can create confusion rather than uncover the truth. Narco testing is also a serious concern in the context of medical ethics. The medical profession is based on the principle of "do no harm." When a doctor administers drugs to a person without any therapeutic purpose, merely for testing, they violate this principle. Furthermore, health risks exist during narco testing, especially if the person already suffers from a physical or mental illness. This raises questions about the role and responsibility of physicians. The argument in support of narcotics testing is that it can help guide investigations into serious crimes, terrorism, or complex cases. However, this argument falls short in the face of constitutional values. The Constitution does not permit the suspension of fundamental rights under any circumstances, except in exceptional situations like emergencies, and that too within a limited scope. The gravity of a crime does not give the state the right to act arbitrarily. If we compromise rights today in the name of serious crimes, tomorrow this scope may extend to ordinary crimes as well. In fact, narco testing reflects the mindset of inves-

tigative agencies, which, in their pursuit of quick results, deviate from constitutional paths. This becomes an easy way to cover up investigative incompetence. In contrast, the modern criminal justice system emphasizes evidence-based, scientific, and professional investigations. Techniques such as DNA analysis, digital forensics, financial investigations, and witness protection are not only more reliable but also in accordance with rights. Police reforms and training are crucial in this context. Unless investigative agencies are equipped with modern technology, adequate resources, and trained in constitutional values, they will continue to be tempted to resort to such shortcuts. The detention guidelines issued by the National Human Rights Commission and the police modernization plan are important steps in this direction, but their effective implementation is required. The role of the judiciary should not be limited to imposing restrictions. Courts must ensure that rights are not violated in any investigative process. Furthermore, judicial training should place special emphasis on constitutional morality and human rights, ensuring that these values are upheld in lower courts. Ultimately, the question of narco testing is not just about a technique, but about the way the state views its citizens. Are citizens merely instruments of investigation, or are they dignified individuals with rights? The Indian Constitution clearly chooses the latter. The strength of democracy lies in its unwavering commitment to its values even when dealing with crime. In conclusion, the Supreme Court's stance reminds us that the purpose of justice is not merely conviction, but rather the attainment of truth through a fair, humane, and constitutional process. Methods like narco-analysis are contrary to this objective. A strong democracy is one that protects human dignity and fundamental rights even under the most difficult circumstances. This constitutional consciousness is the soul of India's judicial system.

Why Big Tech Has Committed Almost \$80 Billion To India In Two Months

In the 2000s, the Indian economy grew at spectacular rates. Those were heady years, as the growth rate accelerated on the back of a steady flow of foreign direct investment (FDI). From Mumbai to Bengaluru (it was still Bangalore then), there was genuine excitement. India was truly shining. Towards the end of the decade, annual FDI touched nearly \$40 billion. At the time, \$40 billion was truly something. Most of that investment went into traditional sectors such as telecom, metals, automobiles, energy and old-world manufacturing. In those years, India had no digital rails, a nascent startup ecosystem and no public cloud strategy. A similar excitement is in the air today. After the doom and gloom of the Covid-19 years, India's economic engine has slipped back into fifth gear. Investor confidence in the India story has been fully restored. Compared to the world of the 2000s, the picture today is dramatically different. India is now part of the global high-tech chain: semiconductors, AI, cloud, data centres, electronics. The shift is seismic. Best Of Times? In this backdrop, Big Tech has entered India with confidence and deep pockets. Since October, they have been lining up at India's doorstep with cheque books open. Amazon has promised \$35 billion. Microsoft has committed \$17.5 billion.



Google is building a \$15 billion AI data hub. Intel has tied up with Tata to anchor India's semiconductor ambitions. After adding a few other players, India has attracted more than \$80 billion in fresh tech pledges within weeks. And this is on top of India's already strong post-pandemic annual FDI inflow of more than \$80 billion. Not long ago, we struggled to attract foreign capital. The sudden surge today feels almost electric. So what has changed? A lot of businessmen and investors here are wondering what has changed in India, why the world's richest tech companies are betting so aggressively on a market that, they insist, still wrestles with paperwork, state-level delays and regulatory bottlenecks. They ask why Big Tech would take this risk when the US under President Trump is nudging

them to invest at home. It is not very difficult to answer these questions. Consider this: India offers what no other democracy can. A digital universe of at least a billion people. The world's second-largest pool of tech talent. A market where cloud consumption is growing faster than almost anywhere else. A state that has made AI infrastructure, semiconductor production and packaging and public digital platforms the spine of its next economic phase. AI models devour data. They need millions of testers. They need languages - India offers at least 22, along with accents and behavioural patterns. They need engineers who can train, tune and monitor them. India has all four in abundance. That is why India beckons Big Tech. But there is a deeper story under the headline numbers. These tech giants are not simply

building data centres. They are embedding themselves into India's long-term economic story, at least for 20-30 years. The government's move may be overdue, but it arrives at a decisive moment. A national sovereign AI framework is slated to roll out in February. The outline is clear. Public datasets, compute grids, domestic model building, Indian language AI, sector-specific guidelines, safety checks and incentives to build indigenous AI capability. It will be India's attempt to ensure that intelligence, like data, becomes a strategic public resource. The new policy will formalise what the world is already sensing. India intends to build AI, not just consume it. The Largest Applied AI Market Where does India stand in the AI world right now? Not at the top. But it is breaking into inner circles.

Will Congress 'High Command' Fumble Another State? Possibly

Even as the year draws to a close and the grand old party prepares to celebrate its 140th foundation day, Karnataka's 'CONG'-estion point seems to be dampening spirits. The 83-year-old Mallikarjun Kharge is staring at the rocky politics of his home state, where a hawkish and somewhat edgy Deputy Chief Minister, DK Shivakumar, is looking for an elevation that was supposedly promised by Kharge in May 2023. Eyewitness accounts have it that it was at 51, Lodhi state, New Delhi, the residence of All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary in-charge of the organisation, KC Venugopal, where the two warring men, Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar, along with Kharge, had spoken twice with Rahul Gandhi over the phone, confirming the rotational chief ministerial formula. Under the arrangement, Siddaramaiah was to run Karnataka for the first two-and-a-half years - that ended last year on November 21 - and Shivakumar would take the reins for the remaining period till May 2028. November 21 has come and gone, but there is no sign of Siddaramaiah either stepping down or accepting any truce that grants him continuation till March-May 2026. Counting on his backward class status, Rahul Gandhi's indifference and support of party MLAs (the majority of Karnataka Congress MLAs are actually more loyal to the Congress than to Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar or any regional satrap), Siddaramaiah is hoping for Shivakumar to make just one 'wrong' move to consolidate his position. Kharge's Failures Significantly, Karnataka is the fourth Congress-ruled state seeing such mayhem under Kharge. The current AICC chief was a party observer for Punjab when a sordid power struggle between the then state unit chief, Navjot Singh Sidhu, and Chief Minister Captain



Amarinder Singh blew up. That led to the appointment of Charanjit Singh Channi as a compromise Chief Minister. The 'experiment', a brainchild of Kharge, ultimately backfired as Singh left the party and the Congress lost to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab. Similarly, it was Kharge who was the point man of the Congress high command on September 25, 2022, the day Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot refused to step down or hold a meeting of the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) amid the long-festering tussle with Sachin Pilot. In December 2018, when the Congress was selecting its Chief Minister for Chhattisgarh, Kharge, as AICC observer, had favoured Bhupesh Baghel, elbowing out TS Singhdeo. Then, too, a compromise, rotational formula was reportedly worked out. But it was never implemented. Thus, in many ways, Karnataka exposes the Congress high command's old problem of indecision. For a party that is struggling to remain competitive nationally, Karnataka is more than just another state. It is the Congress's sole example of a functioning, full-term government with visible governance outcomes.

This alone should have compelled the high command to treat the state with strategic care. Instead, the leadership appears paralysed once again, unable to convey what it intends to do with the 'secret' power-sharing promise that seemed to have brought some peace in 2023. The political temperature in Karnataka is rising. So far, there has been no confirmation or rejection from the high quarters. This lack of clarity has created the oddest of situations: a government that is functioning on paper but is clouded by questions that refuse to go away. Slogans, Signals And A Growing Weariness One does not need sophisticated political analyses to read the signals: slogans for Shivakumar at the Mangaluru airport as Venugopal arrived, supporters in Belagavi openly invoking the name of the man they want as Chief Minister. For any discerning political observer, the tone in these gatherings is not rebellious; it is weary. Workers are asking the party leadership to tell them where things stand. Karnataka, it needs to be emphasised again, is not Punjab, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan, where factional rivalry cost the Congress its governments. The stakes are higher.

Stock markets decline in early trade dragged by foreign fund outflows

Mumbai: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Tuesday as persistent foreign fund outflows and weak global market trends dented investors' sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 363.92 points to 84,849.44 during initial trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 106.65 points to 25,920.65. From the Sensex firms, Eternal, Axis Bank, HCL Tech, Infosys, Tata Steel, and Bharat Electronics were among the major laggards. However, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, and Titan were among the gainers. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index quoted lower. US markets ended in negative territory on Monday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,468.32 crore on Monday, while Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth Rs 1,792.25 crore, according to exchange data. "Major equity indices on Wall Street closed lower amid a risk-off sentiment ahead of key economic data



releases, including non-farm payrolls, retail sales, and inflation figures, which could influence the future course of monetary policy. Asian markets also opened lower, with cautious traders paring positions ahead of the Bank of Japan's crucial monetary policy decision later this week," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said. On the domestic front, persistent FII outflows and continued pressure on the rupee near record lows remain key near-term headwinds, he said. "However, strong par-

ticipation from domestic institutional investors and retail flows continues to provide a cushion against deep-oil downside risks. In this backdrop, markets are expected to respect key technical levels rather than exhibit aggressive trending behaviour," Ponmudi R added. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.54 per cent to USD 60.23 per barrel. On Monday, the Sensex dipped 54.30 points, or 0.06 per cent, to settle at 85,213.36. The Nifty edged lower by 19.65 points, or 0.08 per cent, to 26,027.30. Shares fell Monday in Asia as China

reported investment fell in November in the latest signal that demand in the world's second largest economy remains weak. The retreat followed a dismal end to last week, when declines for superstar artificial-intelligence stocks knocked Wall Street off its record heights Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index shed 1.5% to 50,092.10, as investors wait to see if the Bank of Japan will raise its benchmark interest rate as expected this week. The BOJ's quarterly "tankan" survey of big manufacturers, released Monday, showed a slight improve-

ment in sentiment among such businesses. The measure of those expressing optimism rose to 15 from 14 in the last quarter, the highest level in four years, the central bank said. The index shows the percentage of companies reporting positive conditions minus the percentage reporting unfavourable ones. While the overall survey showed improvement, forecasts for the next quarter were less positive. Japan's economy contracted at a 2.3% annual pace in the July-September quarter, the first such decline in six quarters. An agreement between Japan and the US over the level of President Donald Trump's higher tariffs, limiting baseline import duties to 15%, has helped to reduce uncertainty for big automakers and electronics companies. Analysts said the stronger results may sway the BOJ toward pressing ahead with a 0.25 percentage point rate hike that will take the key rate to 0.75%. The Kospi in South Korea dropped 1.2%, to 4,117.68. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng declined 0.7% to 25,786.45. The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% higher, however, to 3,892.45.

Cipla launches Yurpeak® (tirzepatide) for the treatment of Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes

New Delhi , 16 Dec 2025: Cipla Limited (BSE: 500087; NSE: CIPLA; and hereafter referred to as "Cipla") today announced the launch of Yurpeak® (tirzepatide), a one-weekly injectable therapy for managing obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM)—two of the country's most pressing health challenges. Cipla has the rights to distribute and promote Yurpeak®—the second brand of Lilly's tirzepatide in India, after Lilly received DCGI approval. Commenting on the launch, Achin Gupta, Global Chief Operating Officer, Cipla Limited, said: "The launch of Yurpeak® marks a transformative moment in the fight against obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus, two of India's chronic conditions with a heavy burden. Cipla is entering this space with the same depth of expertise and scientific commitment that define our leadership in chronic diseases and in respiratory care. Our focus remains on accelerating access to globally benchmarked, future-ready therapies through collaborations like ours with Lilly, which bring together



innovation, purpose, and scale to ensure advanced care reaches patients wherever they are." Tirzepatide is the first and only dual agonist glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) and glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptors, indicated as an adjunct to diet and exercise for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes and Chronic weight management in adults with obesity (BMI = 30) or overweight (BMI = 27) with at least one weight-related comorbidity. Yurpeak® will be available on prescription in the KwikPen® device format in six strengths: 2.5 mg, 5 mg, 7.5 mg, 10 mg, 12.5 mg, and 15 mg, allowing for precise, convenient, and patient-friendly

dosing. Launch of Yurpeak® in India will help expand access to tirzepatide so that more patients can benefit from this innovative therapy. Cipla's strategic priority is to make it available across India, including regions beyond metro cities, leveraging its strong distribution network and deep market insights to drive greater nationwide reach and accessibility. Lilly will manufacture and supply Yurpeak® to Cipla, and the price will be the same as Mounjaro®. Cipla will complement the launch of Yurpeak® with comprehensive patient education and support programs, including guidance on dosing, self-administration, and safe, informed use of the therapy.

Enhanced TOEFL iBT test ready for launch in January - ETS Hosts TOEFL Experience Days in Hyderabad to share additions with educators and partners

Hyderabad, Telangana – December 16, 2025 – ETS, the global leader in educational assessment and creator of the TOEFL iBT test, hosted a TOEFL Experience Days event in Hyderabad on December 16, 2025. The event offered an early look at the enhanced TOEFL iBT launching on January 21, 2026, bringing TOEFL experts together with leading educators, advisors, and partners for an immersive deep dive into the upcoming changes. This experiential format reinforces ETS's commitment to strengthening partnerships that enable educators and advisors to better support test-taker success. For ETS, Hyderabad represents a key market in southern India, with growing interest from study-abroad aspirants. ETS India currently operates two active test centers in Hyderabad, both located in prime areas, including the Prometric facility. These centers are well-positioned to cater to the city's strong and growing test-taker base. Given the current market



size, the existing capacity is adequate to support candidates effectively. However, considering Hyderabad's expanding education and study-abroad landscape, ETS India is planning further network expansion in this market by the end of December 2025 to enhance overall service coverage and meet the increasing demand. At the event, participants received early, hands-on exposure to the enhanced TOEFL iBT, exploring the updated format and its improvements firsthand. They engaged in focused sessions on upcoming test enhancements, the educational and fairness principles behind each section, and how the redesigned

test better supports today's learners in a competitive global admissions landscape. Attendees also interacted directly with ETS experts, gaining deeper insights into test design, scoring, and preparation best practices, while addressing institution-specific questions related to how they guide their students and test-takers. During the press event, Mr. Sidnei Rodrigues de Souza, Executive Director-Global Partnerships & Sales shared, "TOEFL is evolving to better reflect how students communicate in real academic settings. We are updating the test content and structure, introducing AI-powered scoring for greater precision,

and adding adaptive elements that respond to each test taker's skill level. Educators have welcomed these enhancements, particularly the expanded preparation resources now available to them. AP/Telangana has been chosen as one of the select regions globally for this initiative because of its strong test-taker base and the growing number of students preparing for higher education abroad. We see this region as an important partner in supporting students as they navigate global admission pathways." Speaking about this development, Mr. Omar Chihane, Global General Manager, TOEFL, ETS said: "Hyderabad is a cornerstone market for ETS in southern India, particularly for study-abroad aspirants. The region continues to show strong growth in outbound student mobility, with many students relying on TOEFL iBT scores to access top universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Ivory Program for its affluent customers

Vishakhapatnam, December 2025: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank today launched Ivory, a banking program designed for India's mass affluent segment. Ivory combines personalized service with lifestyle privileges, providing enhanced transaction capabilities, global access, and zero-fee banking on key banking transactions and services. Developed through extensive consumer research, Ivory caters to customers seeking financial solutions that align with their lifestyle aspirations. The offering integrates digital banking with curated experiences, including, entertainment, and dining benefits. Ivory membership unlocks a world of hospitality through Club Marriott, offering exclusive access to dining and stay benefits across 350+ premium Marriott properties in the Asia Pacific region. Membership includes a



premium metal debit card with airport lounge access, global acceptance, and enhanced transaction limits. Customers also receive an annual OTT subscription, quarterly BookMyShow vouchers, and extra reward points on qualified transaction, redeemable across a curated range of premium lifestyle and retail brands. Additional benefits include zero charges on key banking services and assigns each member a dedicated relationship manager for personalized

financial planning and support. Commenting on the launch Mr. Hitendra Jha, Head of Retail Liabilities - TASC & TPP, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank said, "Today's emerging mass affluent segment continues to face barriers in accessing quality banking services. Many encounter high balance requirements, inconsistent service delivery, and generic reward programs that do not align with their lifestyles. Ivory addresses these challenges through

curated privileges, dedicated relationship managers, and zero-fee banking on key banking transactions and services, designed to deliver a seamless customer experience." Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's Ivory Program reinforces its focus on enhancing retail banking. Beyond premium privileges, it reflects the Bank's vision of strengthening trust, nurturing long-term relationships, and celebrating every milestone in the customer journey.

Step into Christmas and New Year Celebrations with Fabindia's New Winter Collection 2025

As Christmas lights begin to glow and the new year draws near, the season naturally nudges us toward what feels familiar, comforting, and joyful. This collection is crafted with that very feeling in mind, with pieces you can slip into for family dinners, spontaneous get-togethers, or those soft winter evenings at home. The collection blends gentle textures and thoughtful details with a hint of festive charm, making dressing up feel effortless, warm, and beautifully personal. This winter, Fabindia invites you to celebrate the joy of giving, gathering, and decorating with pieces that bring artisanal warmth into every moment. Thoughtfully crafted wooden décor, golden-hued serveware, embroidered textiles, and cozy woollen dhurries come together to create spaces that feel inviting and full of festive character. From elegant utility boxes and handcrafted bedside tables to ceramic accents and timeless home-



ware, every piece adds a layer of comfort and understated sparkle. Whether you're picking out a meaningful gift or refreshing your home for the celebrations ahead, Fabindia's woollen blends, ceramics, and handcrafted designs make each moment feel more heartfelt and memorable. As the festivities unfold, dressing for the season becomes a quiet delight of its own. Fabindia's curated wardrobe of cotton-silk dresses, embroidered tunics, soft wool pants, jackets, and woven shawls bring together warmth, colour, and ease in a way that feels both celebratory

and relaxed. With rich reds, greens, and maroons lending a classic holiday mood, the collection moves seamlessly from spirited evenings out to cosy winter catchups, letting you feel effortlessly put together without ever trying too hard. Blending comfort, craftsmanship, and contemporary design, Fabindia's winter curation for 2025 welcomes everyone to embrace the season in their own way—feeling warm, confident, and beautifully at home in the moments that matter. The Winter Collection is available in all stores and online at www.fabindia.com.

STORII BY ITC HOTELS EXPANDS INTO INDIA'S WILDLIFE LANDSCAPE

New Delhi, December 16, 2025: ITC Hotels Limited (ITCHL) announced a strategic expansion of its boutique brand, Storii by ITC Hotels, into India's most iconic wildlife destinations. Brand Storii is set to debut at retreats in Jawai, Ranthambore, Dhari Gir, and Sasan Gir, bringing its signature immersive hospitality to the heart of nature at key national parks. Speaking on Brand Storii's expansion into India's wildlife landscape, Anil Chadha, Managing Director, ITC Hotels Limited, said, "We are pleased to steer the expansion of Storii by ITC Hotels into some of India's most prominent wildlife destinations including Jawai, Ranthambore, Sasan Gir & Dhari Gir. This enables us to curate nature-led experiences that embody the brand's intimate and distinctive character. We look forward to strengthening brand Storii's footprint while contributing meaningfully to the growth of India's wildlife tourism.

Storii by ITC Hotels – Soon to Open: Storii by ITC Hotels Jawai, with 15 well-appointed guestrooms and premium tents, Storii Jawai is set amidst the region's striking granite hills, where leopards are often seen roaming freely. Surrounded by rocky outcrops and vibrant birdlife, Jawai is an all-year destination. Guests can look forward to gentle trails, scenic sit-outs and quiet moments that celebrate Jawai's rare harmony between the lush outdoors and local life. Vilamb Singh, Director 1st Gate Luxe Private Limited said, "Joining hands with ITC Hotels for Storii Jawai is an exciting opportunity to showcase the bespoke beauty of this region. Together, we aim to create a journey that blends local traditions and authentic hospitality." Storii by ITC Hotels Ranthambore is a tranquil 40-key boutique retreat at the edge of the iconic Ranthambore National Park, one of India's most cele-

brated wildlife sanctuaries and home to the Royal Bengal Tiger. Wake up to the call of the jungle and enjoy relaxed outdoor lounges that echo the spirit of this legendary habitat. Storii Ranthambore promises an unforgettable journey at the heart of the wild. Mohammed Arif and Mohammed Asif, Partners, Bagh-E-Khaas expressed their excitement about the project, saying, "Storii Ranthambore is a natural alignment with ITC Hotels. Our values too are rooted in heritage and service excellence. We are delighted to bring a soulful sanctuary to this grand wilderness." Storii by ITC Hotels Sasan Gir, is situated in the world-famous wildlife sanctuary 'Gir National Park', Gujarat, home to the majestic Asiatic lion, and will offer 26 well-appointed guestrooms. Nestled among mango orchards, Storii Sasan Gir offers a captivating blend of a quaint and peaceful realm that lets guests soak in the region's natural richness as

they relax in forest-facing rooms and garden sit-outs. Owner of this Storii project, Hirenkumar Jashubhai Barad said, "We are pleased to be associated with ITC Hotels and believe that Storii by ITC Hotels will help us provide special wildlife sighting moments at Sasan Gir, and will also give an opportunity to contribute to the local economy." Storii by ITC Hotels Dhari Gir, with 60 spacious guestrooms, sits along the quieter edge of the Gir ecosystem, known for its gentle forest cover and thriving wildlife corridors. Designed for relaxed stays, the retreat will offer guests a calm atmosphere shaped by the quiet pulse of Gir's environment. Pankaj Lodhiya, Partner, Star Developers said, "Our vision for Storii Dhari Gir is to create a sanctuary that reflects Gir's distinctive character and offer holistic leisure experiences. Collaborating with ITC Hotels allows us to harmonize thoughtful service, offering

travelers an escape into the great outdoors." About Storii by ITC Hotels www.itchotels.com/storii Storii by ITC Hotels is a curated collection of hand-picked boutique properties, designed to offer immersive and experiential stays. Each property is located in destinations that inspire—whether it's breathtaking landscapes steeped in history, pristine beaches untouched by time, lush jungles alive with adventure, serene valleys, or deserts echoing with folklore. Every Storii tells a unique story, creating meaningful experiences that go beyond a stay. Since its launch in 2022, Storii is growing rapidly, with 21 properties and 1000+ keys (including both operating and pipeline properties) currently, redefining how travelers connect with places and people. With its growing footprint, Storii by ITC Hotels aims to continue curating stays that celebrate culture, communities and countryside.

Ukraine struggling to keep lights on under Russian attack, says energy boss

Ukraine's biggest private energy provider is living in permanent crisis mode because of Russian attacks on the grid, its chief executive has told the BBC. Most of Ukraine is suffering from lengthy power cuts as temperatures drop and Maxim Timchenko, whose company DTEK provides power for 5.6 million Ukrainians, says the intensity of strikes has been so frequent "we just don't have time to recover". President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Tuesday that Russia knew the winter cold could become one of its most dangerous weapons. "Every night Ukrainian parents hold their children in basements and shelters hoping our air defence will hold," he told the Dutch parliament. As the fourth anniversary of Russia's full scale invasion approaches, Maxim



Timchenko says Russia has repeatedly targeted DTEK's energy grid with "waves of drones, cruise and ballistic missiles" and his company has found it difficult to cope. Tens of thousands of people in the southern city of Odesa have been without electricity for three days this week, following a co-ordinated Russian attack. "Life has been difficult,

but people are very supportive of each other," says Yana, who is among those lucky enough still to have power. She has invited friends to her home to charge their phones. Power outages also cut off heat and water supplies and Yana says those still connected to the grid have offered strangers the chance to wash or take a shower. Across Ukraine

electricity is being rationed – with supplies turned on for a few hours each day. Many Ukrainians rely on power banks and generators as a back-up, and the sound of generators in the capital is now more constant than the air raid warnings. Kyiv resident Tetiana says the first thing she does in the morning is to check her phone to find

out the daily schedule for when her power will be switched on. Like many she has invested in power banks to make life more bearable: "You need to remember when you leave home to leave the power-banks on so that you have them charged when you get back home." About 50% of Ukraine's energy is currently supplied by three large nuclear power plants in central and western Ukraine. But the network that transfers that power has been severely damaged. DTEK runs about 5 power stations, most of them fuelled by coal. One was recently targeted by five 5 ballistic missiles and Mr Timchenko said some of their power plants and sub stations had been attacked "every three or four days". "I don't remember a single day when I had no reports about some damage to our grid." Finding spare parts

to repair damaged equipment has become a significant challenge. The energy provider used to be able to source equipment from within Ukraine, but now it has to scour the rest of Europe for replacement parts. This year DTEK has had to spend \$166m (£123m) on repairing its damaged thermal power plants and coal facilities. "We will not give up," Maxim Timchenko insists: "We have a responsibility to millions of mothers to have power and heat". DTEK's origins are in the Donbas in Eastern Ukraine where the fighting is fiercest and where power supplies have been disrupted the most. Eight of its engineers have been killed doing their job. "Every day they risk their lives to keep power in this area," Mr Timchenko said. Additional reporting by Anastasia Levchenko and Kyla Herrmannsen.

Police 'shot in the front': NSW premier rejects criticism of Bondi response



The New South Wales premier has rejected criticism of the police response to the attack on a Jewish festival at Bondi Beach, saying officers acted with "bravery and integrity". Some witnesses have suggested police were too slow to disarm the two gunmen, who killed 15 people and injured dozens in Australia's most famous beach on Sunday. "There are two officers in critical care... at the moment," Chris Minns said after sustained questioning from reporters. "They weren't shot in the back as they were running away. They were shot in the front." The gunmen went on a shooting spree that

lasted around ten minutes before police shot both men, killing one and critically injuring the other. There have also been questions about whether adequate security was provided before the shooting took place. "They shoot, shoot, change magazine and just shoot," one witness, Shmulik Scuri, told reporters the day of the assault, adding he thought officers "froze". Asked about these criticisms, Minns said the "rush to conclusions" about the police operation was "disrespectful". "They didn't take a backward step. They engaged the gunmen on the footbridge with handguns.

French court sentences ex-DR Congo rebel and politician to 30 years in jail



A French court has sentenced a former rebel leader and politician from the Democratic Republic of Congo to 30 years in jail after finding him guilty of complicity in crimes against humanity more than two decades ago. Roger Lumbala headed a rebel movement backed by neighbouring Uganda accused of committing atrocities during a period known as the Second Congo War. The judge said the 67-year-old was found guilty of ordering or aiding and abetting torture and inhumane crimes, summary executions, rape constituting torture, sexual slavery, forced labour and theft. Lumbala, who was living in France when he was arrested nearly five years ago, has refused to accept the legitimacy of the court in Paris. He did not attend the trial, which began last month, though he was in the dock to hear the verdict on Monday. Lumbala also served as a minister in DR Congo's transitional government from

2003 to 2005 and later as a member of parliament. Several years later the Congolese government issued an arrest warrant for him over his alleged support for the M23, a rebel group currently active in the eastern DR Congo, prompting him to flee to France. The Second Congo War, which raged from 1998-2003, involved nine countries, numerous rebel groups and led to the estimated deaths of between two and five million people. At the time Lumbala led the Rally of Congolese Democrats and Nationalists (RCD-N), which allegedly carried out atrocities during a campaign between 2002 and 2003 called "Erase the Slate". The operation targeted members of the Nande and Bambuti ethnic groups in the north-eastern provinces of Ituri and North Kivu who were accused of supporting a rival militia. A UN team that investigated in its aftermath said it was characterised by "premeditated operations using looting, rape and summary execution as tools of warfare". Lumbala's case was prosecuted under the principle of "universal jurisdiction", which allows French courts to seek justice related to crimes against humanity committed abroad.

Lizzo celebrates as fat-shaming claims dismissed



Pop star Lizzo is celebrating a legal victory after a judge dismissed allegations of fat-shaming from a 2023 lawsuit filed by three of her former dancers. The singer, whose hits include body positive anthems such as Good As Hell and Juice, marked the development with a video statement posted to her Instagram and TikTok feeds. "There was no evidence that I fired them because they gained weight," Lizzo said. "They were fired for taking a private recording of me

without my consent and sending it off to ex-employees." While those specific allegations have been dropped, the case against Lizzo and her production company will continue, over claims that three dancers were subject to sexual harassment. Lizzo's team has called the lawsuit a "fabricated sob story," but a Los Angeles judge ruled that the case could move forward last year. Arianna Davis, Crystal Williams and Noelle Rodriguez say they were pressured into attending sex shows and interacting with nude performers between 2021 and 2023. The claims against Lizzo - whose real name is Melissa Viviane Jefferson - include that she "pressured Ms Davis to touch the breasts" of a dancer in a nightclub in Amsterdam.

Dashcam video shows couple trying to stop gunman before being killed in Bondi attack

A couple killed in the Bondi Beach shooting tried to stop one of the alleged attackers by grabbing his gun, dramatic dashcam footage shows. Boris Gurman, 69, and his wife Sofia, 61, courageously stepped in to try and protect others before being shot themselves, their family said in a statement. Video of the incident shows Mr Gurman, who was retired, wrestling with one of the gunmen and taking the weapon off him, before they both fall onto the road. Mr Gurman then gets up and appears to hit the attacker with the gun. The attacker is then thought to have got another gun which he used to kill them. "While nothing can lessen the pain of losing Boris and Sofia, we feel an overwhelming sense of



pride in their bravery and selflessness," the family said. "This encapsulates who Boris and Sofia were - people who instinctively and selflessly tried to help others." The Gurman couple, who were Jewish, were the first two people killed in Sunday's attack, the Sydney Morning Herald reported. At least 15 people have been confirmed dead in the shooting, which happened

during an event to mark the first day of Hanukkah. In their statement, the family said the couple had been married for 34 years. "We are heartbroken by the sudden and senseless loss of our beloved Boris and Sofia Gurman. "Boris was a retired mechanic, known for his generosity, quiet strength and willingness to lend a hand to anyone in need. "Sofia worked at

Australia Post and was deeply loved by her colleagues and community. "Bondi locals, together they lived honest, hardworking lives and treated everyone they met with kindness, warmth and respect. Boris and Sofia were devoted to their family and to each other. They were the heart of our family, and their absence has left an immeasurable void." Witnesses have described Mr Gurman as a "hero". The woman who owns the dashcam footage told Reuters that Mr Gurman "did not run away - instead, he charged straight toward the danger, using all his strength trying to wrestle away the gun and fighting to the death". "I can see from my camera that the elderly man was ultimately shot and collapsed.

Eight killed in latest strikes on alleged drug boats, US military says

The US military says it has carried out strikes on three boats it has accused of trafficking drugs in the Pacific Ocean, killing eight people. The US Southern Command posted footage of the strikes on social media and said the vessels were "transiting along known narco-trafficking routes... and were engaged in narco-trafficking". More than 20 vessels in the Pacific and the Caribbean have been targeted in recent months, killing at least 90 people, as part of President Donald Trump's escalating campaign against gangs he accuses of transporting drugs in the region. Some experts say the strikes could violate



laws governing armed conflict. The first attack by the US - on 2 September - has drawn particular scrutiny as there was not one but two strikes, with survivors of the first killed in the second. Several legal experts have told BBC Verify that the second strike on the alleged Venezuelan drug boat by

the US military was probably illegal, and would likely be considered an extrajudicial killing under international law. Previously, a former chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court told the BBC that the US military campaign more broadly had fallen into the category of a planned, sys-

tematic attack against civilians during peacetime. In response, the White House said it had acted in line with the laws of armed conflict to protect the US from cartels "trying to bring poison to our shores... destroying American lives". US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth is expected on Tuesday to brief members of both chambers of Congress alongside Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Politico reported that the officials were set to show video of the controversial "double-tap" incident to all members of the armed services committees of both the House and Senate later this week.

'Best of our country': Australian PM visits Bondi hero in hospital



Australia's Prime Minister has visited Bondi hero Ahmed al Ahmed in hospital, after the bystander tried to disarm one of the gunmen in the nation's deadliest gun attack since 1996. "Your heart is strong", PM Anthony Albanese told the father-of-two, later calling him "the best of our country". The fruit shop owner, who was born and raised in Syria, was shot several times in the shoulder after tackling one of the alleged gunmen. Albanese said Mr Ahmed would "undergo further surgery" on Wednesday. At least 15 people have been confirmed dead after Sunday's attack in Sydney during an event to mark the first night of Hanukkah. Police have declared the attack as a terrorist incident targeting the Jewish community. "He was trying to get a cup of coffee and found himself at a moment where people were being shot in front of him," Albanese said after the bedside visit. "He decided to take action, and his

bravery is an inspiration for all Australians. He is a very humble man." "At a moment where we have seen evil perpetrated, he shines out as an example of the strength of humanity," the prime minister added. "We are a brave country. Ahmed al Ahmed represents the best of our country." He later added: "Ahmed, you are an Australian hero." There has been nationwide support for the 43-year-old including from US President Donald Trump who commended his courage, and a US billionaire who donated \$99,999 (US\$65,000; £49,000) to Mr Ahmed, calling him a "brave hero". In the footage, Mr Ahmed is seen hiding behind a parked car before he leaps out. He runs at the alleged gunman and seizes his weapon, before turning the gun round on him. The suspected attacker then begins to retreat. Mr Ahmed then lowers the weapon and raises one hand in the air, appearing to show police he was not one of the attackers.

Trump repeats criticism of killed Hollywood director Rob Reiner

US President Donald Trump has repeated his criticism of Rob Reiner - after his earlier remarks about the killed Hollywood director, a long-time Trump critic, sparked widespread condemnation. The US president told reporters the director was "very bad for our country", having earlier written on Truth Social that Reiner's death was linked to "Trump derangement syndrome" - a term he often uses to describe his critics. Reiner and his wife Michele Singer Reiner were found dead at their Los Angeles home on Sunday, and police have arrested their son Nick on suspicion of murder. They have not suggested any motive in the case, or any evidence that Reiner's politics and criticism of Trump played any role. In his social media post, which called the

couple's deaths "very sad", Trump criticised Reiner, saying: "He was known to have driven people CRAZY by his raging obsession of President Donald J. Trump." Those comments were widely criticised, including by prominent Republicans. Kentucky representative Thomas Massie, a Republican who has clashed with Trump since the president returned to the White House in January, wrote on X: "Regardless of how you felt about Rob Reiner, this is inappropriate and disrespectful discourse about a man who was just brutally murdered." He added: "I guess my elected GOP colleagues, the VP, and White House staff will just ignore it because they're afraid? I challenge anyone to defend it." Georgia Republican



Marjorie Taylor Greene, who was once a staunch supporter of Trump before recently becoming a frequent critic, said that "this is a family tragedy, not about politics or political enemies" and that the murders should be "met with empathy". Multiple other senior members of Trump's party appeared to distance themselves from the remarks. Senator John Kennedy, a Republican rep-

resenting Louisiana, said he thought Trump should not have made the comments. "I think a wise man once said nothing. Why? Because he was a wise man," Kennedy said. "I think President Trump should have said nothing. I think when the president says these sorts of things, it detracts from his policy achievements." Reiner was a lifelong Democrat and prominent liberal activist, and fre-

quently spoke out against Trump. In 2017, for example, he called Trump "mentally unfit" for office. And as recently as October, Reiner said he believed Trump was ushering in an age of "full-on autocracy" in the US. Hours after his social media post, Trump repeated his thoughts on Reiner in comments given in the Oval Office to reporters, describing the director as a "deranged person" who was partly "behind" previous claims of collusion between Russia and Trump's team. "I was not a fan of Rob Reiner at all, in any way, shape or form," he said. Trump has in the past criticised political foes after their death. Following the death of Arizona Senator John McCain - with whom he clashed regularly - in 2019, for example, Trump

said he "was never a fan" and "never will be". In another incident the same year, Trump quipped that the late Democratic lawmaker John Dingell could be "looking up" at him from the grave, a comment which was widely interpreted as a suggestion that Dingell was in hell. In a statement following the remarks about Dingell, the White House said that the president was "just riffing". Reiner, who was 78, was known for directing several iconic films in a variety of genres, including This Is Spinal Tap, Stand By Me, Misery and A Few Good Men. He married Michele, an actress, photographer and producer, in 1989, later recalling that they met during the making of one of his best-known films, When Harry Met Sally.

Virat and Anushka Visit Premanand Maharaj Upon Return To India

Star India batter Virat Kohli and his wife Anushka Sharma visited Premanand Ji Maharaj in his Ashram Shri Hit Radha Keli Kunj, Varah Ghat in Vrindavan. In a viral video, Kohli and Anushka can be seen having a spiritual conversation (Ekantik Vartalaap) with Premanand Ji Maharaj. In the video, which was shared by Bhajan Marg's Official Instagram handle, Premanand Maharaj told Kohli and Anushka to treat their work as "service to god". "Apne karyakshetra ko bhagwan ka seva smajhiye. Gambhir bhav se rahiye. Vinamra rahiye. Aur khub naam jap kijiye. (Treat your work as your service to God. Be serious and humble. And pray to the Almighty)," Premanand Maharaj told the couple. This was the couple's third visit to Vrindavan this year. The couple returned to India last week from the UK. In January, Virat, Anushka Sharma and their children visited Vrindavan to seek the blessings of Premanand Ji



Maharaj. The couple also sought blessings from Premanand Ji Maharaj, a day after Kohli announced his retirement from Test cricket in May this year. Kohli

remains active as a cricketer in ODIs, as well as the Indian Premier League (IPL). He will now be seen in action during the Vijay Hazare Trophy, starting December 24. The 37-

year-old flew back to the UK after taking part in India's three-match ODI series against South Africa, which concluded on December 6. Kohli and Anushka have been

residing in the UK with their kids, Vamika and Akaay. Kohli will only feature in a few games for Delhi in the Vijay Hazare Trophy as he expected to join the Indian team for the three-match ODI series against New Zealand, starting January 11. The couple had also met the spiritual leader shortly after Virat Kohli announced his retirement from Test cricket in May this year, a decision that marked a significant milestone in his career. Fans were quick to react to the latest video, with many praising the couple's spiritual grounding and consistency in visiting the ashram. "Whole India wants to meet Messi & here Virushka came here to see Premanand Maharaj ji," read one comment, while another wrote, "Anushka really got the spiritual side out of him." "That bliss that child like smile is innocence which gets lost but when you are with people who share positivity, you blush, you smile, you are content," the third user wrote.

Fernandes 'hurt' Man Utd 'wanted him to go' to Saudi

Manchester United captain Bruno Fernandes says it "hurt" to realise the club "wanted me to leave" when Saudi Arabian side Al-Hilal proposed a huge offer in the summer. The Portugal international, 31, rejected the move to the Saudi Pro League in order to stay at Old Trafford, despite Al-Hilal reportedly being open to paying a fee of about £100m and wages of up to £700,000 a week. Fernandes has a contract that runs to 2027, with the option of an additional year. He said in October, before his 300th United appearance, that he will not discuss his future with anyone until after next year's World Cup. Looking back on the Al-Hilal interest in a new interview, he said of United's stance: "From the club I felt it was, 'If you go it's not so bad for us'. It hurts me a bit." Fernandes made the claims to Canal 11, a channel owned by the Portuguese Football Federation. "More than hurting me, it makes me sad," Fernandes said. "I'm a



player that no-one can criticise, I'm always available, I always give my best. "I could have left in this transfer window, I would have earned much more money. "I would have won many trophies this season, but I decided not to go, not only for family reasons but because I genuinely love the club." Fernandes joined United in January 2020 for £47m from Portuguese side Sporting and has made 307 appearances for the club, scoring 103 goals and providing 93 assists. This season, he has five goals and seven assists in the

Premier League, including a brilliant free-kick strike and an assist in Monday's 4-4 draw with Bournemouth. In June, Fernandes said one of the reasons he did not join Al-Hilal was because he wanted to continue to "play at the highest level", and it was United boss Ruben Amorim who urged him to stay at Old Trafford. However, Fernandes told Canal 11: "The club wanted me to leave. I told the directors that, I think they didn't have the courage to make that decision because the manager wanted me.

Auqib Dar: 'Dale Steyn Of Baramulla' Who Went For Rs 8.4 Crore To Delhi Capitals In IPL 2026 Auction

Jammu and Kashmir pacer Auqib Dar made headlines after he was bought by Delhi Capitals for Rs 8.40 crore during the IPL 2026 mini auction on Tuesday. Starting at a base price of Rs 30 lakh, Auqib triggered a massive bidding war between DC and Rajasthan Royals. Later, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Sunrisers Hyderabad also joined in but Auqib was eventually sold to DC. The Delhi-based franchise, whose pace attack consists of Mitchell Starc, got an amazing boost with the entry of Auqib. Who is Auqib? Born in Baramulla, Kashmir, the 28-year-old pacer initially wanted to become a doctor to fulfil his



father's dream. However, the life took a different turn for the "Dale Steyn of Baramulla" and he gave the JKCA trials. He went for the trials but wasn't selected. It was finally in 2016, when he finally got selected in the JKCA trials. Nabi made his Ranji Trophy debut for Jammu

and Kashmir in 2020 and eventually burst onto the scene with a three-wicket haul against Karnataka in the quarter-final. He went wicketless in the second innings but remained the most economical bowler for his side. In that season, Nabi pulled the curtains down

on his campaign with a staggering 24 wickets in just seven games, at an average of 18.50, with two five-wicket hauls. Over the next two years, he did not make a single appearance for his state side in the first-class. It appeared as if his red-ball career had stalled, but a single season turned around his career. In the last season of the Ranji Trophy, Nabi left the opposition batters in dismay and blazed his way to 49 wickets from nine matches last season at a stellar average of 13.08. In brilliance continued in the 2025-26 season of Duleep Trophy, where he played for the North Zone and registered a big feat.

Kartik Sharma: CSK's New Young Sensation Who Broke IPL Auction Record With Rs 14.2 Crore Bid

Wicket-keeper batter Kartik Sharma stunned everyone at the IPL 2026 Auction. The 19-year-old from Rajasthan was bought for a massive Rs 14.20 Crore by Chennai Super Kings. Mumbai Indians opened the bidding at Rs 30 lakh before Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants engaged in an intense battle. However, once the bidding war reached the Rs 5 Crore mark, it was CSK who took charge, and despite Sunrisers Hyderabad entering late, the five-time champions won the battle. This will be the first time that the youngster will feature in the IPL. He drew a lot of attention for his explosive lower-order batting in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy group stage, where he scored 133



runs in 5 matches. While the youngster has played just 12 T20 matches till now, he has been quite consistent with a strike rate above 160. He is currently the joint-most expensive uncapped player in IPL history, alongside Prashant Veer, who was

Dhabi on Tuesday, while Uttar Pradesh's spin bowling all-rounder Prashant Veer made history to become the most expensive uncapped Indian player in tournament's history. The IPL auction 2026 continued to spring surprises. The 29-year-old Auqib from Jammu and Kashmir, causing mayhem in domestic cricket with his skillset as a pacer, finally got a home in the biggest league in the world. On the other hand, Veer was picked by CSK for a massive Rs 14.20 crores and could fill in the big shoes of Ravindra Jadeja, one of the franchise's biggest match-winners. For Auqib, DC started the bid, and eventually Rajasthan Royals (RR) and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) entered the fray.

VAN DE VEN 'NEVER EXPECTED' POSTECOGLOU SACKING



Tottenham defender Micky van de Ven said he "never expected" the club to sack former manager Ange Postecoglou. The Australian's two-year tenure came to an end just 16 days after he led Tottenham to victory in the Europa League final – the club's first major trophy for 17 years. However, the club's European success was not mirrored in the Premier League, with Tottenham finishing in 17th place in Postecoglou's final season in charge. He was replaced by former Brentford boss Thomas Frank in the summer but Spurs currently sit 11th in the table, with 22 points from 16 matches, and suffered a 3-0 loss to Nottingham Forest on Sunday. "He was a really good manager. I still really like him," Van de Ven told The Overlap podcast. "I don't know how everything went backstage. I didn't expect it. It was strange how everything

went after - he's the manager that won silverware for Tottenham. "Afterwards, when he got sacked, I sent a message to my dad and my friends and said, 'I never expected this.'" Postecoglou joined Tottenham from Celtic ahead of the 2023-24 season, replacing Antonio Conte, and enjoyed early success with his attacking style of play, taking 26 points from his opening 10 league matches. However, that unbeaten run came to an abrupt end with four defeats in five matches and Tottenham's season tailed off, ultimately missing out on Champions League qualification by two points. The following season, they won just 11 of their 38 league matches. Although he enjoyed Postecoglou's style of play, Netherlands international Van de Ven believes Tottenham lacked a "plan B" and revealed he and Cristian Romero discussed taking a more defensive approach with the manager.

Cameron Green Creates History, Becomes Costliest Overseas Buy With Rs 25.2 Cr Bid In IPL Auction

IPL 2026 mini auction began on a fiery note as Australia all-rounder Cameron Green was acquired by Kolkata Knight Riders at a whopping price of Rs 25.20 crore. Green triggered a heavy bidding war between Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals. Later, Chennai Super Kings also entered the war and made it a thrilling affair. With Rs 25.20 crore, Green became the costliest overseas star in the history of IPL auction, surpassing pacer Mitchell Starc, who was also bought by KKR in IPL 2024 auction for Rs 24.75 crore. However, his salary for the season would still be Rs 18 crore (USD 1.9 million)



as the rest of the amount will go towards the BCCI's player development programme as per the rules of the auction for foreign players. Green, who previously turned up for Mumbai Indians and Royal

Challengers Bengaluru, has so far played 29 matches in the IPL to aggregate 707 runs and take 16 wickets. What IPL rule says The reason is IPL's "maximum-fee" rule, which states that a foreign

player's maximum fee at a mini auction will be the lower value between the highest retention slab (Rs 18 crore) and the highest price at the previous mega auction (Rs 27 crore for Rishabh Pant in 2025). In the first set of IPL 2026 auction, the likes of Devon Conway, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Prithvi Shaw and Sarfaraz Khan remained unsold while Miller was bought by DC for Rs 2 crore. Shaw went unsold despite his fine run of form in the domestic circuit lately, and so was the case with Sarfaraz, who smashed a 22-ball 73 in a Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match for Mumbai on Tuesday.

Who Is Abhigyan Kundu? India U19 Star And Vaibhav Suryavanshi's Teammate Who Slammed

India star Abhigyan Kundu made history on Tuesday as he slammed 209 off 125 balls against Malaysia in a U-19 Asia Cup match in Dubai. Kundu brought up his double century in 121 balls. En route to his double ton, Kundu surpassed Ambati Rayudu (177) to register the highest score by an Indian in U-19 ODI cricket. He also beat Vaibhav Suryavanshi to record the highest individual score of this tournament. Ultimately, Kundu finished on 209 off 125 balls, hitting nine sixes and 17 fours. Kundu broke South Africa's Jorich van Schalkwyk's record (145 balls) by scoring the fastest double ton in U-19 ODIs. Kundu's 209 is the second-highest individual score in the history of U-19



ODIs, after van Schalkwyk's 215 against Zimbabwe. However, all his records won't be counted as he achieved the feat against an associate nation. His knock powered India U-19 to a huge 408 for seven batting first. Abhigyan Kundu is a talented wicketkeeper-batter. Against Pakistan, the left-handed batter scored 22

and safely took a couple of catches. He was born on April 30, 2008, and represents Mumbai at the state level.

Walking in after the dismissal of Suryavanshi, Kundu scored boundaries right from the get-go. He formed a 181-ball 209-run partnership with Trivedi and then added another 87 runs off just 36 with

Kanishk Chouhan. Abhigyan Kundu smashed 17 boundaries and slammed nine sixes. While Kundu reached his fifty off just 44 balls, the left-handed batter brought up his century in just 80 balls, setting the stage for the late innings blitz. The final stages of the innings saw him unleash an array of strokes, bringing up the historic double century in just 121 balls. Kundu's unbeaten 209 not only helped India set a target of 409 but also surpassed Ambati Rayudu's previous record for the highest score by an Indian in Under-19 ODIs-177*. The only other double-centurion in Youth ODIs is South Africa U19's Jorich Van Schalkwyk, who scored 212 off 153 balls against Zimbabwe U19s in 2025.

Teenager Flagg makes history in Mavericks defeat



Cooper Flagg became the youngest player in NBA history to score at least 40 points in a game as the Dallas Mavericks lost 140-133 after overtime to the Utah Jazz. The number one pick at this year's Draft, the 18-year-old forward finished with 42 points, seven rebounds and six assists at Delta Center in Salt Lake City. Only Cliff Robinson (45), GG Jackson (44) and LeBron James (43) have scored more points in a game as a teenager, while Flagg equalled Mark Aguirre's record for a Mavericks rookie. Flagg, who turns 19 on Sunday, is the third teenager in the league's 79-year history - after James and Kevin Durant - to claim 40 points, five rebounds, and five assists. The Mavericks led 75-71 at half-time - by which time Flagg had 24 points - and 124-116 late in the fourth quarter. However, after blowing their eight-point lead to trail 129-127, they

required two free throws from Max Christie with less than five seconds remaining to level the game. The Jazz dominated overtime to register their 10th win of the season as Keyonte George finished with 37 points and Lauri Markkanen 33. The Jazz are 10th in the Western Conference and the Mavericks 12th. The 6ft 8in Flagg became the first freshman to be named Maine Player of the Year after leading high school Nokomis Regional to the state title in 2021. He transferred to Montverde Academy in Florida, winning the 2022 USA Basketball Male Athlete of the Year and 2024 National High School Player of the Year awards. He was part of the USA side that won the 2022 Under-17s World Cup and was named in the all-tournament team. In 2024-25 Flagg averaged 19.2 points, 7.5 rebounds, and 4.2 assists in a 37-game debut season for Duke University.

Dhandoraa Is a Powerfully Crafted Film Blending Every Commercial Element with Depth,’ Says Actor Shivaji

Veteran actor Shivaji, known for choosing unconventional and layered roles, plays a pivotal part in the upcoming film Dhandoraa. Produced by Ravindra Banerjee Muppaneni under the Loukya Entertainments banner, the production house behind acclaimed films like Colour Photo and Bedurulanka 2012, Dhandoraa is directed by MuraliKanth and is scheduled for a grand theatrical release on December 25. Alongside Shivaji, the film features an ensemble cast including Navdeep, Nandu, Ravi Krishna, Manika Chikkala, Mounika Reddy, Bindu Madhavi, Radhya, and Aditi Bhavaraju in key roles. As part of the film’s promotional activities, Shivaji interacted with the media and spoke in detail about the journey of Dhandoraa, his character, and the film’s larger intent.



ral. Dhandoraa is, quite simply, a beautifully made film.

Since this comes after Court, expectations are naturally high. Does your role live up to them?

The response I received for Mangapathi in Court was overwhelming, and I’m confident the character in Dhandoraa will have a similar impact. As an actor, you need a lot of luck to be offered such layered roles. This character has multiple shades and allows me to explore a wide emotional range. The film itself is content-driven and emotionally engaging from start to finish.

There have been comparisons to films like Vedam and C/o Kancharapalem when it comes to portraying sensitive characters. How is it handled here? In Dhandoraa, Bindu Madhavi’s character has been portrayed with a lot of dignity and class. The treatment is very respectful, and audiences will genuinely connect with both the character and the situation.

It seems like new directors are approaching you more these days. Any thoughts on that?

I’ve mostly been working with new directors, and I actually enjoy that. Many filmmakers here tend to over-calculate and hesitate, even when there’s so much acting talent within our own industry. Instead, they often look outside. In Dhandoraa, actors like Navdeep, Nandu, and Ravi Krishna are all exceptional performers. Unfortunately, we sometimes underestimate our own people.

or bad. That judgement is left to them after the film ends. I play a farmer, but the story doesn’t revolve around just one hero. Every character in the film carries weight. However, the narrative keeps circling back to my character, giving it significant importance. Roles like these don’t come often. No character in this film exists merely to fill space. Everyone matters.

Is Dhandoraa a message-oriented film?

I wouldn’t call Dhandoraa a purely message-driven film. It’s a well-balanced commercial entertainer that blends emotion, drama, and realism. The film has strong emotional layers, but it never feels preachy. What really impressed me was the screenplay. It flows organically and feels very natu-

Did you hear the story of Dhandoraa even before Court?

I actually heard the story of Dhandoraa much earlier. My character immediately stood out because it was unlike anything I had done before. The makers even paid me an advance back then, but due to certain production delays, the film took time to move forward. In the meantime, Court released first.

What can audiences expect from your character in Dhandoraa?

My role in Dhandoraa is deliberately ambiguous. While watching the film, the audience won’t be able to clearly decide whether my character is good

Audiences should encourage and support new-age films like “Gurram Paapireddy: Legendary comedian Brahmanandam at the pre-release press meet

The film “Gurram Paapireddy,” starring Naresh Agastya and Faria Abdullah as the lead pair, is being produced by Venu Saddi, Amar Bura, and Jayakanth (Bobby), under the presentation of Dr. Sandhya Goli. Directed by Murali Manohar, this is a dark comedy made with a concept never seen on screen before. “Gurram Paapireddy” is releasing worldwide in theatres on the 19th of this month. The pre-release press meet of the film was held grandly today in Hyderabad. Dialogue writer Niranjana said, “With ‘Gurram Paapireddy,’ we tried something new. These days, it feels scary to say we are making a new kind of film. If it’s a regular commercial movie, people feel it’s the same old formula. We made this film differently to give audiences a new cinematic experience. Our film is releasing on the 19th, and I request everyone to support it.” Music director Krishna Saurabh said, “Working on this film felt exciting every single day. I composed songs in new genres. The song ‘Paisa Dum Dum,’ which we already released, is getting a very



good response. Faria will impress everyone as a singer as well. I thank the entire team who supported me throughout this journey.” Director Murali Manohar said, “The main reason I started this film is my friend and producer Bobby. Because of him, I began this movie. Only when you are given freedom can you do your work properly. The producers gave me complete creative freedom. When I talk about the support they gave me, I become emotional. All of us worked with the intention of showing Telugu audiences a new kind of film.

Even though it’s new, we never moved away from our nativity. Every artist and technician in our team supported my effort as a director. I thank all of them. ‘Gurram Paapireddy’ is releasing on the 19th. Please watch it in theatres and enjoy.” Producer Amar Bura said, “The reason our movie has come out so well is our director Murali. From the beginning, he told us he would make us proud with this film, and he proved it with the trailer. Our friends and distributors in the US are talking only about the content after watching it.

Our combination journey will not stop here; we want to make more films together. This film should become a big hit, at least for our director Murali Manohar. Brahmanandam garu has been supporting us at every stage and kept calling to ask how the film is shaping up. Getting Yogi Babu’s dates was difficult, and we waited for two months for him. His character has come out really well. Jeevan, Vamsidhar, and Rajkumar Kasireddy will make you laugh. During our recent promotional tours, we received a very good response.

Karunada Chakravarthy Shiva Rajkumar, Real Star Upendra, Versatile Star Raj B Shetty’s “45: The Movie” Crazy Trailer Unveiled

Popular music director Arjun Janya takes the director’s chair for the first time for the much-awaited flick 45: The Movie, a project that promises scale, substance, and star power in equal measure. The film unites three formidable forces of Kannada cinema- Karunada Chakravarthy Shiva Rajkumar, Real Star Upendra, and the versatile Raj B Shetty, setting the stage for a cinematic collision unlike any other. Produced by Mrs. Uma Ramesh Reddy and M Ramesh Reddy under the Suraj Productions banner, 45 has been crafted with a clear ambition to stand apart. From its striking promotional material to the intriguing snippets unveiled so far, the film has steadily built an air of mystery that has kept audiences talking. With anticipation peaking, the makers of the movie unveiled its theatrical trailer. The opening frames introduce a



powerful visual idea- a date of birth, a date of death, and the fleeting stretch between them. This stark imagery becomes the film’s thematic backbone, suggesting that existence is not just about living, but about being

accountable for every choice made within that narrow window of time. The trailer hints at a belief system where moral reckoning does not stop with death, giving the film an almost meta-physical undertone.

Bringing together Shiva Rajkumar, Upendra, and Raj B Shetty, 45 blends contrasting personas into this moral framework. Upendra’s resonant voiceover lends philosophical gravity, framing the narrative as a reflection

on cause and consequence. Raj B Shetty appears rooted and vulnerable, representing the ordinary individual caught in forces larger than himself. Shiva Rajkumar’s presence, particularly his unexpected appearance in a red Bharatanatyam costume, introduces a striking sense of duality and transformation. The cinematography by Satya Hegde stands out. Arjun Janya’s pulsating score amplifies the experience, while the production values are exceptional. The movie features high-intensity action sequences choreographed by leading stunt masters Dr. K. Ravi Verma, Jolly Bastian, and Different Danny Chetan D’Souza. Dialogues are written by Anil Kumar, while editing is handled by K.M. Prakash. With the trailer setting the bar high the movie is gearing up for a grand release in five languages on January 1st for New Year.

‘Police Complaint’ Teaser Launched in Grand Style

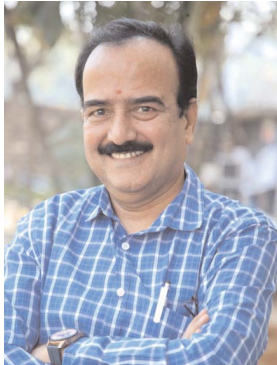


Varalaxmi Sarathkumar in a Powerful Role | Naveen Chandra in a Strong Heroic Character The Telugu and Kannada teaser of the action thriller ‘Police Complaint’ was launched grandly at Prasad Labs, Hyderabad. The film is being produced by Balakrishna Maharana under the MSK Pramidadashree Films banner, with Sanjeev Megoti handling both writing and direction. Positioned as a horror thriller and out-and-out entertainer, Police Complaint features South Indian hot favourite heroine Varalaxmi Sarathkumar in a powerful and completely entertaining role, while Naveen Chandra plays a strong, impactful character with perfect heroism. The film also boasts an ensemble cast of 52 senior artists, making it a content-rich project. Speaking on the occasion, director Sanjeev Megoti said, > “This film is a hide-and-seek drama woven between love and revenge, right and wrong, good and evil. We have presented it not just as a horror thriller but as a complete entertainer. Kannada star heroine Ragini Dwivedi appears in a special role that will thrill audiences. With an intense screenplay, Krishna Sai and Baby Tanasvi will be seen in unique characters. Varalaxmi Sarathkumar delivers both fear and entertainment in this film. Completing the shoot in just 45 days was possible mainly because of her commitment. The film is being made in four languages – Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada.”

Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, speaking about the film, said, > “I agreed to do this film because I really liked the subject narrated by the director. Along with action, I have done full-on comedy in this movie. The film has come out very well and I’m sure it will be liked by everyone.” Apart from Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, Naveen Chandra and Ragini Dwivedi, the film also features Aditya Om, Ravi Shankar, Prithvi, Srinivas Reddy, Saptagiri, Sarath Lohithaswa, Gemini Suresh, Dil Ramesh and others in key roles. The makers stated that the cinematography by S.N. Harish and the action sequences choreographed by Dragon Prakash and Ravi Teja will be major highlights. They also emphasized that the roles played by Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, Naveen Chandra and Ragini Dwivedi will be completely different from their previous films. Guests including Producer Council Secretary Prasanna Kumar, hero Krishna Sai, senior journalist Krishnamurthy, Adivi Sai Kiran, Ravula Venkateswara Rao and others attended the event and conveyed their best wishes to the film unit. Many guests and members of the film unit praised director Sanjeev Megoti, saying, > “Sanjeev Megoti is a passionate filmmaker with a strong ability to present stories effectively. He brings a unique intensity to the story and screenplay, balancing commercial elements with solid content, and clearly showcases his distinct directorial stamp in every film.”

"Missterious" Climax Will Be Memorable - Director Mahi Komati Reddy

The movie "Missterious" stars Rohit as the hero and Abid Bhushan in a police role, alongside actresses Riya Kapoor and Meghna Rajputh. Directed by Mahi Komati Reddy and produced by Jay Vallamdas under Ashlee Creations, the film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release worldwide on the 19th of this month. On this occasion, Director Mahi Komati Reddy shared several key highlights of the movie in an interview today.



Director Mahi Komati Reddy said in the interview...

Our film, "Missterious," is not a regular format like all other movies; we have crafted it with a distinct point. The film includes crime, love, and crush elements. Additionally, the movie is rich with thrilling aspects. The audience will definitely be entertained by these. Such thrilling elements have not been shown in any movie so far. The suspense about who the killer is will continue until the end of the film. As for the climax episode, it will be a blend of suspense and thrill, featuring an unexpected twist that no one can predict. After the movie ends, everyone will

surely be talking about that climax episode. When it comes to thriller movies, songs may not be highly expected. However, we have included three songs based on the story's requirement in our film. All three songs fit perfectly. They provide a good kick and prevent the audience from feeling like they are just watching a crime film, ensuring they are not disturbed. Our music director, ML Raja, has provided chartbuster music for these songs. We had the song "Adugu Aduguna," which highlights the greatness of the police, released by City Police Commissioner CV Anand Garu. That song is receiving a great response. Besides the songs, our film "Missterious" also features a fight sequence, which has come out brilliantly.

Thus, our film "Missterious" is a mix of crime, crush, love, thrill, suspense, songs, and fight scenes. The audience will come to the theatre, watch all these, get entertained, and leave. Especially, the climax episode will be unforgettable. So far, the promotional content for our film "Missterious" has received good feedback. We produced it wonderfully with the help of our friend, producer Jay Vallamdas. We originally planned to release the movie on the 12th of this month. However, due to the release of Akhanda 2, we are bringing it to the audience a week late, on the 19th of this month. We are releasing it grandly in over 150 theatres. Recently, we held a grand pre-release event. We extend special thanks to Brahmanandam Garu for attending the event as the Chief Guest and supporting all of us. Key Cast & Crew **Main Cast:** Rohit, Meghna Rajput, Abid Bhushan, Riya Kapoor, Kannada actor Balaraj Wadi, Srinivas Bogireddy, Akunuri Gautam, Jabardasth Rajamouli, Jabardasth Naveen, and Lucky play pivotal roles.

A BRIGHT FUTURE AWAITS Filmmaker Dollye Tomar – “Zindagi in Two Shades” Part 2 Should Also Come!



— Telangana Minority Affairs Minister & Renowned Cricketer Mohammed Azharuddin The documentary “Zindagi in Two Shades”, based on the life of Iftekhar Sharif, had its Hyderabad premiere recently and received a very positive response from both audiences and invited guests. Former Indian cricketer and Telangana Minority Affairs Minister Mohammed Azharuddin, who attended the event, praised the documentary after watching it. He said the real-life story was pre-

sented in a very honest and simple manner and appreciated the strong social message conveyed through the film. He expressed his wish to see more such films from Dollye Tomar and stated that she has a bright future as a filmmaker. He also mentioned that a Part 2 of “Zindagi in Two Shades” should definitely be made. The documentary is produced by Omsheel Productions, Mumbai, headed by Dollye Tomar, with support from DK Omsheel Productions, USA, led by Khurram Syed. The film is directed

by Rajneesh Dubey, produced by Kalpana Rajput, and edited by Devu Namdev. “Zindagi in Two Shades” realistically portrays the truths and struggles of everyday life. The documentary has already started attracting attention at international film festivals as well. The event was coordinated by senior film journalist Dheeraj Appaji.

Overall, with its strong content and meaningful message, “Zindagi in Two Shades” is winning the hearts of audiences and making a lasting impression.