

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



18-12-2025
Total pilgrims: 61,582
Tonsures: 19,757
Hundi kanukalu: 4.35 CR
Waiting Compartments: 31

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens). 20 H

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2026



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INBRIEF

Six Killed as Water Tank Collapses at Nagpur Factory



Nagpur (TSIT) Six persons died after a water tank collapsed at an industrial unit on the outskirts of Nagpur city on Friday, a police official said. The incident occurred around 9.30 am at Avaada Electro Private Limited, a solar panel manufacturing factory located in MIDC Butibori area, the official said. While three persons had died at the time of the incident after getting trapped under the debris, three others who were rushed to hospital have also succumbed to injuries, he informed.

ED Attaches Rs.7.93 Cr Assets in Illegal Betting App Case

New Delhi : In fresh trouble for cricketers Yuvraj Singh and Robin Uthappa, actor Sonu Sood and others, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached their movable and immovable assets valued at Rs 7.93 crore as part of action against illegal offshore betting platform lxBet, an official said on Friday. Earlier on October 6, the ED had attached assets amounting to Rs 11.14 crore of cricketers Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina. Others against whom the latest action in the case has been taken by the ED Headquarters Office, include actresses Urvasi Rautela, Mimi Chakraborty, actor Ankush Hazra and actress Neha Sharma, an ED statement said. The attachment was done under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, an official

Manipur security forces recover 16 abandoned IEDs in Churachandpur

Manipur: Security forces in Manipur on Thursday recovered 16 abandoned improvised explosive devices (IEDs) at Lungdeiphai Leinom village junction in the Kangvai area of Churachandpur district, officials confirmed on Friday. The explosives were neutralised by a bomb disposal squad. Officials said the recovery took place during a search operation in and around the village junction. The incident follows a suspected armed attack by a Kuki group two days earlier, which involved indiscriminate firing and bombings in Torbung Sabal Mamang Leikai in neighbouring Bishnupur district.

41 CPI (Maoist) Cadres Surrender in Telangana

The Cadres handed over 24 firearms

HYDERABAD ■ (TSIT): In a major setback to the banned CPI (Maoist) organisation, forty-one underground Maoist cadres, including six senior leaders of Company Platoon Committee Member / Divisional Committee Member (CyPCM/DVCM) rank, surrendered before the Telangana Police on Friday in the presence of the Director General of Police (DGP), Telangana. During the surrender, the cadres handed over 24 firearms comprising one INSAS Light Machine Gun (LMG), three AK-47 rifles, five SLR rifles, seven INSAS rifles, one BGL gun, four .303 rifles, one single-shot rifle and two air guns, along with 733 live rounds of ammunition and eight BGL shells. Police officials stated that the surrender of such a large cache of arms has significantly weakened the operational and combat capability of the CPI (Maoist) in the region.



The surrendered cadres belonged to key formations of the CPI (Maoist), including the PLGA Battalion, Komaram Bheem Asifabad-Mancherial Divisional Committee, 2nd Central Regional Command Company, Cherla-Shabari Area Committee, Platoon-33 of the South Sub Zonal Bureau, South Bastar and Darbha Divisional Committees, and the Gangaloor Area Committee of West Bastar DVC. Many of them had remained underground for periods ranging from seven to

twenty-four years. The cadres stated that they were influenced by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's appeal on October 21, 2025, urging Maoists to abandon violence and rejoin the mainstream. Continuous pressure from security forces, shrinking support networks, harsh living conditions, declining health, prolonged separation from families, ideological disillusionment and internal leadership disputes were cited as reasons for surrender. Under the Telangana Government's Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy, a total eligible amount of Rs.1.46 crore will be disbursed after documentation, with an interim relief of Rs.25,000 already provided to each cadre. Police officials revealed that 509 Maoist cadres have surrendered in 2025 so far, reflecting the steady decline of the extremist organisation.



KTR dares Revanth to prove 66% support

HYDERABAD (TSIT): Bharat Rashtriya Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) on Friday, December 19, dared Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to prove his claims of having the approval of people in the panchayat elections by making the 10 defected MLAs from BRS resign and seek fresh mandate. Addressing a victory meeting of newly elected BRS sarpanches in Sircilla, KTR challenged the CM to test his "66 per cent support" claim. "The CM claimed Congress won 66 per cent in local polls and called it a blessing for his government. Yet, within five minutes, he took a U-turn, stating local polls are fought on local issues and caste, not government performance," he said. "Mr. Chief Minister, if you truly believe the people are with you, accept my challenge.

CM Naidu Seeks Centre's Support for Projects



AMARAVATI (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi on Friday and sought substantial central support for various projects. These included the Purvodaya programme, the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme works, a transformative horticulture development package for Rayalaseema, and urgent assistance for the Polavaram-Nallamala Sagar Link Project to address persistent drought conditions in several districts. CM Naidu emphasised that the Purvodaya initiative is crucial for realising the Viksit Bharat vision, as it supports the holistic development of eastern states and strengthens India's national economic growth. According to an official release here, the Chief Minister explained that Purvodaya funds are essential for improving

rural connectivity, modernising irrigation systems, developing infrastructure, expanding industrial corridors, establishing food-processing clusters, and enhancing healthcare and education facilities. Stressing that these interventions would significantly expand economic opportunities in rural Andhra Pradesh, he requested the Centre to prioritise State-specific needs and simplify administrative norms to ensure smooth implementation of Purvodaya projects. The Chief Minister also sought the expeditious release of funds under the SASCI scheme for several important projects. He requested immediate support for the construction of the Unity Mall in Visakhapatnam, the reconstruction of the historic Havelock Bridge under Akhanda Godavari, the Gandikota Tourism Project, and the completion of three working women's hostels in different districts.

Prez Murmu Urges PSC to Prioritise Honesty

HYDERABAD (TSIT): President Droupadi Murmu on Friday asked the Public Service Commissions to give the highest priority to honesty and integrity of the candidates they recruit.Inaugurating the national conference



for the Chairpersons of State Public Service Commissions, being organised by the Telangana Public Service Commission, she stated that honesty and integrity are paramount as well as non-negotiable.She under-

lined that lack of skills and competencies can be dealt with through learning interventions and several other strategies, but lack of integrity may cause grave challenges which may be impossible to overcome.

Traditional medicine restores life & health balance: Modi

NEW DELHI : While imbalances in life, gut health, sleep, and workplace are creating significant global health challenges, implementing traditional medicine can help restore balance and harmony and boost health, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday. Speaking at the concluding ceremony of the second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine at the Bharat Mandapam here, the Prime Minister underscored India's growing leadership and pioneer-



ing initiatives in shaping a global, science-based, and people-centred traditional medicine agenda. The Summit, held from December 17 to 19, was jointly organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Ayush. Emphasising the theme of the event "Restoring balance: The science and practice of

health and well-being", PM Modi noted how India's age-old wisdom, Ayurveda, is centred around balance. "In Ayurveda, balance, that is, equilibrium, has been called the synonym of health. The one whose body maintains this balance is healthy," the PM said. "Today, we see imbalances in work-life, gut microbiome, sleep, and emotions creating global health challenges. Both studies and data indicate this. Thus, restoring balance is a global urgency," said PM Modi.

93 Indian Airports Switch to 100% Green Energy

New Delhi : A total of 93 airports in India have switched over to 100 per cent green energy use, Murlidhar Mohol, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, informed the Parliament.In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, the minister stated that four airports in the country, including Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru, have achieved the highest carbon accreditation level, five, as per the Airports International Council, and have become carbon neutral.

Siddaramaiah asserts full-term CM amid Cong infighting

BELAGAVI (TSIT): Amid speculation over leadership change within the Karnataka Congress, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday asserted that he is the incumbent Chief Minister and will continue in office for the full term, while categorically denying that any power-sharing formula had been discussed within the party. The Chief Minister made the statement on the floor of the Assembly after BJP leaders questioned whether he would remain in office long enough to implement the assurances announced for the development of the North Karnataka region during the ongoing Belagavi session. "The leadership issue is an internal matter of our party. We will follow the directions of the high command. However, I am the current Chief Minister and have completed two-and-a-half years in office. I will continue as the Chief Minister in the future as well," Siddaramaiah said, reiterating, "I am here and

I will continue to be the Chief Minister."Senior BJP MLA V. Sunil Kumar said he was raising the issue out of genuine concern. "Today, you have made announcements for North Karnataka. You should be in a position to implement them. You will remain as the Chief Minister, right?" he asked. In response, Siddaramaiah said that he would indeed remain in office. Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka then sought clarity on whether the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) had decided if Siddaramaiah would serve a full five-year term or only a two-and-a-half-year term. The Chief Minister replied that no such decision regarding a half-term arrangement had been taken within the party. BJP MLA N. Munirathna followed up by challenging Siddaramaiah to make a categorical declaration. "Won't you thump the table and say that you will remain Chief Minister for five years?" he asked.

DMK Alliance to protest MGNREGA replacement on Dec 24

CHENNAI (TSIT): The Secular Progressive Alliance led by the ruling DMK, has announced a state-wide protest on December 24 against the Centre's newly passed legislation to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Beneficiaries of the existing 100-day rural employment scheme will be mobilised, along

with district secretaries, MLAs, local body representatives, and members of the alliance parties. The alliance demands the withdrawal of the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill, 2025, which repeals MGNREGA and introduces a new rural employment framework. "On December 24, the



protest would be held at 10 am in the capital city and also in all the party's local levels by

mobilising the beneficiaries of the 100-day employment scheme," it said. "Let us raise our voices against the union BJP government that deceives the people of Tamil Nadu and the AIADMK that supports them," the release said. On December 18, the Tamil Nadu government expressed its strong objection to the Centre's new rural employment scheme, saying concerns includ-

ed, removal of Mahatma Gandhi's name from it and the increased financial burden on states. Chief Minister M K Stalin told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the proposed legislation "will jeopardise the livelihoods of crores of rural poor, particularly in performing states like Tamil Nadu, and strain inter-governmental relations."

40 lakh annual FASTag passes issued since August, barrier-free toll collection by 2026: Gadkari

NEW DELHI: The government will implement barrier-free toll collection at all 1,050 toll plazas across the country by 2026 and about 40 lakh annual FASTag passes have been issued in four months since August, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday.

Answering queries during Question Hour in the Lok Sabha, Gadkari said annual FASTag passes will allow private cars to cross 200 toll plazas at Rs 3,000 a year, or an average of Rs 15 per toll.

The pass is much cheaper when compared to the current cost of Rs 15,000 for crossing 200 tolls.

"By 2026, we will put in place sophisticated AI-based system for collecting tolls at all the 1,050 plazas,



which include 350 private toll booths and 700 government). Cars can move at Rs 80km/hour on highways without stopping at toll plazas," Gadkari said.

The minister said the new barrier-free seamless high-

way and expressway toll collection system will replace the current system of toll collection, wherein cars have to stop at toll plazas for money to be deducted from FASTag.

Beginning August 15, 2025,

the government has started the FASTag annual pass. The annual pass eliminates the need to frequently recharge FASTag through one-time fee payment of Rs 3,000 for one-year validity or 200 toll plaza crossings.

Hijab row: Bihar Health minister unaware of doctor's refusal to join duty

PATNA: Bihar Health Minister Mangal Pandey on Thursday said he was not aware of reports that a female doctor had refused to join duty following an incident in which Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was seen publicly removing the veil from her face.

The senior BJP leader, however, sought to put a lid on the controversy by asserting that the ruling NDA in the state has always worked for empowerment of women (Matri Shakti).

"I have no such information", was the terse reply of Pandey, whom journalists asked about reports that the Ayush doctor Nusrat Parveen, who hails from Kolkata, has declined the government job following the unsavoury incident that took place earlier this week.

A section of media had on Wednesday reported that she had declined the job.

Parveen was among ten Ayush doc-



tors who had turned up at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Monday to receive their letters of appointment. When Parveen's turn came, the 75-year-old CM pointed towards her veil (Hijab) and exclaimed 'what is this' before pulling it down and exposing her face.

The incident has drawn criticism

from far and wide, including many West Asian countries, and the JD (U) president is facing accusations of disrespecting Muslim traditions, allegedly in line with 'RSS agenda'.

However, Pandey insisted, "Women have always been respected by our CM, who has made huge efforts for the empowerment of Matri Shakti".

PM Modi expresses grief over death of sculptor Ram Sutar



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday mourned the death of noted sculptor Ram Sutar, and said his works will always be admired as powerful expression of India's history and culture.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of Shri Ram Sutar Ji, a remarkable sculptor whose mastery gave India some of its most iconic landmarks, in-

cluding the Statue of Unity in Kevadia," Modi said in a post on X.

The prime minister said Sutar's work will always be admired as powerful expressions of India's history, culture and collective spirit.

"He has immortalised national pride for generations to come. His works will keep inspiring artists and citizens alike. My heartfelt condolences to his family, admirers and all who were touched by his remarkable life and work. Om Shanti," Modi said.

Sutar, 100, breathed his last at this residence in Uttar Pradesh's Noida on late Wednesday night.

VB-G RAM G versus MGNREGA: Here are the major differences

NEW DELHI: The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025 -- which was passed by the Lok Sabha on Thursday -- repeals the MGNREGA and paves the way for a structural transformation of the government's role in the rural employment landscape.

Passed in 2005 as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), and renamed in 2009 as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), it aimed to enhance livelihood security of households in the rural areas.

The Act promised at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult

members volunteer for unskilled manual work.

The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill aims to establish a "rural development framework aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047", by providing a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment.

Here are the key differences between the two rural employment frameworks:

- * While the MGNREGA has a provision for 100 days of wage employment, the VB-G RAM G Bill promises 125 days of wage employment.
- * The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is demand-driven, meaning the government has to allocate additional funds if there is demand for

work.

The VB-G RAM G Bill provides for normative allocation to states, and any expenditure beyond it has to be borne by the state governments.

- * Under MGNREGS, 100 per cent of the wages are to be paid by the Centre, while the material cost would be shared 75:25 between the Centre and the states.
- Under the VB-G RAM G, also a centrally sponsored scheme, the state governments will take on a larger share of the expenditure than before.
- The financial liability would be shared between the Centre and the state governments following a ratio of 90:10 for the northeastern and Himalayan states, and 60:40 for all other states and Union territories (UTs) with legislature.

For the UTs without legislature, the whole cost would be borne by the central government.

- * Under MGNREGA, work can be sought throughout the year.
- Under the VB-G RAM G, the state will notify a period covering the peak agricultural seasons of sowing and harvesting, during which work can not be sought under this scheme.
- * Under MGNREGA, work is divided into broad categories such as water conservation, drought-proofing, irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, and flood control.
- The VB-G RAM G Bill lists four thematic focus domains: water security through water-related works, core rural infrastructure, livelihood-relat-

ed infrastructure and works for the mitigation of extreme weather events.

- * Under MGNREGA, the gram panchayat is responsible for identification of projects in its area. Plans and decisions regarding the nature and choice of works to be undertaken, the order of each worksite selection, etc., would be made in open assemblies of the gram sabha or ward sabha and ratified by the panchayat.
- Under VB-G RAM G, the work undertaken shall originate from the Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, prepared by the gram panchayats and integrated with the PM Gati Shakti Nation-

al Master Plan.

- * There is no categorisation of panchayats under MGNREGA.
- The VB-G RAM G Bill says every panchayat shall prepare saturation-mode plans based on its classification into categories A, B, C -- determined based on development parameters.
- * The VB-G RAM G talks about a comprehensive digital ecosystem, including biometric authentication at various levels, global positioning system or mobile-based worksite monitoring, proactive public disclosures, and artificial intelligence for planning, audits and fraud risk mitigation, which will be used to modernise governance, accountability and citizen engagement.
- There is no such provision in the MGNREGA.

Assam CM lauds Indian Orthopaedic Association for advancing medical education

GUWAHATI: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday lauded the Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA) for its contribution to medical education and orthopaedic care in India, saying the organisation was founded by visionary surgeons who understood the needs of a young and newly independent nation.

Addressing the IOA's annual conference here, the CM said the founders of the association had realised the importance of a strong national organisation to promote learning, encourage research and uphold ethical medical practices in orthopaedics.

He said this vision has been carried forward with dedication and consistency over the decades.

"In the early years, orthopaedic practice in India was shaped by the health challenges of the time, with doctors largely treat-

ing injuries, bone and joint tuberculosis and deformities caused by polio, despite limited resources and developing infrastructure", he said.

During this period, the IOA emerged as an important platform for doctors from across the country to share knowledge, learn from one another and collectively improve patient care, he said.

A major milestone in this journey was the start of the Annual Conference of the Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOACON) in the late 1950s, which was conceived as a national forum for academic exchange and professional dialogue and has remained so over the years.

Over time, as medical science advanced, orthopaedic care became more specialised and IOACON expanded in both scale and academic depth, covering areas such as joint replacement, spine care,

sports injuries, paediatric orthopaedics, and hand and trauma care, he said.

Beyond conferences, the IOA has played a key role in strengthening medical education by promoting continuous learning, supporting postgraduate training and encouraging research among young doctors, thereby ensuring a strong and ethical future for the profession, he said.

Highlighting the government's focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure, the CM said the state has set a target of establishing one medical college in each district.

At present, 15 medical colleges are functional in Assam, while 10 more are at various stages of construction and by 2030, 25 medical colleges would be functional in the state, leading to the creation of a large pool of medical specialists, including orthopaedic surgeons, Sarma added.

Circumstantial evidence can be used for conviction if it leads to guilt only: SC

NEW DELHI: Circumstantial evidence can be used to convict an accused in a criminal case if it is of such a nature that is "consistent only with his guilt", the Supreme Court said on Thursday.

Setting aside the conviction and life sentence of a man accused in a 2004 murder case, a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra reiterated the legal principle that the "last seen together" theory alone is insufficient to sustain a conviction in cases resting entirely on circumstantial evidence.

"It is a well-established rule in criminal jurisprudence that circumstantial evidence can be made the basis of the conviction of an accused person if it is of such a character that it is wholly inconsistent with the innocence of the accused and is consistent only with his guilt," Justice Mishra, who authored the judgement, said.

The verdict said in a case that lacks direct evidence, the incriminating circumstances being used against the accused must be such as to lead only to a hypothesis of guilt and must exclude every other possibil-



ity of the innocence of the accused.

"And if the circumstances proved against the accused, in a particular case, are consistent with the innocence of the accused, he will be entitled to the benefit of the doubt," it said.

The bench acquitted appellant Manoj alias Munna, granting him the benefit of the doubt after finding significant gaps in the prosecution's chain of evidence.

Referring to the facts of the case, the court said, "We are of the opinion that the nature of circumstantial evidence available against the appellant though raises a doubt that he may have committed the offence but the same is not so conclusive that he can be convicted only on the evidence of the last seen together (theory)."

It is a settled proposition that whenever any doubt emanates in

the mind of the court, the benefit shall accrue to the accused and not the prosecution, it added.

"The present case is one where except for the evidence of last seen together, there is no other corroborative evidence against the appellant. Therefore, the conviction only on the basis of last seen together cannot be sustained," it said while setting aside the impugned judgements.

The case dates back to June 2004. The prosecution had alleged that Manoj, along with five co-accused, killed one Yuvraj Singh Patle, a tractor driver, to steal the vehicle and sell it.

The deceased was found with burn injuries and ligature marks on his neck.

While the trial court acquitted the five other co-accused, Manoj was convicted under sections 302 (murder) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) of the Indian Penal Code, primarily based on the testimony of witnesses who saw him leaving with the deceased on the evening of June 6, 2004.

The Chhattisgarh High Court upheld his conviction in 2011.

Nation must always be placed above any party or ideology: Cong leader Sachin Pilot

MUMBAI: Senior Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Thursday said serving the country does not necessarily require being a politician and stressed that the nation must always be placed above any party or ideology.

The AICC general secretary and former Rajasthan deputy chief minister was speaking on the role of ideology and public service at the 'Role Model Series' at the 11th edition of India's International Movement to Unite Nations (IIMUN).

"Serving the country does not necessarily require being a politician. The nation must always be placed above any party or ideology. Individuals can contribute to the country in many ways by being responsible citizens, stakeholders and by remaining aware and engaged with issues that shape the future," he said.

"I believe no ideology is above the nation. Our country is greater than any party or belief system. If people are committed to making India the best country in the world, ideological differences become secondary,"



he asserted. Referring to politicians switching sides or ideologies, Pilot said such developments have occurred in the past and will continue in the future, as it ultimately depends on individual choices.

While ideological differences are a natural part of democracy, the focus should remain on who is better placed to serve the country, Pilot said. "The debate should be about who can deliver, who has the capa-

bility and who can serve India better," he pointed out.

Emphasising inclusivity, the Congress leader said governance cannot be driven by a single viewpoint.

"Progress requires taking people along and building consensus. There is no question of enemies in public life. It is about collective effort and bringing diverse views together for the nation's progress," he said.

Arunachal govt making concerted efforts to revive stalled hydropower projects: Mein

ITANAGAR: Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on Thursday said the state government is making concerted efforts to revive stalled hydropower projects.

He made the statement after reviewing the status of several large hydropower projects in the state.

"Reviewed the status of major hydropower projects including Tawang I and II, Etalin, Demwe Lower, Naying, Kalai I and II, Hutong, Subansiri Upper, Kamala and the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project," Mein said in a post on X after the meeting.

The deputy chief minister, who also holds the Power and Hydropower portfolios, said the review also covered other mega and large hydropower projects, including the Etalin hydroelectric project of 3,097 mw, the Demwe Lower project of 1,750 mw and the Subansiri Upper project of



1,605 mw, which are critical to Arunachal Pradesh's long-term energy roadmap.

He emphasised that the exercise is part of a broader, structured effort to unlock the state's vast hydropower potential.

"The review forms part of a comprehensive effort to revive stalled hydropower capacity and ensure timely, responsible and sustainable development across the sector," he said.

Mein said these initiatives

reaffirm the government's commitment to policy stability, responsible hydropower development and long-term energy security.

He noted that hydropower remains a cornerstone of the state's development strategy.

“Soulful Strokes’ – the 6th Annual Art Exhibition will be held in Chitrakala Parishath



Bengaluru : Celebrating the spirit, rhythm, and evolving identity of the city, artist Barnali presents her latest art series titled “Namma Bengaluru: Colours of the City” as part of “Soulful Strokes,” the 6th Annual Art Exhibition organised by the Kalashrishti Group of Artists at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Gallery 2 and 3, Kumara Krupa Road, Bengaluru.

The exhibition, held from December 17 to 21, 2025, will be open to the public daily from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Entry is free. Through “Namma Bengaluru: Colours of the City,” Barnali offers a heartfelt visual tribute to the city she calls home,

moving beyond its image as a technology-driven metropolis to reveal its deeper character shaped by heritage, greenery, memories, and lived experiences. Her artworks depict iconic Bengaluru landmarks such as Cubbon Park, Vidhana Soudha, Lalbagh, KR Market, and Church Street, not as postcard images, but as vibrant spaces filled with emotion and everyday life.

“Bengaluru is not just a city I live in. It is a feeling I paint,” says Barnali. Her works reflect the calm, chaos, nostalgia, and rhythm of the city, inviting viewers to pause and observe moments often overlooked in the rush of

urban life. “In every Bengaluru street, there is a story waiting to be remembered. From Cubbon Park to KR Market, my art captures the rhythm of everyday Bengaluru,” she adds.

Curated by Bernari Ray, Soulful Strokes features works by eminent artists Vikram, Archana Shailesh, Haribabu, Chaitanya, Latha, Sanjay Kumar, Manoj Ajay Gurunatha, and Suparna Rajan, along with promising student artists Adrija Chatterjee and Samita Ghosh. The exhibition brings together diverse artistic styles and contemporary themes, highlighting evolving narratives in Indian art while encouraging emerging talent.

Nethradhama Launches Karnataka's First Mobile Unit for Bladeless Eye Surgery;



Bengaluru : In a major leap for precision eye surgery in Karnataka, Nethradhama Superspeciality Eye Hospital has launched the Ziemer Z8 Neo, a state-of-the-art multi-purpose femtosecond laser system, now being delivered across multiple centres within the city through a custom-engineered mobile unit. We were among the earliest adopters of Femtosecond laser technology in India,” said Prof. Dr. Sri Ganesh, Chairman and Managing Director, Nethradhama, “We were the first in India to install the Catalys platform for bladeless cataract surgery and the first in the country to introduce the VisuMax 800 system offering SMILE Pro. From introducing the state's first Catalys platform for bladeless cataract surgery to pioneering SMILE in South India, innovation has always been part of our DNA. With the Z8 Neo, we have elevated this further, not just by upgrading our in-centre capabilities, but also by mobilising the technology itself. Our specially engineered van, with climate and shock control, allows us to rotate the machine between five centres.

Nothing wrong in Satish Jarkiholi’s dinner meeting: DCM DK Shivakumar

Belagavi: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday said there was nothing wrong in Satish Jarkiholi hosting a dinner meeting of legislators, asserting that such gatherings were common. Speaking to reporters at the Circuit House, he remarked that no one could object to a dinner meeting and said he had no role in organising it.

Responding to BJP leader B.Y. Vijayendra’s remarks branding him the “father of corrup-



tion” and alleging that the Congress was an ATM for the High Command, Shivakumar said the allegations must be proven and that time would answer Vijayendra.

On his personal secretary Rajendra Prasad’s accident, the Deputy CM said he was stable and out of danger, though advised rest. Expressing grief over the death of a youth in the accident, Shivakumar said the government would ensure adequate com-

Varshini Aparna brings glory to the state by winning 1 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze in the 63rd National Roller Skating Championship

Bengaluru: Varshini Aparna has won one gold medal, three silver medals, and one bronze medal in the 63rd National Roller Skating Championship-2025 held in Visakhapatnam.

Aparna, who was being trained by Best Club Coach Raghavendra G. V., has increased the glory of the country by achieving this unique achievement.

Speaking at the same time, Varshini Aparna



said that with the great desire to win a gold medal in skating, she trained continuously under the good guidance of Coach

Raghavendra G. V. Thus, she expressed her joy that it helped her win the gold medal. Coach Raghavendra G.V. Speaking, he said

that the BEST Club is working with the aim of encouraging and supporting boys and girls who are interested in skating,

and so far hundreds of skaters have played at the national and state levels and achieved fame.

The state’s Sports Department is providing appropriate cooperation to the skating sport. He said that it is our hope that the youth of our state should rep-

Aware of existing conditions, tenders invited with a forward-looking approach: MB Patil

Bengaluru: Infrastructure Development Minister M. B. Patil said on Friday that the State Government is aware that permission from Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL) is required to construct a second international airport near the State capital, and that the relevant condition remains valid until 2033. With this in view, and adopting a long-term perspective, the Government has initiated preparatory work well in advance, he said. He has responded to the matter raised during the recent session of Parliament regarding the proposed second international airport for Bengaluru.



Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), a condition was imposed prohibiting the development of another airport within a 150-km radius until 2033. However, similar conditions have been relaxed in cities such as New Delhi and Navi Mumbai to facilitate the development of second airports. This matter will be addressed appropriately at

the appropriate time, he said. Patil explained that several critical steps are involved in establishing an airport, including site identification, inspections, land acquisition and disbursement of compensation. Completing these processes alone would take at least five to six years. Approval from BIAL would be required only after these stages are completed. Therefore, tenders have been invited through the Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSIIIDC) to prepare a location suitability report along with a comprehensive technical and financial feasibility study.

Congress gave nothing to North Karnataka in Belagavi session: Opposition leader R. Ashok

Bengaluru : The Congress government has given nothing to North Karnataka in the Belagavi session. They have only told lies, said opposition leader R. Ashok, expressing outrage.

Speaking to reporters, he said that in every Belagavi session, discussions take place on the problems of North Karnataka. This time, the BJP had emphasized this issue. Even though discussions went on for a total of 21 hours, it was like washing tamarind fruit in a river (meaning it was futile). CM Siddaramaiah, who has presented the budget 16 times, says that injustice has been done to North Karnataka—if that’s the case, it is his own failure. Even though there are Public Works and Irrigation Ministers, there are potholes in the roads of North Karnataka. They say they will provide 10,000 crore rupees every year,



but later lie by saying it’s for the entire state.

They first give assurances on irrigation projects, then say there is a court injunction. The Govindarav Commission report is still not complete. CM Siddaramaiah is a complete liar and has told lies. People thought the Chief Minister would announce something new. But they have made it as if there is no electricity, snatching away the light from the entire North Karnataka. They have only made allegations

against the central government. They haven’t provided land for the central railway project, nor their share for the waste management project. Even though the central government provided a grant for the development of the Ellamma Temple project, they haven’t started it. Even though about 50 crore rupees were given for Belagavi’s lakes, they haven’t used it. Congress MPs asked a question in the Lok Sabha about the release of funds for the Jal Jeevan Mission scheme, and the answer was to submit the bill. Officials told the CC Patil committee that they couldn’t submit the bill.

KREDL celebrates Energy Conservation Week

Bengaluru : Hundreds of students from various schools participated in the National Energy Conservation Day celebrations held at KREDL’s headquarters in Nagarbhavi today. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Union Ministry of Power, mandates the observance of Energy Conservation Week across all states.

ICICI Home Finance

Corporate Office: ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ICICI HFC Tower, Anandhi, Kuria Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai- 400059, India
Branch Office: CTS No. 3414, 1st floor, Anant Plaza, Somdevi Galli, Khade Bazaar, Near Bogavare Circle, Belgaum- 590002
Branch Office: Shop No. 1316/C, 2nd floor, 9th Cross, 9th Main, Opp To Tirumalagiri Venkateshwara Temple, J P Nagar, 2nd Phase Above Central Bank, Bengaluru - 560078
[See proviso to rule 8(6)] Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd., will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Legal Heirs. Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date and Time of Auction	One Day Before Auction Date	SARFAESI Stage
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)
1.	Ranjit Budhaji Ghatage (Borrower) Ghatage Mithun Budhaji (Co- Borrower) Lan No. LHBGM00001356750	Ccb No 849, Rs No 48/1A/1 Vasant Joshi Colony, Shahu Nagar No Belgaum Karnataka- 590001	Rs. 7,97,007.00/- December 16, 2025	Rs. 36,26,640/- To Rs. 3,62,664/-	January 13, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	January 20, 2026 02:00 PM To 03:00 PM	January 19, 2026 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession
2.	Mohammed Mubeeb (Borrower) Thaseen Taj Mubeeb (Co- Borrower) Lan No. NHBGN00000741741	No E 2nd Floor Municipal Bn-62/4 Hoyalth Residency Ranaji Rao Road Basavangudi Bangalore-560004	Rs. 4,45,84,605.00/- December 16, 2025	Rs. 1,24,74,000/- To Rs. 12,47,400/-	January 13, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	January 20, 2026 02:00 PM To 03:00 PM	January 19, 2026 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency Value Trust Capital Services Private Limited. The Mortgage(s) notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till January 19, 2026 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.
The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address Mentioned on top of the article on or before January 19, 2026 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit signed copy of Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address Mentioned on top of the article on or before January 19, 2026 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd. - Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Home Finance Company Limited on 9920807300.
The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit https://www.icicifhc.com/
Date: December 20, 2025
Place: Belgaum, Bangalore
Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited",
CIN Number- U65922MH1999PLC120106

Bandhan Bank

Regional Office: Netaji Marg, Nr. Mithakhali Six Roads, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad-6. Phone: + 91-79-26421671-75

Demand Notice to Borrowers

The under mentioned account turned into NPA and demand notice issued by Bandhan Bank Ltd. under Sec.13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act (The Act), 2002 to the following Borrowers and third party to whom the borrower had sold the mortgaged property. However, the same was unserved. Hence, this notice is issued to you all and public at large through publication.

Name of borrower(s), Guarantor and Loan Account No.	Description of mortgaged property (Secured Asset)	Date of Demand Notice/Date of NPA	O/S Amount as on Date of Demand Notice	Date of Posting of Notice
Halesha Naik Lakshmi Bai 90000000697992	All That Piece And Parcel Of Free Hold Land And Hereditaments And Property Bearing RCC House Property No.446/2, E Swathu No.151200502200320430, Measuring 4.572 Mtrs And 19.812, Sq Mtrs. Situated At Benakanihali Village, Benakanihali Gram Panchayath, Honnali Taluk, Davanagere Dist, Owned By Sri Halesha Naik, Son Of Ramanaik, And Said Property is Bounded As Under. Owned By Halesha Naik S/O Ramanaik And Same Bounded As Under: North: V P Sewage, East: Property Of Jayamma W/O Hanumanthappa A K, West: Property Of Gurumurthy Naik, S/O Rama Naik, South: V P Road	September 17, 2025/ August 03, 2025	Rs. 23,24,508.31	November 27, 2025

Demand made against you through this notice to repay to the Bank dues mentioned against your name with interest, costs and charges within 60 days from the date hereof, failing which the Bank will further proceed to take steps u/s 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act. The borrowers'/mortgagors' attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
Place: Davanagere
Date: December 20, 2025
Authorised Officer
Bandhan Bank Limited

STATE BANK OF INDIA

STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH-1 (CODE: 05172)
2nd Floor, TSRTC Commuter Amenities Centre, Bus Terminal Complex, Koti, Hyderabad-500095, T.S., Ph: 040-24651352, E-Mail: sbi.05172@sbi.co.in

DEMAND NOTICE

A notice is hereby given that the following Borrowers : (1) M/s. Hiranmaye Industries Pvt Ltd, (2) Sri G. Anirudh Bhaskar Reddy, (3) Smt. M. Pranathi, (4) Sri G.B. Karunakar Reddy, (5) Sri Sajjad Khan, (6) Smt. Hita Prabha Reddy, (7) Smt. G. Prathiba Reddy have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). The notices were issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (Hereinafter Called "Act") on their last known addresses, but they have been returned unserved and as such they are hereby informed by way of this public notice.

Name of the Borrowers, Guarantor & Address	Details of Properties / Address of Secured Assets to be Enforced	Date of Notice	Date of NPA	Total Dues (as on the date of notice)
(1) M/s. Hiranmaye Industries Pvt Ltd, Represented by its Managing Director: Sri G. Anirudh Bhaskar Reddy, S/o. G. B. Karunakar Reddy, Door No.15/312-A, Gangavarapu Gopal Reddy Street, Madanapalle, Chittoor Dist. -517325 Andhra Pradesh, (2) Sri G. Anirudh Bhaskar Reddy, S/o. GB Karunakar Reddy, R/o.Door No.15/311-A, Gangavarapu Gopal Reddy Street, Madanapalle, Chittoor Dist. A.P.-517325 (3) Smt M Pranathi W/o M.R. Murali Krishna, R/o H.No.36/1, 14th Street, V Block, Anna Nagar, Chennai-600 040 (4) Sri G.B. Karunakar Reddy S/o. G. Bhaskar Reddy, Door No.15/311-A, Gangavarapu Gopal Reddy Street, Madanapalle, Chittoor Dist. A.P.-517325 (5) Sri Sajjad Khan S/oLate Hammad Khan, Yachanpalli, Romur, Kolar, Karnataka-563135, (6) Smt Hita Prabha Reddy, D/o. Late G. B. Karunakar Reddy, Door No.15/311-A, Gangavarapu Gopal Reddy Street, Madanapalle, Chittoor Dist. A.P.-517325	Hypothecation of Movable Properties : Hypothecation of Plant & Machinery, Receivables & Other Current Assets of the firm present and future. Equitable Mortgage of Immovable properties : Item No.1: Chittoor District – Madanapalle Sub-District – Madanapalle Municipality- Kammappalle Revenue Village – 15th Ward – Old Ladhu Middle with Penkulu, Theerlu and Rekulu bearing Door No.15-365 Ground and First Floors along with vacant site situated at Jogappagari street, Madanapalle Town, with the following boundaries and measurements:- East: Jogappagari Street; West: Flushing Peta; North: The House sold by Smt Sukanya to others; South: Sobha lodge and the house of R K Doraswamy legal heirs and Ratakonda Sreedhar Avaranam Within the above boundaries measuring East to West 94 feet (or) 28.67 meters, North to South 128 feet (or) 39.04 meters, total extent 12032 Sq.ft (or) 1336.88 Sq yds, vacant site full with constructed old Ladhu Middle with Penkulu, Theerlu and Rekulu bearing Door No.15-365, Ground and First Floors along with vacant site with doors, windows and its frames, electrical equipments, electrical services, Municipal Tap, Staircase, Iron Grill and gates, Four Sides walls, Compound wall along with roof and adugu nivesam etc with all easementary rights, Property belonging to Sri G Anirudh Bhaskar Reddy S/o G.B. Karunakar Reddy vide Relinquishment Deed Doc No.5745/2016 dated 03.09.2016, SRO Madanapally. Item No.2: Chittoor District – Madanapalle Sub-District – Madanapalle Municipality- Kammappalle Revenue Village – 15th Ward – in Sy No.206-1, admeasuring Ac 0.99cents (or) 0.400 hectares paiki House bearing Door No.15-311-B, Ground, First and 2nd Floors situated at Gangarapu Gopal Reddy Street, Madanapalle Town, within the following boundaries and measurements:- East: The Vacant site retained by the Donors Sri G Bhaskar Reddy, West: Gangarapu Gopal Reddy Street, North: The Vacant Site retained by the Donors Sri G Bhaskar Reddy , South: The Vacant Site of Sri Janakiram working in LIC Within the above boundaries measuring East to West 78 feet (or) 23.66 meters, North to South 35 feet (or) 10.62 meters, total extent 2730 Sq.ft (or) 303.33 Sq yds, with constructed RCC residential building bearing Door No.15-311-B, Ground, First and 2nd Floors along with doors, windows and its frames, electrical equipments, electrical services, Municipal Tap, Staircase, Iron Grill and gates, Four Sides walls, Compound wall along with roof and adugu nivesam etc with all easementary rights, Property belonging to Sri G B Karunakar Reddy S/o G.Bhaskar Reddy vide Doc No.1778/1983 dated 13.05.1983 and Rectification Deed Doc No.5734/2016 dated 03.09.2016, SRO Madanapally.	26-11-2025	31-03-2023	Rs. 2,36,46,623/- (Rupees Two Crores Thirty Six Lakhs Forty Six Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Three only). as on 26-11-2025

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower(s) and / or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. The borrowers attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section(8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.
Date: 26-11-2025, Place: Hyderabad
Sd/- Authorized Officer, State Bank of India, SARB

LIVING FOR THE NATION

Patriotism has long been measured by sacrifice, often dramatised through martyrdom and moments of crisis. But a mature civilisation must eventually ask a harder question. What does it mean to live for the nation every single day? True nationalism is not forged only on battlefields or in moments of extreme heroism. It is sustained in ordinary life, in conduct, choices, discipline and collective purpose. To live for the nation is to place it above narrow identities without erasing diversity. It is to understand that caste, creed, region and language are social facts, not political weapons. When society fractures over small differences, it signals not passion but intellectual laziness. Civilisations decline not because of external enemies alone, but because internal cohesion weakens. Unity, therefore, is not a slogan, but a strategic strength. History repeatedly shows that truth alone does not command respect in a competitive world. Moral righteousness without capacity becomes vulnerable. Strength, whether it is economic, cultural, intellectual or social, is what allows values to travel beyond borders. This strength, however, does not emerge from confrontation for its own sake. Wisdom lies in discernment. In knowing when to assert, when to adapt, and when to outgrow conflict altogether. An impulsive society fights every problem whereas a wise one understands which battles elevate and which only exhaust. Living for the nation also means rejecting the false binary between personal success and collective duty. One does not need to renounce the world to serve it. Professional excellence, wealth creation, innovation and ambition are not anti-national. They are essential to nation-building, provided they are anchored in responsibility. A society where individuals rise but forget the collective soon finds that individual success itself becomes fragile. Equally important is cultural confidence. A nation unsure of its own traditions becomes vulnerable to imitation without understanding. Cultural pride is not hostility to the world. It is clarity about oneself. Wearing traditional attire, preserving languages, valuing family bonds and celebrating indigenous thought systems are not acts of regression. They are acts of continuity. Global engagement is meaningful only when rooted in self-respect. Perhaps the most profound idea embedded in the call to live for the nation is the recognition of every individual's importance. Societies are not built only by towering heroes. They are sustained by millions of small contributions. The quiet honesty of a public servant, the ethical choices of a business owner, the discipline of a student, the compassion of a neighbour, these are the invisible bricks of national strength. When people believe their role is insignificant, apathy sets in. When they believe they matter, nations rise. Finally, living for the nation demands emotional maturity. It requires keeping self-interests in check, resisting constant outrage, and cultivating patience. A great nation is not one that is perpetually angry, but one that is self-aware, resilient and purposeful. Patriotism, at its highest form, is civic responsibility, not performative emotion, not symbolic aggression, but sustained commitment. The future will belong to nations whose citizens can balance strength with wisdom, ambition with ethics, identity with unity. The challenge before us is to not just stop romanticising death for the nation, but start dignifying life lived consciously for it.

Modi's Gulf, East Africa Visit SETTING STRATEGIC FOOTHOLDS

■ DR D K GIRI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day state visit to Jordan on 15-16 December, marked a watershed moment in India-Jordan relations, coming 75 years after diplomatic ties were established after a 37-year gap since the last full-fledged visit by an Indian premier. The visit, the first leg of a three-nation tour which also took Modi to Ethiopia and Oman between 16-18 December, was framed by both sides as an opportunity to move the partnership from "symbolic" to "substantive". In a series of social media posts and a joint press briefing in Jordan, Modi highlighted a 'meaningful expansion' of cooperation across a wide spectrum of sectors.

PM Modi's four-day, three nation swing through Jordan, Ethiopia and Oman is meant to give India a diplomatic push in two key regions – the Horne of Africa and the Gulf – at a time when New Delhi is rolling out its 'Link West' and 'Africa Initiative' strategies. At the time of writing (17 Dec), Modi will leave from Ethiopia to Oman. This article, thus, covers the events in Jordan visit while hinting at the purpose of Prime Minister's visits to Ethiopia and Oman.

In Jordan, the most tangible results were the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) signed on 15 December. The Agreements covered renewable energy, water resource management, digital public infrastructure and a twining of UNESCO sites of Petra, Jordan and Ellora in India. The cultural MoU includes the renewal of the India-Jordan Cultural Exchange Programme for 2025-2029 an initiative that the Prime Minister said would 'further deepen people-to-people ties'. In renewable energy, both countries pledged technical cooperation aimed at clean growth, energy security and climate responsibility. This echoes Modi's earlier statement that the partnership 'reflects a shared commitment to clean growth'.

Water security, a critical issue for both arid countries, was addressed with collaboration on water-resources management and development, with an emphasis on sharing best practices in conservation and technological innovation. Digital transformation received a boost through a Letter of Intent on sharing successful digital solutions and a call for collaboration between Jordan's National Payment System and India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI). The latter was part of a broader push to support Jordan's digital public infrastructure and inclusive governance.

Strategically, the visit reinforced a shared stance against terrorism. King Abdullah II conveyed strong support for India's fight against terrorism as both leaders condemned

terrorism in all its forms. This part of the outcome has reportedly sent shivers through the spine of terror organisations and their patrons in Pakistani military. Modi also praised Jordan's 'active and positive role' on the Gaza issue, underscoring the geo-political dimension of the bilateral dialogues. While King Abdullah II acknowledged India's 'rising influence' expressing confidence that their partnership would serve as a model for South-South Cooperation.

On economic and trade prospects, India is Jordan's third-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade valued at about 2.8b USD. Jordan supplies a significant share of India's fertilizer imports – particularly Phosphates and Potash – making it a key component of India's food security strategy. During the talks, Modi proposed raising bilateral trade to US 5b USD over the next five years, a target that reflects the ambition to deepen economic inter-dependence. The Prime Minister's 8-Point vision, presented to the King, outlined cooperation in trade, critical minerals, civil-nuclear energy, and capacity-building programmes, including the training of 10 master trainers over three years. Jordan expressed its intent to join Indian-led global initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Global Bio Fuel Alliance, and the Coalition for Disaster Resilience Infrastructure, signalling a convergence of interests on climate and sustainable development.

The latest trade figures show that India imported 1.2m tonnes of Phosphates and 0.8 m tonnes of Potash from Jordan in the last fiscal year, accounting for roughly 12 per cent of India's total fertilizer imports. Both governments have agreed to launch a Joint Business Council to explore new sectors such as renewable-energy components, agri-tech and pharmaceuticals, aiming to double trade volume by 2030.

On strategic and security dimensions beyond economics, the visit cemented a security partnership that builds on the 2018-defence cooperation MoU. Discussions covered military training, defence-industrial collabora-

tion, counter terrorism, intelligence sharing and potential military exports. Modi's reference to Jordan's "firm stand against terrorism and extremism" highlighted a shared security outlook; while the King's support for India's counter terrorism efforts reinforced mutual trust.

The geo-political context is equally significant. Jordan's participation in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) positions the Kingdom of Jordan as a linchpin in a multi-model connectivity project that could cut shipping cost by up to 30 per cent and reduce transit times by around 40 per cent. Modi's visit, therefore, was not simply a bilateral affair but also a step toward integrating Jordan into a broader regional architecture that links South Asia to the Mediterranean.

In the defence sector, India has offered to supply Jordan with advanced light-weight howitzers and to conduct joint training exercises at the Indian Army's training centre in Rajasthan. A Letter of Intent was also signed to explore co-production of spare parts, which could reduce Jordan's maintenance costs by an estimated 15 per cent over the next decade.

In cultural exchange and people-to-people ties, the Indian Diaspora in Jordan numbers around 17,500 employed mainly in textiles, construction, manufacturing and UN agencies. The twining of Petra and Ellora is presented as a 'Gateway for heritage conservation', tourism and academic exchanges. To nurture ties among the youth, India will offer 50 scholarships under the ICCR programme for Jordanian students to pursue undergraduate studies in engineering and technology with the first batch set to arrive in August 2026.

The outcomes of the December visit open up several avenues for future collaboration such as renewable-energy, joint ventures, with Jordan seeking to expand its solar capacity, Indian expertise through the ISA and private sector partnership could create large scale project, leveraging India's cost-effective solar technology. Similarly, digital infra-

structure and FinTech linking UPI – Jordan Payment-System could serve as a template for broader FinTech cooperation including cross-border remittances, E-commerce platforms and date-security standards.

There is also scope in water-management, technology transfer where Indian companies have notable experience – water recycling, drip irrigation and desalination. Opportunities can easily be explored in joint-investment in exploration of critical minerals and fertilizer that could secure supply chain for India's agriculture sector while providing Jordan with value-added industry.

Scope exists in defence and security collaboration, education and capacity building, tourism and heritage conservation which will boost both economies while supporting Jordan's ambition to become a technology hub. Such present initiatives and future scope collectively aim to transform the India-Jordan relationship into a dynamic, multi-sector partnership that can serve as a catalyst for broader regional integration and sustainable development.

Modi's visit to Ethiopia is timed to mark 70 years of diplomatic relations. Ethiopia hosts the Africa Union headquarter, making it a strategic foothold for India's broader Africa outreach. For Ethiopia, India is one of its top trading partners and a major source of concessional loans. Modi's second visit to the Sultanate of Oman also coincides with 70th anniversary of India-Oman diplomatic ties and following Sultan Haithm bin Tariqu's state visit to India Dec 2023. Oman's location at the mouth of Strait of Hormuz makes it vital for India's security and maritime interest. In short, the Ethiopia leg is about cementing a strategic foothold in East Africa and expanding economic ties, while the Oman leg leverages a long-standing Gulf partnership, energy security and a pending Free Trade Pact, Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that could boost bilateral trade beyond the current 10b USD. Also, such a pact with Oman should deepen India's influence in the Western Indian Ocean. ---INFA

Something is rotten in the state of Goa

GOA, a tiny state on the western coast of India, is the land of my ancestors, who were Hindus. My maternal grandmother told me that our distant ancestors had arrived there with the sage Parshuram, who had fired an arrow that struck the fertile land of Goa, following which the Goud Saraswat community has been living there for aeons. The last time I met my grandmother was in 1952, when I arrived at her home unannounced with my books to prepare for the UPSC's civil services examination. She stayed alone in her huge house with an old woman for company and to cook her meals. I arrived after dusk. To my surprise, all the doors were open. Murders and thefts were rare in Goa in those times.

Goa has progressed into a state comparable to any other in the Indian Union, alive in a sense that it is afflicted by crime and corruption. When the colonial rulers, the Portuguese, were driven out in 1961, the state was merged into the Union of India. The two core services, the IAS and the IPS, were introduced and the judiciary reorganised on the lines of neighbouring states. At first, the local inhabitants were very happy. The new rulers were among their own and till the casino culture gained prominence in Goa, disaffection with those who ruled was minimal. The Congress gave way to the BJP, which ensnared most of

the rival legislators through the lure of office.

It can be safely said that till BJP leader Manohar Parrikar was the Chief Minister, crime and corruption had been checked despite the influx of citizens from northern states and the inroads of the casino culture. The current government led by Pramod Sawant has allowed the hold that Parrikar had on the administration to slip so badly that Herculean efforts will be needed to restore the rule of law. The fire that swept through the nightclub called Birch by Romeo Lane, killing 25 people – including 20 poor migrants who had shifted to Goa to make a living – sums up the sorry state of governance under Sawant's rule.

Two brothers, Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, owned the nightclub, along with "sleeping partner" Ajay Gupta. The land had been leased to them by the owner, Surinder Kumar Khosla, though he knew that no construction was permitted there since it lay astride former salt pans.

It has been reported that Gaurav and Saurabh, both residents of Delhi, share their residential address with 42 firms, most of which are probably shell companies. The Enforcement Directorate would be well advised to ascertain if these firms are conduits for money laundering. As per a report in a leading English newspaper, when electoral bonds were the flavour of the season, the brothers or the companies they



controlled deposited Rs 37 crore in the scheme (which was later scrapped). This needs to be verified.

Now, the BJP, like any other political party, has to collect money by all means, fair or foul, in order to run its electoral machinery. In Goa, nightclubs and casinos present the politicians with easy pickings. The constructions that have changed the face of the Goan countryside are, of course, their prime source of funding.

The Luthra brothers were in Delhi when the fire struck their nightclub built with birchwood and having thatched roofs – all combustible material. They were informed telephonically within minutes of the disaster.

Immediately, they booked a flight to Thailand to avoid arrest. CM Sawant's minions went into top gear and managed to get the brothers arrested from Phuket. The government hoped that the public would forget that the real culprits were those who had shut their eyes to the illegalities.

Who are the officials who permitted the nightclub to operate brazenly on land on which no construction was permitted? If a politician has given the green signal, he or she should be exposed. Why have the erring officials not been named as co-accused along with the Luthra brothers and the landowner?

The officer in charge of the police station where the

nightclub was operating is reported to have sent a written report to his superiors. He alleged that he was told to "keep quiet". If that is so, there is no solace for law-abiding citizens of Goa if the senior officers who should have enforced the law are themselves complicit in the crime committed under their very noses.

My brother retired as the head of the Town and Country Planning Department in the Central government. He worked for five years after retirement as the Director of the School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi. He told me that he is not abreast of the happenings in his previous department in Goa, though he lives in our

ancestral home in the village. I consulted him about this fiasco. His first comment was that the land on which the nightclub was built was an "eco-sensitive zone, subject to tidal action". According to the Goa Regional Plan (2001-21), which was approved in 2008, no construction can be permitted on such land.

The second mandatory requirement that was disregarded was that there has to be a minimum distance of 70 metres between any building and the spot which a fire tender can access. In the Arpora case, the fire tenders had to operate from a distance of 400 metres, which was obviously ineffective. Planners should have pointed out these

requirements to those empowered to permit construction.

Most native Goans feel that there is no governance in their state. It has collapsed beyond repair and only a change of guard can stem the rot.

The CM is attempting to shift the blame to officials. He has suspended a few of them and threatened not to spare any other who has not acted in good faith. He has not pointed a finger at any politician! But without political blessings, these violations could not have occurred. Goa is too small a state for its residents not to be aware of the levels to which corruption has risen.

The 20 migrants who lost their lives represented the India that has not benefited from PM Narendra Modi's development initiatives and the economic advances the country has made. There appears to be a sense of oblivion about the existence of this India when decisions have to be taken, like they have to be taken every day by those who rule. When Covid struck, our Prime Minister abruptly announced a lockdown. He forgot to factor in the poor migrants who were left without shelter and sustenance. PM Modi's acolytes in Goa apparently don't spare a thought for the migrants who go there to make a living. Forgetting about this parallel, poor India is inexcusable.



Maruti Suzuki WagonR surpasses 35 lakh production milestone

· One of the few models to achieve the 35 lakh production figure in India



New Delhi December 2025: Maruti Suzuki India Limited (“Maruti Suzuki”) celebrates a historic milestone of 35 lakh units of cumulative production, across three generations, of the iconic WagonR. This milestone marks the extraordinary journey of trust and emotional connect of the brand with millions of customers across India. Launched in December 1999, the WagonR joins the ranks of Alto and Swift in crossing this significant milestone. Maruti Suzuki WagonR is currently manufactured at the Company’s facilities in Gurgaon and Manesar, in Haryana.Mr. Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, “This achievement is not just a production milestone, but reflects the enduring love and confidence that generations of customers have shown towards brand WagonR. It is rare for a vehicle to receive such acceptance even after 25 years since its launch. The WagonR kept

evolving with the introduction of new technology and features over time, while retaining its original DNA. The WagonR has been highly appreciated for aspects like its iconic tall-boy design, spacious interiors and fuel efficiency, which aptly reflect our customers’ needs and expectations. We are deeply grateful for their continued support and remain committed to providing ‘Joy of Mobility’ for generations to come.”

In Japan, Suzuki WagonR was first introduced in September 1993. Developed as a semi-bonnet style mini wagon, it gained immense popularity as a comfortable and easy-to-use car. It is manufactured across Japan, India, Hungary, and Indonesia. At present, WagonR is sold in more than 75 countries and regions across the world, including Japan, India and Europe. In August 2025, the Suzuki WagonR crossed the accumulated sales of 1 crore units.

Murali Manohar Palod Elected Chairman, Govind Narayan Rathii Vice-Chairman of AP Mahesh Co-operative Urban Bank

Hyderabad: Hyderabad District Collector Harichandana Dasari on Friday said that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of AP Mahesh Co-operative Urban Bank Limited were elected unanimously, as all the board members expressed consensus and no objections were raised.The election process was conducted at the Collectorate mini conference hall, where the District Collector participated along with District Revenue Officer E. Venkatachary during the election proceedings for the posts of Chairman and Vice-Chairman.The Collector informed that two nominations were received for the posts of Chairman and Vice-Chairman and, as no member expressed any objection, Murali Manohar Palod was unanimously elected as Chairman, while Govind Narayan Rathii was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman.She



also directed all the elected Board of Directors of AP Mahesh Co-operative Urban Bank to submit their election expenditure statements within the stipulated time, as per the prescribed rules. Since the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were elected unanimously by the Board members, the District Collector stated that the report would be forwarded to the Co-operative Elections Authority for approval.On the occasion, the newly elected Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Directors expressed their gratitude to the District Returning Officer for conducting the election smoothly.

Samsung Solve for Tomorrow 2025: Young Innovators Drive Tech for Sustainability

For decades, environmental sustainability was seen as sacrifice and compromise. With the support and mentorship from Samsung’s flagship education programme, Samsung Solve for Tomorrow (SFT) 2025, in partnership with IIT Delhi, the young innovators flipped the narrative: technology can drive prosperity while protecting the planet. Thousands of students across India designed cutting-edge solutions under the theme “Environmental Sustainability via Technology” - focusing on resource conservation, waste management, clean water, and carbon reduction.

Here’s what this new generation of changemakers achieved:

1. Innovation Rooted in Urgency and Growth
Students developed technologies that conserve water, energy, waste, and biodiversity, turning sustainability into a catalyst for economic and social progress.
2. Theme Winner Prithvi Rakshak: Transforming Waste into



Wealth
The standout Samsung Solve for Tomorrow 2025 winner, Prithvi Rakshak, is a modular AI-powered vermicomposting system developed by three teenagers - Abhishek Dhanda, Prabhkirat Singh, and Rachita Chandok. Their innovation automates organic waste conversion into nutrient-rich compost with smart sensors, making it suitable for schools, markets, and communities.
3. Other Leading Innovations Challenging Environmental Issues
Additional top teams tackled critical environmental challenges:
Drop of Hope (Uttar Pradesh): A device to extract water from air

using solar atmospheric condensation
Renewable Desalination (Assam): Low-cost & energy efficient desalination system to deliver clean drinking water SmaBlu (Gujarat): AI platform to optimize enterprise data infra & reduce carbon footprint in cloud infrastructure VOXMAPS (Madhya Pradesh): LiDAR & HD imaging sensors mounted drones to collect pollution data & create Voxel maps
4. Support for Scaling Impact
Winners received up to 1 crore incubation support at IIT Delhi, with additional awards for top teams, including 1 lakh grants, Goodwill Awards and Young Innovator Awards and Samsung

Galaxy Z Flip smartphones for the top 20 teams.

5. A Growing, Decentralised Innovation Ecosystem

The 2025 edition saw increasing participation from Tier-II and Tier-III cities, with alumni mentoring newcomers and access to IIT Delhi’s FITT Labs for prototype development. This reflects the spread of STEM innovation beyond metropolitan hubs.

6. Empathy-Driven, Responsible Innovation
Students were guided through design-thinking focused on solving real-world problems responsibly, prioritizing societal impact and sustainable AI solutions.

7. Legacy of Changemaking

Since 2010, Samsung Solve for Tomorrow has engaged 2.9 million young innovators in 68 countries, empowering students with mentorship and tools to create impactful STEM solutions. India’s diverse and vibrant contribution continues to grow year on year.

Vi Partners with Niyo to Offer Zero Forex Markup Cards for International Travellers



Leading telecom operator Vi has partnered with travel banking fintech Niyo, to Provide Zero Markup Forex Card delivery for Vi customers travelling abroad this holiday season. This first-of-its-kind partnership by a telco, enables Vi customers travelling overseas on holiday, business or higher education to receive a Niyo Zero Forex Markup Card delivered to their doorstep within 24 hours.

With the Niyo partnership, Vi is adding a strong financial convenience layer to this travel ecosystem. Vi Customers can request for the Zero mark-up Niyo Forex card on Vi App. A Niyo executive will assist Vi users with KYC verification, card setup and a trial transaction. Customers can input their name and pin code details to determine if their location is serviced by Niyo Express. For locations outside of the Express purview, customers can download the Niyo App and activate their card digitally.

As a special introductory offer for Vi customers, Niyo is offering their flagship Niyo Premium service (worth Rs 999/ year) completely free, which gives travellers a host of benefits such as: Rs 10,000 worth of annual savings on travel

Zero convenience fee on visa &

flight bookings on Niyo app
Flat 10% off on international hotels on Niyo app
1 free lounge access every quarter
1 free ATM withdrawal every quarter

Accepted in more than 180 countries, the Niyo Forex card processes international transactions at base exchange rates and helps customers avoid the usual 3 to 5 percent forex mark-up that increases the cost of spending overseas.

This new initiative aligns with Vi’s continued focus on strengthening its International Roaming proposition combining first in Industry propositions for the benefit of International Travellers. Recently Vi had announced special roaming discounts for secondary members on Vi Family Postpaid plans, whereby Secondary members receive a 10 percent discount and REDX Family users receive a 25 percent discount on IR packs. Vi also partnered with Aditya Birla Health Insurance to offer Travel Insurance cover of Rs.40 Lakh, at an attractive price point — just Rs.285 with all Vi IR Packs. Additionally, Vi’s partnership with Blue Ribbon Bags extends delayed/lost baggage protection with compensation of up to Rs 19,800 per bag at just Rs 99.

Flipkart Acquires Majority Stake in Minivet AI to Accelerate GenAI-Powered E-commerce Innovation

Bengaluru - December, 19 2025: Flipkart, India’s homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced it executed definitive documents to acquire a majority stake in Minivet AI, an innovative AI/ML solutions provider founded in 2024. The acquisition is a strategic move to build and invest in core Generative AI (GenAI) capabilities, at a time when e-commerce is rapidly shifting towards visual, conversational, and AI-led discovery. This is expected to accelerate the transition to a more intuitive, interactive, and immersive shopping experience for e-commerce platforms, including Flipkart.

Minivet AI focuses on generative video for e-commerce, transforming static product catalogs into rich, engaging video content at scale. Built on a foundation of sophisticated model orchestration and deep performance optimization, the platform delivers quality results at a fraction of traditional production costs. Beyond video, Minivet AI offers a broader suite of e-commerce AI capabilities—positioning the company as a full-stack AI partner and a foundational GenAI capability for online retail platforms.

Speaking on the acquisition, Aditya Rachakonda, Founder, Minivet AI, said, "This partnership



with Flipkart is a pivotal moment for Minivet AI. It allows us to accelerate the deployment of our proprietary GenAI solutions, from catalog videoification to conversational search, directly onto India’s leading e-commerce platform at scale, making shopping more intuitive and immersive for millions of customers." This investment strengthens Flipkart’s long-term technology portfolio, ensuring the company remains at the forefront of digital commerce innovation. This acquisition is subject to completion of customary closing conditions.

Ravi Iyer, Senior Vice President

- Corporate, Flipkart, said, "Acquiring Minivet AI is a strategic investment that will enhance Flipkart’s core GenAI capabilities by the integration of niche talent and advanced proprietary technology, which includes leading solutions for catalog videoification and semantic search. These are critical for addressing the rising industry trend of visual-first and video-first commerce, ultimately driving higher customer engagement, conversions, and long-term innovation across the Flipkart platform and, over time, the wider Flipkart Group ecosystem."

Celebrate Christmas in Dubai: Festive Dining Experiences Across the City



Dubai: This Christmas season, Dubai’s top hotels are offering an array of festive dining experiences, combining culinary delights, entertainment, and the city’s magical holiday ambiance. From elegant brunches to lavish dinners, families and friends can indulge in seasonal flavours at some of the city’s most luxurious venues. St. Regis Downtown Dubai – BASTA! & Ginori Terrace: Guests can enjoy Italian festive specials, live stations, and canal views from December 4th–30th. Christmas Eve Dinner is priced at AED 450 (including house beverages), while Christmas Brunch on December 25 ranges from AED 395 for children to AED 850 for premium adults.Royal Mansour Marrakech – La Gastronomie: From late December to early January, enjoy refined festive

menus with French, Italian, and Moroccan classics. Pricing varies depending on à la carte or set menus. Ciel Dubai Marina – East 14: Celebrate Christmas Eve on December 24 with bold Asian flavours, live dim sum, and sushi stations overlooking Dubai Marina. Prices range from AED 325 to AED 595 per adult, with discounts for children under 12. Palazzo Versace Dubai – Giardino: Enjoy an international buffet on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (24–25 December) with prices from AED 275–445 per adult, while children aged four and below dine free. Armani Hotel Dubai – Armani/ Mediterraneo: Christmas Eve Buffet on December 24 features seasonal favourites in a cozy setting, priced at AED 420 per adult with soft drinks, and discounts for children aged 4–6. Rixos Premium Saadiyat Island: Christmas Eve Dinner on December 24 (AED 985) and Christmas Day Brunch on December 25 (AED 895) offer festive elegance, live music, and family-friendly celebrations. From luxury Italian feasts to international buffets and Asian delights, Dubai’s hotels are creating memorable holiday experiences for every taste, making this Christmas season a true culinary celebration.

Century Mattresses & Sofas Sleep Specialist Store Inaugurated in Karimnagar

Karimnagar Century Mattresses, India’s renowned Sleep Specialist brand with over three decades of expertise, inaugurated its new Century Mattresses & Sofas Sleep Specialist Store at Ashok Nagar, Karimnagar, on Thursday. Located at Bomma Venkanna Building, Ashok Nagar, the exclusive store aims to provide customers with expert-backed, world-class sleep and comfort solutions under one roof. As part of the inaugural celebrations, the company announced special launch offers, including a flat 25% discount on mattresses and sofas, along with a complimentary pillow set and bedsheet with every mattress purchase.The store was inaugurated by Uttam Malani, Executive Director, Century Mattresses and Sofas, in the presence of Gouri Shetty Srinivas and



Kanna Santosh, Proprietors of Sai Balaji Furniture. The opening witnessed a strong response from customers and industry representatives.Speaking on the occasion, Uttam Malani said the Karimnagar store marks

another important step in strengthening Century’s presence in Telangana and offering customers a personalised, immersive shopping experience to help them choose the right sleep solutions.

China backs Venezuela

China voiced political support for Venezuela Thursday after the United States ordered a blockade of sanctioned oil tankers, denouncing what it called 'unilateral bullying' but offering no details on any concrete assistance to its long-time oil supplier



Beijing opposes all forms of unilateral bullying and supports countries in safeguarding their sovereignty and national dignity

Beijing, Dec 19 : China opposed what it said was “unilateral bullying” after Washington ordered a blockade of sanctioned tankers entering and leaving oil-rich Venezuela, but did not say exactly how it would come to the South American country’s aid or offer any refuge for its embattled leader. Earlier this week, US President Donald Trump ordered a complete blockade of all sanctioned oil tankers attempting to leave Venezuelan waters, and those arriving, as Washington massed troops and warships in the region. China is the biggest buyer of Venezuelan crude, which accounts for roughly 4% of its imports, with shipments in December on track to average more than 600,000 barrels per day, analysts have said. Beijing opposes all forms of “unilateral bullying” and supports countries in safeguarding their sovereignty and national dignity, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Venezu-

elan counterpart Yvan Gil on a phone call Wednesday. Wang did not name the United States or Trump in the official readout of the call. Wang also did not elaborate on the form or extent of the support that China might or could offer to Venezuela, with which Beijing previously said it had forged an ironclad friendship. The US is squeezing Venezuela’s principal source of revenue in its attempt to target terrorism, drug smuggling and human trafficking, according to Trump. Last week, the US Coast Guard seized an oil tanker off the coast of Venezuela. President Nicolas Maduro has said the US wants the OPEC nation’s crude oil resources, and the military build-up was to overthrow him. In an interview with Politico, Trump said Maduro’s days were “num-

- ▶ US has ordered blockade of sanctioned oil tankers moving in and out of Venezuela
- ▶ China says opposed to ‘unilateral bullying’
- ▶ China’s foreign minister spoke to Venezuelan counterpart on the phone
- ▶ UN and other nations urge de-escalation and dialogue

bered”. For years, China has extended credit lines to Venezuela under loans-for-oil deals. In a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Moscow this year, Maduro told Xi that Venezuela was looking forward to expanding cooperation in trade and energy. At the same time, Beijing has been making an intense effort to co-exist with the US, its most important trading partner. After months of acrimonious dispute over trade and tariffs, Trump and Xi in October managed to hammer out a consensus on how to handle thorny trade issues. China says it opposes any acts that violate the UN Charter or encroach on the sovereignty and security of other countries.

FRESH TENSIONS WITH CHINA US rolls out \$10bn Taiwan arms deal

Washington, Dec 19: The Trump administration has announced a massive package of arms sales to Taiwan valued at more than \$ 10 billion that includes medium-range missiles, howitzers and drones, drawing an angry response from China. The State Department announced the sales late Wednesday during a nationally televised address by President Donald Trump, who made scant mention of foreign policy issues and did not speak about China or Taiwan at all. US-Chinese tensions have ebbed and flowed during Trump’s second term, largely over trade and tariffs but also over China’s increasing aggressiveness toward Taiwan, which Beijing has said must reunify with the mainland. The eight arms sales agreements announced Wednesday cover 82 high-mobility artillery rocket systems, or HIMARS, and 420 Army Tactical Missile Systems, or ATACMS — similar to what the US had been providing Ukraine during the Biden administration to defend itself from Russia — worth more than \$4 billion. They also include 60 self-propelled howitzer systems and related equipment worth more than \$4 billion and drones valued at more than \$1 billion. Other sales in the package include military software valued at



more than \$1 billion, Javelin and TOW missiles worth more than \$700 million, helicopter spare parts worth \$96 million and refurbishment kits for Harpoon missiles worth \$91 million. China’s Foreign Ministry attacked the move, saying it would violate diplomatic agreements between China and the US; gravely harm China’s sovereignty, security and territorial integrity; and undermine regional stability. “The Taiwan independence’ forces on the island seek independence through force and resist reunification through force, squandering the hard-earned money of the people to purchase weapons at the cost of turning Taiwan into a powder keg,” said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun. “This cannot save the doomed fate of Taiwan independence’ but will only accelerate the push of the Taiwan Strait toward a dangerous situation of military confrontation and war. The US support for Taiwan Independence’ through arms will only end up backfiring. Using Taiwan to contain China will not succeed,” he added.

India resumes visa services in Dhaka



Dhaka, Dec 19: India Thursday resumed operations at its visa application centre in Dhaka, a day after closing it over escalated security concerns, but closed two other identical facilities in other parts of Bangladesh as anti-India protesters tried to march towards the Indian missions there. The Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) at southwestern Khulna and northwestern Rajshahi were closed on the grounds of security concerns amid strong protest marches towards the facilities that were stopped by security officials. In Rajshahi, “Bharityo Adhipotto Birodhi July 36 Mancha” tried to march towards the Assistant High Commission of India but police in riot gear blocked them near the mission

when a brief clash occurred as the protestors tried to break through the security barricades. The protesters raised anti-India slogans, according to the videos on social media. In Khulna, the protestors under a banner called ‘Unity Against Indian Hegemony’ tried to march towards the Assistant High Commission of India but army soldiers and navy sailors joined hands with police to thwart the marchers. “We had enforced a stringent vigil preventing them (protestors) from proceeding towards the mission. They left the scene after staging a ‘peaceful’ rally,” Khulna’s deputy commissioner of police Tajul Islam said. The reports said in both the rallies the protestors accused India of sheltering deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and demanded her immediate return to be exposed to gallows.

Trump lists administration’s successes in year-end address

New York/Washington, Dec 19: US President Donald Trump touted his administration’s successes on immigration and in ending eight wars as he listed the various accomplishments of his second term in the White House in a year-end address to the nation. “Eleven months ago, I inherited a mess, and I’m fixing it,” Trump said as he began his 19-minute special prime time address to the nation Wednesday. Trump listed his administration’s achievements since he took office for a second term in January this year, including securing the border, “reverse migration”, bringing prices down, ending conflicts, using tariffs to bring billions of dollars into the country, enabling job creation and cracking down on immigration. “I’ve restored American strength, settled eight wars in 10 months, destroyed the Iran nuclear threat and ended the war in Gaza, bringing for the first time in 3,000 years peace to the Middle East, and secured the release of the hostages, both living and dead,” Trump said.



While Trump did not name the conflicts, he has throughout the year repeated his claim innumerable times that he ended wars between India and Pakistan, Thailand and Cambodia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Kosovo and Serbia, Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia, as well as Rwanda and the Congo. He also touted his administration’s success in dealing with migrants coming into the country from around the world, taking up American jobs and driving up housing costs. Trump said that a major factor in driving up housing costs was the “colossal border invasion”. “We have never been invaded. This is the worst thing that frankly, in my opinion, the worst thing that the Biden administration did to our country is the invasion at the border,” he said. Trump said the Biden administration and its allies in Congress brought in “millions and millions” of migrants and gave them taxpayer-funded housing, while the rent and housing costs for Americans skyrocketed. He claimed that over 60 per cent of growth in the rental market came from foreign migrants. “At the same time, illegal aliens stole American jobs and flooded emergency rooms, getting free health care and education paid for by you, the American taxpayer,” Trump said. He claimed that for the first time in 50 years, the US is now seeing “reverse migration, as migrants go back home, leaving more housing and more jobs for Americans.” In the year before his election, all net creation of jobs was going to foreign migrants. “Since I took office, 100 per cent of all net job creation has gone to American-born citizens. Hundred per cent,” he said.

Deposed PM Oli re-elected party chair

Kathmandu, Dec 19: Ousted Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli was Thursday elected as the CPN-UML’s chairman for the third consecutive term with a two-thirds majority. Oli was elected the Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) chairman in a contest held three months after his government was forced to resign following a student-led protest. During the 11th general convention of the party that concluded Thursday, Oli secured 1,663 votes against his opponent Ishwor Pokharel, who received 584 votes, according to party sources. Pokharel, 71, had received the backing of former President Bidya Devi Bhandari, his rival in the presidential election. The convention started with a public meeting in the Bhaktapur district and concluded with the election of Oli and other office bearers and central committee members of the party. Shankar Pokhare, from Oli’s panel, was elected to the post of General Secretary of the party for the second term. He defeated Surendra Pandey, former finance minister, who contested the election from Pokharel’s panel. Among 19 office bearers of the party, 17 were elected from Oli’s panel, while two were from Pokharel’s panel. Prithvi Subba Gurung, Bishnu Paudel, Raghujhi Panta, Ram Bahadur Thapa and Gokarna Bishta have been elected to the post of Vice President. Among them, only Gokarna Bishta is from Oli’s rival team. Similarly, among three deputy general secretaries, Lekh Raj Bhatta, Yogesh Bhattarai and Raghuraj Mahaseth, Bhattarai is from Pokharel’s team. All nine secretaries were elected from Oli’s team. Hundreds of cadres belonging to Oli took out a victory procession in Kathmandu’s Bhrikutimandap, where the general convention was held, soon after the election results were out.



CEPA SIGNED

India and Oman formalised a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), that aims to boost trade, investment, and cooperation across key sectors

Muscat, Dec 19: India and Oman Thursday signed a free trade agreement, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and explored ways to further add greater depth to the bilateral Strategic Partnership. Modi, who arrived in Oman Wednesday on the last leg of his three-nation tour, was welcomed by Sultan Haitham at Al Baraka Palace in Muscat before their one-on-one talks and the



delegation-level meeting. “Today, we are taking a historic step forward in India-Oman relations, whose positive impact will be felt for decades to come. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will energise our ties in the 21st century,” Modi said. He said the agreement will give new momentum to trade, investment and open new op-

portunities across different sectors, and greatly benefit the youth of both nations. Modi thanked the Sultan for his efforts in finalising the historic CEPA, as he described it as “a new and golden chapter” of bilateral cooperation. They also exchanged views on regional and global developments and reaffirmed their commitment to regional peace and stability. They reaffirmed

Today, we are taking a historic step forward in India-Oman relations, whose positive impact will be felt for decades to come. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will energise our ties in the 21st century-
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER, INDIA

their commitment to further enhancing the defence and security collaboration, including in the maritime domain. The CEPA - signed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Oman’s Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef - is expected to enhance market access, promote investments, and strengthen cooperation across key sectors. The pact will increase trade between the two countries by reducing trade barriers and

creating a stable framework. It will unlock opportunities in all major sectors of the economy, enhance economic growth, create jobs and boost investment flows between both countries. This is Oman’s second FTA with an individual country and the first FTA they have done in about 20 years. Modi said he also discussed with Sultan Haitham ways to further boost trade and investment linkages. “Financial services also offer great scope for working together. We talked about how sectors like energy, critical minerals, agriculture, fertilisers and healthcare have rich potential for closer ties,” he said. “We discussed how cultural and people-to-people linkages can be enhanced. This includes student exchange programmes and other such ways to ensure our youth connect regularly,” Modi said.

India Beat SF, Win T20I Series 3-1



Team India players celebrate with the trophy after winning the series against South Africa at the end of the fifth Twenty20 international cricket match at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad...

AHMEDABAD: Hard-hitting India batters Tilak Varma and Hardik Pandya hammered fine half-centuries while spinner Varun Chakravarthi snared four wickets as India defeated South Africa by 30 runs to clinch the five-match T20I series 3-1 here on Saturday. With Varma (73 off 42 balls) and Pandya (63 off 25 balls) in full flow, India scored a competitive 231 for 5 and then restricted the visitors to 201 for 8. The Proteas were in the match till opener Quinton de Kock (65 off 35 balls) and Dewald Brevis (31 off 17) were at the crease, but the visitors lost wickets quickly once the two departed in successive overs.

Chakravarthi (4/53) removed the dangerous Aiden Markram and Donovan Ferreira off consecutive deliveries in the 13th over to take the fight out of the South Africans by reducing them to 135 for 5 from 118 for 1 in 10 overs. Earlier, skipper Suryakumar Yadav's poor run with the bat continued as he scored just five runs but India still put up a big total with Varma and Pandya sharing a 115-

run stand for the fourth wicket.

Brief scores.
India 231 for 5 in 20 overs (Abhishek Sharma 34, Sanju Samson 37, Tilak Varma 73, Hardik Pandya 63; Corbin Bosch 2/44).
South Africa 201 for 8 in 20 overs (Quinton de Kock 65, Dewald Brevis 31; Varun Chakravarthi 4/53, Jasprit Bumrah 2/17).

Team India produced a stunning all-round performance to defeat South Africa by 30 runs in the fifth T20 match, clinching the series in style. Brilliant half-centuries from Tilak Varma and Hardik Pandya, followed by a magical bowling spell from Varun Chakravarthi, powered India to a memorable victory at the Narendra Modi Stadium, where fans witnessed a run-fest.

After winning the toss, South Africa captain Aiden Markram opted to field first. India got off to a solid start with openers Abhishek Sharma (34) and Sanju Samson (37) laying a strong foundation. Captain

With Varma (73 off 42 balls) and Pandya (63 off 25 balls) in full flow, India scored a competitive 231 for 5 and then restricted the visitors to 201 for 8.

Suryakumar Yadav had a brief stay at the crease, but the innings truly came alive when Tilak Varma and Hardik Pandya joined forces.

The duo launched a fierce counter-attack, dismantling the South African bowling with a flurry of boundaries and sixes. Hardik Pandya played a breathtaking knock, smashing 63 runs off just 25 balls, including five fours and five sixes. Tilak Varma anchored the innings beautifully, scoring 73 runs off 42 balls with ten fours and a six. Their

explosive partnership propelled India to a massive total of 231 for 5 in 20 overs. Chasing a daunting target of 232, South Africa responded positively. Opener Quinton de Kock played a superb innings, scoring 65 off 35 balls, while Dewald Brevis contributed a quick 31, keeping the visitors in the hunt. At one stage, South Africa looked capable of pulling off a remarkable chase.

However, India's bowlers rose to the occasion at crucial moments. Jasprit Bumrah broke the momentum by dismissing the dangerous de Kock, while Varun Chakravarthi turned the game on its head with a brilliant spell. The mystery spinner picked up four wickets, including two in a single over, ripping through South Africa's middle order. Bumrah was equally impressive, finishing with figures of 2 for 17 and applying the brakes with disciplined bowling.

In the end, South Africa were restricted to 201 for 8 in their 20 overs, falling short by 30 runs. India's comprehensive victory sealed.

Eng's Ashes hopes hanging by a thread



Adelaide, Dec 19: Nearly four years of Ashes planning was left in smouldering ruins Thursday as England buckled under the heat and the pressure at Adelaide Oval to lurch towards a series-deciding defeat in the third test against Australia.

Australia lead series 2-0, need only a draw to retain urn
Lyon moves to second on Australia's all-time bowling list

On a day when temperatures reached 40 degrees Celsius (104F) and fresh controversy erupted over the "Snicko" review technology, England were 213 for eight at stumps on day two, still 158 runs short of Australia's first innings 371.

England captain Ben Stokes (45 not out) was battling cramp and Jofra Archer (30 not out) showed courage to keep the ninth wicket intact for 45 runs, but the duo's late resistance could do little to make up for failures higher up the order.

Leading 2-0 in the series, Australia need only draw the match to retain the urn they have held since 2017/18.

bilitated back into his work, removing Zak Crawley (9) caught behind in a partnership-breaking dismissal before Lyon struck with two wickets in four balls.

Lyon's second dismissal was a peach, bowling Ben Duckett for 29 with a ball that gripped, turned and beat the outside edge.

It put the wily off-spinner second on Australia's all-time test wickets list on 564, one ahead of pace great Glenn McGrath and behind only Shane Warne.

It's the biggest village that we are organizing in the Milano Organizing Committee.

But there was little sign the hosts would be content with anything less than another crushing win after their comfortable victories in Perth and Brisbane.

There was certainly no easing back into the action for Australia's returning captain Pat Cummins and recalled spinner Nathan Lyon, who combined to blitz England's top order before lunch.

"Pretty proud about how the boys went about it," Lyon told TNT Sports. "Pat's been phenomenal as captain as always, but the effort from our fast bowlers to get them 213-8 off 68 overs it's a pretty big effort so rest up, recover and we'll have another crack in the morning."

England lost 3-5 in a collapse that may have snuffed out the last flicker of optimism from having earlier denied Australia a 400-plus total on a flat wicket. Cummins threw his reha-

Lyon's first wicket was a gift, though, as under-fire number three Ollie Pope surrendered it for three with a flick off his pads caught at midwicket.

SNICKO IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A Snicko controversy had engulfed day one and a new one flared late on day two.

England wicketkeeper Jamie Smith was at the centre of the confusion, first surviving a caught-behind appeal when on 16 then being given out caught behind for 22 when he appeared to completely miss a Cummins ball.

With third umpire Chris Gaffaney having to rule on both decisions, Snicko only appeared to muddy the waters rather than clear up matters.

Australia paceman Mitchell Starc said Snicko needed to be "sacked" after Smith's earlier reprieve, while Smith left the field furious when he was eventually dismissed.

When focus shifted back to the cricket, England ended up losing 3-9 to fall to 168 for eight courtesy of a two-wicket burst from pacer Scott Boland before Archer joined Stokes to push England past 200.

Inter-CIL Volleyball Tournament 2025-26 hosted

Ranchi, Dec 19: The three-day Inter-CIL Volleyball Tournament 2025-26 was inaugurated Tuesday at the CMPDI Sports Ground, Ranchi, and will continue till December 19.

The tournament was formally opened by Director (Technical/CRD) Shankar Nagachari, Director (Technical/ES) Rajiv Kumar Sinha, Director (Technical/RD&T) Nripendra Nath, and Chief Vigilance Officer Pankaj Kumar, who interacted with the players and inaugurated the event by serving the ball.

Several senior officials, sports enthusiasts, and mem-



bers of the CMPDI fraternity were present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, the dignitaries underlined the importance of sports in fostering teamwork, discipline, physical

fitness, and camaraderie among employees. All participating players took an oath to uphold sportsmanship and fair play.

The tournament aims to strengthen inter-organisation-

al relations and promote unity, health, and team spirit within the Coal India family.

In the opening match, MCL-Sambalpur defeated CCL-Ranchi by 25-18, 25-18, 25-19. In the second encounter, NCL-Singrauli registered a win over WCL-Nagpur by 25-20, 27-25, 25-12. The third match saw SECL-Bilaspur defeating CMPDI-Ranchi by 25-18, 26-24, 25-20.

Teams from all Coal India Limited subsidiaries are participating in the tournament, including host CMPDI (Headquarters) Ranchi and SCCL-Kothagudem, highlighting a spirit of healthy competition and unity across the organisation.

Sat-Chi get closer to knockouts

Hangzhou, Dec 19: India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty dished out a solid performance to outwit the Indonesian pair of Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri in their second Group B match to inch closer to the knockout stage of the BWF World Tour Finals here Thursday.

The former world No 1 Indian pair shored up their defence and dominated the proceedings to register a 21-11, 16-21, 21-11 win over world No 8 Alfian and Fikri in the men's doubles match that lasted an hour.

With two wins from two matches, Satwik and Chirag



now lead the group and have built a considerable advantage in points difference.

Third seeds Satwik and Chirag will face second seeds Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in their last group match Friday.

Facing a pair known for their exceptional front-court skills, the onus was on Chirag, but he was ably supported by Satwik, who was simply flawless in the evening.

NAT'L SHOOTING C'SHIP

Ketan wins women's 10m air pistol gold

New Delhi, Dec 19: Haryana's Ketan Malik overcame a strong field comprising Paris Olympic double medallist Manu Bhaker and was crowned the women's 10m air pistol national champion here Thursday. Ketan struck the gold with 240.0, ahead of Meenu Pathak of Delhi, who took silver with 238.4, and Surbhi Rao, who claimed bronze with 219.5. In the junior women's category, Vanshika Chaudhary from Uttar Pradesh emerged on top, edging out Anjali Shekhawat by 0.2 for gold, while Asian Games champion Palak Gulia secured bronze, and Army Marksman-ship Unit's Lakshita Bishnoi claimed the youth title after a narrow 0.6 victory over Rashmika Sahgal, with Sanskriti Bana completing the podium. The final followed an extensive qualification phase that saw over 900 shooters compete across 39 relays. Gulia topped the qualification with 582.24x. She was joined at the top by Bhaker, who also shot 582, finishing second on inner-10 count with 19x. In the final, Bhaker finished seventh with 137.2, followed by Anjali Choudhary on 110.1, while Mohini Singh ended fourth with 197.9 and Anjali Shekhawat placed sixth with 157.5.



WFI tightens selection norms for wrestlers

The wrestling body makes presence at national camp must; bars wrestlers from training independently

New Delhi, Dec 19: The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) has unveiled a new selection policy that makes attendance at national camps mandatory to be eligible for national selection, bars wrestlers from training independently and mandates Olympic Games qualifying athletes to appear in a final one-bout selection trial.

The policy was discussed and cleared at WFI's recent General Council meeting during the National Championships in Ahmedabad.

It was also presented to the Sports Authority of India (SAI) for feedback and a review.

No Nat'l camp, no India jersey

"Participation in the National Coaching Camp is mandatory for all wrestlers, including elite and iconic athletes. To be eligible for the camp, a wrestler must have won a medal in the National Championship of the concerned year," the policy under the sub-head National Coaching Camps, stated.

"Once selected, wrestlers are required to train exclusively at the designated national camp. No athlete is permitted to train independently at any other venue," it added.

It means that Vinesh Phogat, who recently announced her comeback from retirement, will have to prove herself at the domestic level before being reckoning for a spot in the



national team.

The policy made it clear that a failure to attend the camp will make the wrestler "ineligible to participate in the selection trials".

The policy has also made a provision to keep a list of reserve wrestler, who will be asked to do the national duty in case of injury to selected athlete.

The WFI policy makes it clear that "past performances

will not be considered for selection trials." "We are not going to give trials exemption to anyone. No athlete can sit on past achievements. In the past, few athletes had asked for exemption which is not fair to up and coming wrestlers, WFI will give equal opportunity to all," a WFI official told PTI.

The policy mentions, that "to be eligible, a wrestler must

have won a medal in at least one of the following competitions of the concerned year: National Championship, Federation Cup and any other WFI-recognised competition."

Selection trials must for international competitions

The policy also states that trials are mandatory for teams representing India in major international competitions such as Olympic Games, Asian Games, Continental Championships and World Championships.

The objective of the trials is to provide fair opportunity, assessment of form and fitness, transparency, accountability and merit-based representation.

The WFI asserted that Olympic quotas are awarded to the nation and not to individual athletes and it reserves the right to conduct trials for Olympic participation.

WFI made it clear that quota winner will not compete in the initial trials and will fight it out with the winner of the trials and if he/she loses, will be given a second chance to reclaim the quota.

The selection committee will be headed by the WFI President. It will also include the Secretary General or Vice President and will have either a Dronacharya/Arjuna/Dhyanchand awardee apart from chief coach of that discipline and the foreign coach.

Apart from this, the chief coach can recommend barring a wrestler from trials on count of indiscipline or poor attendance. The selection committee may uphold the recommendation and WFI reserves the right to take disciplinary action against wrestlers found overweight during international competition.

MISSTERIOUS MOVIE REVIEW:

A Suspense Thriller with a Hint of Horror

Missterious is one of the small-budget films in recent times that generated positive buzz ahead of its release. The promotional content clearly hinted at a suspense thriller, and the presence of comedy legend Brahmanandam at the pre-release event further boosted audience curiosity. The film has now hit theatres, and here is a balanced review.

Story
Kondapur Sub-Inspector Ramkhi alias Ram Kumar (Abid Bhushan) goes missing under mysterious circumstances. To crack the case, ACP Anand Sai (Balaraj Wadi) steps in. During the investigation, he questions architect Virat (Rohit Sahni) and his wife Shilpa (Meghna Rajput). What is the connection between Virat and Shilpa and SI Ramkhi's disappearance? Why did Ramkhi visit the villa purchased by Virat? How does Missira (Riya Kapoor) enter the story? And most impor-

tantly, who killed SI Ramkhi? These questions unfold through a series of twists, suspenseful turns, and surprises.
Analysis
While watching Missterious, viewers may be reminded of familiar triangle love stories seen in everyday life. However, the director gives this routine setup a fresh spin by blending it with suspense, thriller elements, and a subtle horror layer. It is evident that the story has been written with care, keeping the genre's demands in mind. Being a suspense thriller, the director avoids unnecessary delays in character introductions and quickly moves into the core plot. Characters are introduced while the story progresses, ensuring that twists arrive at regular intervals. The identity of the killer remains a question mark until the climax, which helps keep the audience engaged. In this aspect, the director



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RATING: 3.5/5

succeeds to a fair extent. The interval block delivers an unexpected twist, pushing the story to the next level. In the second half, the

addition of horror elements intensifies the suspense further. A major twist in the climax changes the course of the narrative and is likely to shock viewers who think they have already figured out the killer.
Performances
Director Mahi Komatireddy has included three songs, all placed appropriately within the narrative, which works in the film's favour. Music director ML Raja provides suitable background score and songs that complement the thriller mood. In terms of performances, most actors deliver solid work. Rohit Sahni, Riya Kapoor, Meghna Rajput, and Abid Bhushan perform convincingly in the lead roles. Balaraj Wadi stands out as the senior police officer with his trademark performance. Jabardasth fame Rajamouli gets a meaningful role and does justice to it, while Gaddam Naveen, though appearing briefly, performs within his

scope. One drawback is that most of the cast are relatively unfamiliar faces, which slightly affects the film's overall impact. With more attention to casting, the film could have benefited further.
Technical Aspects
ML Raja's music enhances the suspense-thriller atmosphere effectively. Cinematographer Parvathu Devendra Suri deserves praise for his visuals. However, since he also handled editing, tighter editing in certain portions would have improved the pace. Production values are decent and suit the scale of the film.
Verdict
Missterious is a suspense thriller that goes beyond the genre by adding a horror touch. Despite a few shortcomings, it manages to keep viewers hooked with its twists and climax. It is a film worth watching at least once for fans of suspense and thriller movies.



'Bad Girlz' teaser released; christmas release set

Bad Girlz' is an entertainer directed by Phani Pradeep Dhulipudi, who has previously directed the successful '30 Rojullo Preminchadam Ela'. The film is being produced under the banners of Prashvitha Entertainment, Neeli Neeli Aakasam Creations, and NVL Creations. Anchal Gowda, Payal Chengappa, Roshini, Yashna, Rohan Surya, Moin and Rohan Surya are the main actors in 'Bad Girlz'. The tagline for the film, 'Kani Chala Manchodlu', contradicts with the title in an interesting way. Sasidhar Nalla, Emmadi Soma Narsaiah, Ramiseti Rambabu, and Ravula Ramesh are producing this film. The film is slated for release as a Christmas gift on December 25. Today, the teaser of

used to think that Munna would surely become a director, and that I should become one too. Just like how the song 'Nee Kallu Neeli Samudram' from my film Uppena became a chartbuster, the song 'Neeli Neeli Aakasham' is an even bigger hit. Music director Anup Rubens has given wonderful songs for this film as well. I am a big fan of the songs from the film Manam. In this movie, Renu Desai garu plays an important role. The fact that she agreed to do this film itself shows how good the story is. The movie releases on December 25—do watch it without fail." Director Phani Pradeep Dhulipudi said, "Our Bad Girlz is a complete entertainer. If hilarious films like Jathi Ratnalu and MAD were made with girls in



this film was released by Buchi Babu Sana, director of Ram Charan's upcoming pan-India film Peddi. Speaking on the occasion, the talented filmmaker said that he knows the story of Bad Girlz and that it's quite interesting. "The climax is highly emotional. When I was working as an assistant director under Sukumar garu, Munna used to come to him, narrate the stories he had written, and get them approved. Back then, I

the lead, they would have been like Bad Girlz. It's a refreshing movie. We released the teaser today to give an idea of what our movie is like. I am very happy that the teaser is out at the hands of my well-wisher, Buchi Babu Sana garu. Whether I am facing difficulties or experiencing happiness, the first person I share it with is him. When I narrated the story of this film to him, he appreciated its content.

Uday Bhaskar Prepares for Career Milestone with Upcoming Film 2nd Innings

Actor Uday Bhaskar, known for his grounded performances and emotional authenticity, has completed shooting for his upcoming film "2nd Innings", which is currently in the post-production phase. With a career spanning 16 years, Uday Bhaskar continues to evolve as a performer who prioritizes depth, realism, and sincerity over spectacle. Over the years, Uday Bhaskar has built a reputation for immersing himself fully into every role he takes on. His acting journey, shaped by consistent learning and dedication, reflects a strong foundation in per-

formance-driven storytelling. Industry observers often describe him as an actor who communicates emotions through silence, restraint, and subtle expressions rather than exaggerated dramatics. In 2nd Innings, Uday Bhaskar's performance is already being spoken about positively within industry circles. While the makers are maintaining complete secrecy around the film's narrative, they emphasize that the emotional intensity of the film rests heavily on the strength of performances. According to the unit, Uday Bhaskar's portrayal stands out as one of the film's key strengths, with

many calling it a potential career-defining moment. His on-screen chemistry with co-star Nakshatra has also been highlighted as a major asset. The interactions between the two actors are said to feel organic and emotionally honest, adding weight to the film's overall impact without relying on overt dramatization. Currently, 2nd Innings is undergoing post-production, with editing, background score, and sound design in progress. Special care is being taken to ensure that the technical elements enhance the emotional layers of the performances. The makers have stated that the film's soundscape and music

are being designed to complement Uday Bhaskar's performance rather than overpower it. Despite being 16 years into his career, Uday Bhaskar remains selective and purposeful in choosing projects. He is known for favoring emotionally rooted roles that allow him to explore human complexity and inner conflict. 2nd Innings reflects this approach and aligns closely with the artistic path he has been carving over the years. As the film moves closer to completion, expectations are steadily building within the industry. Many believe that Uday Bhaskar's work in 2nd Innings will resonate

Ram Gopal Varma: 'Dhurandhar' changes future of Indian cinema



Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma claimed that Aditya Dhar has single-handedly changed the future of Indian cinema with his latest release "Dhurandhar". Calling the movie a "QUANTUM LEAP IN INDIAN CINEMA", he shared on social media, "I believe that @AdityaDharFilms has completely and single handedly changed the future of Indian cinema, be it north or south..That's because Duradhar is not just a film.. it is a quantum leap What Dhurandhar achieves is not just scale, but a never before experienced vision not just in sight but in the mind. Aditya Dhar doesn't direct scenes here... he engineers the states of minds of both the characters and us audience (sic)".

RGV shared his opinion about Ranveer Singh and Akshaye Khanna starrer using the following words, "The film doesn't ask for your attention.. it commands it. From the very first shot, there's a sense that something irreversible has been set in motion, and the audience is no longer a spectator but an accomplice to the happenings on screen. This is a film that refuses to be polite. The writing cuts with intent, the staging breathes menace, and the silences are as weaponized as the thunderous sound effects." Ram Gopal Varma added that Dhar, as a filmmaker, understands that the power of storytelling does not lie in the volume, but in pressure building. He further went on to praise the performances in the film, which, according to him, have been designed to linger long after the audience leaves the theatre. "Characters walk in carrying history on their shoulders, and the film trusts the audience enough to read their scars rather than spoon feed their backstories. This confidence which could be easily mistaken for arrogance is precisely what marks Dhurandhar as a turning point for Indian cinema," added the director. Ram Gopal Varma pointed out that during the time when most filmmakers believe in dumbing down their films, Dhar is someone who assumes that the audience is intelligent, "the highest respect a director can pay to an audience". The 'Satya' makers said that "Dhurandhar" is not a film chasing trends or validation.

