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Illegal migrants issue: PM Modi slams Congress, says BJP reviving Assam after years of neglect



WORLD | NEWS

Can't be forced to return, faces political assassination: Sheikh Hasina



SPORTS | NEWS

Neeraj hits 90m high but no end to country's doping woes

INBRIEF

Air India's Mumbai-bound B777 plane returns to Delhi due to right engine issue

NEW DELHI: A Mumbai-bound Air India's Boeing 777 aircraft returned to the national capital due to a right engine issue on Monday morning, according to sources. The plane, carrying around 335 people, was airborne for nearly an hour before returning to Delhi. The aircraft made an emergency landing, they added. "The crew operating flight AI887 from Delhi to Mumbai on 22 December decided to return to Delhi shortly after take-off due to a technical issue as per standard operating procedure," Air India said in a statement. The aircraft landed safely at Delhi and the passengers and crew have disembarked, the airline said and regretted the inconvenience caused due to this unforeseen situation.

Delhi's air quality 'very poor'

NEW DELHI: Thick grey haze shrouded Delhi on Monday morning, with the air quality remaining in the 'very poor' category with a reading of 366, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). The Air Quality Index (AQI) at seven air quality monitoring stations was 'severe', with Narela logging the highest reading at 418. According to the CPCB, an AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 to 100 'satisfactory', 101 to 200 'moderate', 201 to 300 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor', and 401 to 500 'severe'. Delhi's air quality is likely to remain 'very poor' for the next three days. It is expected to oscillate between 'very poor' and 'severe' categories during the subsequent six days, according to the Air Quality Early Warning System (AQEWS). The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the current average wind speed, which is less than 10 kmph, is unfavourable for the dispersion of pollutants.

Gold Rates in Hyderabad Soar to Unprecedented Highs on Monday

HYDERABAD: Gold prices in Hyderabad surged to record levels on Monday, reflecting both domestic and international market trends. The price of 24-carat gold crossed Rs.6,600 per gram, while 22-carat gold reached Rs.6,050 per gram, marking an unprecedented high for the city. Market analysts attributed the rise to a combination of factors, including weakening rupee, increasing global demand, and geopolitical uncertainties affecting international gold prices. Jewellery retailers reported a significant spike in enquiries, though purchases remained cautious due to the steep rates. Silver prices also saw an uptick, with 1 kg silver trading at Rs.78,500, up from Rs.77,200 on Friday. Traders advised buyers to monitor market trends before making large purchases. The sharp rise in gold prices has triggered concerns among investors and households planning to buy gold for upcoming weddings and festivals.

Revanth releases Gram Panchayat representatives' handbook

HYDERABAD (TSIT): Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Monday formally released the "Gram Panchayat Public Representatives' Handbook", a comprehensive guide aimed at strengthening grassroots governance across the State. The event was attended by Ministers Seethakka, Uttam Kumar Reddy, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Jupally Krishna Rao, Konda Surekha, Vakiti Srihari and Azharuddin, along with Government Advisor Sudarshan Reddy, Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao and senior officials.

Prepared by the Telangana Institute of Rural Development

(TGIRD), the 292-page handbook provides detailed and practical information on the Panchayat Raj Act-2018, outlining the powers, duties and responsibilities of Gram Panchayats.

It serves as a ready reference for elected representatives to effectively discharge their roles and improve delivery of services at the village level.

The State Government announced that the hand-

book will be distributed to all Gram Panchayat public representatives, with the objective of enhancing administrative clarity, legal awareness and accountable local governance.



Cold wave conditions grip parts of Telangana



Hyderabad (TSIT): Telangana continued to reel under cold wave conditions on Monday, with some areas recording single-digit minimum temperatures. Kohin in Sangareddy district was the coldest at 5°C, followed by Reddy Palle in Moinabad mandal of Ranga Reddy district at 6.9°C. Out of 33 districts, 17 recorded minimum temperatures below 10°C.

Other low temperatures included Sirpur (U) in Komaram Bheem Asifabad at 7°C, Arili in Adilabad at 8.3°C, Nawabpet in Vikarabad at 8.7°C, Pothareddipet in Siddipet at 9.5°C, Damaranachan in Medak at 9.5°C, and Gandhari in Kamareddy at 9.7°C. Hyderabad and surrounding suburbs also witnessed a significant drop

in night temperatures, with dense fog reported in parts of Ranga Reddy, Sangareddy, Vikarabad, Medak, Adilabad, and Komaram Bheem Asifabad districts.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an orange alert for Adilabad, Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Sangareddy, Medak, and Kamareddy, where minimum temperatures are expected to range between 5°C and 10°C until December 26. A yellow alert has been issued for districts including Hanumakonda, Hyderabad, Jagtial, Karimnagar, Ranga Reddy, Siddipet, Vikarabad, Warangal, and others, where minimums are likely between 11°C and 15°C.

Rahul should decide on leadership change in Karnataka: CM Siddaramaiah

MYSURU (TSIT): Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said that Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi should decide on the leadership crisis in the state.

Talking to media persons at his native place, Mysuru, Siddaramaiah said, "We are committed to whatever decision Rahul Gandhi takes."

Expressing dismay over the media discussing leadership change, he said, "Why is there a need to ask so many questions?

I have already spoken about this in the Legislative Assembly. There is no need to dis-

cuss it again." Recently, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah declared on the floor of the House that he would complete his tenure.

Responding to media questions about former minister and Congress MLA K.N. Rajanna meeting Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar last

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday lashed out at the Election Commission, alleging that there were "gross errors" in the draft rolls published following the enumeration phase of the SIR in the state.

Addressing a meeting of TMC's Booth Level Agents (BLAs) at the Netaji Indoor Stadium here, she also dubbed it an exercise "rid-

dled with blunders from A to Z". Banerjee alleged that the EC was appointing observers without informing the state government, and working to foster the BJP's interests.

The Election Commission is working only as per the directions of the BJP. There are gross errors in mapping of voters during the enumeration phase of the special intensive revision (SIR) in the state.

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Tributes Paid to Former Union Minister G. Venkateswamy at DGP Office



Hyderabad: Floral tributes were paid to former Union Minister G. Venkateswamy at the Director General of Police (DGP) Office here on Monday, marking his death anniversary. As part of the official programme organised by the State Government, In-charge DGP Mahesh M. Bhagwat participated in the event and offered floral tributes to the portrait of the late leader. Remembering the services of G. Venkateswamy, speakers recalled his lifelong commitment to the welfare of the poor, weaker sections and marginalised communities, and his significant contribution to public life. Following government instructions, similar tribute programmes were held across the State with official honours.

LIC HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Back Office, 201, 2nd FLOOR, KRISHI SAPPHIRE, MADHAPUR, HITECH CITY MAIN ROAD, HYDERABAD 500081, Phone No. 040-4005 2223

DEMAND NOTICE

Regd. Post with Ack. Due

Whereas at the request of you (below mentioned persons in Col. No.2) LIC Housing Finance Ltd., had granted the Housing Loan against the schedule property whose particulars are mentioned in Col. No. 3. As you have failed to discharge the debt due to LIC Housing Finance Ltd., your loan account has been classified as Non-Performing Assets as per the guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India. As the some of the envelopes containing the Demand Notices sent to you by Registered Post calling upon you to discharge the debt, were returned unopened/acknowledged and hence we are issuing this notice through paper publication. If you (below mentioned persons in Col. No.2) fail to pay the amount due mentioned in Col. No. 4 with future interest and incidental expenses, costs as stated below in terms of this notice under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI & ESI Act, 2002 with in 60 days from the date of this notice, LIC Housing Finance Ltd., will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under Section 13 (4) of SARFAESI Act and other applicable provisions. This notice is without prejudice to the LIC Housing Finance Limited right to initiate such other actions or legal proceedings, as it deem necessary under any other provisions of law.

Sl. No.	Name & Addresses of the borrowers	Properties under Mortgage	Outstanding amount due (in Rs.)
1	To, 1) Mr. Karthik Reddy Davillapally (Primary Applicant), S/o. Mr. Venkata Reddy Davillapally, Ranga Reddy District, Hyderabad, Telangana - 500092, Mob. - 7989135183, 8884744474 Also At: Mr. Karthik Reddy Davillapally (Primary Applicant), S/o. Mr. Venkata Reddy Davillapally, ORACLE INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED, # 67, Salarpuria Cyber Park, Hitech City, Hyderabad, Telangana-500081, Email: mikerthikreddy122@gmail.com, Tel: 9491630806(A1P2).	All that the Part and Parcel of the R.C.C. Roof House bearing No. 31-248NPA/1 (PTIN No. 117703412) on Plot No. 248 North Part, admeasuring 21 Sq. Yards, and Plot No.247 South Part, admeasuring 118 Sq. Yards, in all total land areaing 139 Sq. Yards, equivalent to 112 Sq. Feet, with R.C.C. Roof, in forming Part of Survey No.139, situated at M.C.R. Colony, Badangpet Village, Balapur, Ranga Reddy District, Under Badangpet Municipal Corporation, registration Sub-District L.B. Nagar, belonging to Mr. Karthik Reddy Davillapally. Vida Sale Deed No. 9735/2022 dated 30.09.2022 and bounded as follows: North: Plot No. 247 North Part, South: Plot No. 248 South Part, East: 30' Wide Road, West: Plot No. 263 and 264. Herein after referred to as secured asset.	Rs. 38,91,310.74 (Rupees Thirty-Eight Lakhs Ninety One Thousand Three Hundred and Ten rupees and Seventy Four paisa Only)
	2) Also At: Mr. Karthik Reddy Davillapally (Primary Applicant), S/o. Mr. Venkata Reddy Davillapally, 248 North Part, Plot No 247 South Part, H No. 31-248n-A-1, MCR Colony, Badangpet Village,139, Badangpet Municipal, Balapur, Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Hyderabad - Telangana 500084 Loan No.: 710200014019 DN Date: 16.12.2025.		
	3) Date: 19.12.2025 Place: Hyderabad		Sd/- Authorized Officer

Karnataka Bank Ltd.
Your Family Bank. Across India

Asset Recovery Management Branch, 1st Floor, Phone : 040-23755686/ 23745686
Plot No. 5, Srinagar Colony, Road No. 3, E-Mail : hyd.arm@kbbk.com
Website : www.karnatakabank.com
CIN : L85110KA1924PLC001128

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the Authorised Officer of KARNATAKA BANK LIMITED, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Act, 2002 issued a demand notice under section 13(2) of the said act dated 18.09.2025 calling upon the borrowers /mortagors /co-obligants/guarantors (1) Mrs. Emen Agri Farms, Represented by its Proprietress: Mrs. Purnareva Mounika Reddy, addressed at Sy. No. 209A, Kanekal Mandal, Yeragulla Village-515871, Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh. (2) Mrs. Purnareva Mounika Reddy, W/o Mr. Avula Prabhajana Kumar, (3) Mrs. Avula Nagamani, W/o Mr. Purnareva Mounika Reddy and (4) Mr. Avula Prabhajana Kumar, S/o Mr. Avula Govinda, all Sl Nos. (2) to (4) are addressed at: 8-463/10, Kanekal Crossing, Kanekal-515871, Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh to repay an aggregate amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.6,31,38,133.83 (Rupees six crore thirty one lakh thirty eight thousand one hundred thirty three and eighty three paisa only) under

Nature & Account No.	Balance Outstanding (Rs.)	Rate Of Interest (Compound Monthly)	Interest Calculated Upto	Interest To Be Added From
PS Term Loan A/c 092700180660201	3,37,25,416.69	12.44%	30.06.2025	01.07.2025
PS Term Loan A/c 092700180665901	2,30,98,413.14	11.03%	30.06.2025	01.07.2025
PS Overdraft A/c 092700060012301	63,14,304.00	10.30%	31.08.2025	01.09.2025
Total	6,31,38,133.83			

within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower, mortgagors and the co-obligants/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, mortgagors, co-obligants/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rules on this 18th day of December, 2025.

The borrower, the mortgagors and the co-obligants/guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Karnataka Bank Limited, Bommanahalli Branch for an aggregate amount of Rs.6,51,350.83 (Rupees six crore thirty one lakh thirty eight thousand one hundred thirty three and eighty three paisa only) under

Nature & Account No.	Balance Outstanding (Rs.)	Interest to be added from
PS Term Loan A/c 092700180660201	3,48,94,909.69	01.10.2025
PS Term Loan A/c 092700180665901	2,37,60,390.14	01.10.2025
PS Overdraft A/c 092700060012301	65,14,051.00	01.12.2025
Total	6,51,69,350.83	

plus costs.

(The borrower's 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 asset).

Description of the Immovable Property
Item No. 1: All that part and parcel of commercial property comprised in Sy. No. 209-A6 with land measuring 20887.3 Sq. meters (Ac. 4-98 cents) and poultry unit constructed thereon situated at Yeragulla Village, Kanekal Mandal, Ananthapur, Andhra Pradesh. The property belongs to Avula Prabhajana Kumar. The property is bounded by, East: Bandi Rasta, West: Land of Chavati Hanumanthappa, North: Road and South: Avula Prabhajana Kumar share.

Location: Latitude & Longitude: 14.839836 & 77.003226.

Note: As per Sale Deed No. 2971/2021 the total area is Ac. 5.00. As per registered MDTD, bearing No. 341/2023 the property mortgaged was Ac. 4-98 Cents.

Item No. 2: All that part and parcel of commercial property comprised with land measuring Sy. No. 581 sq.yards (12 cents) comprised in Sy. No. 627 and building constructed thereon bearing Door No. 27-186-1 and 27-186-2, Assmt No. 5538 & 5539, situated at Ward No. 08, Kanekal Mandal, Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh. The property belongs to Avula Prabhajana Kumar. The property is bounded by, East: Land of Rachara Prakash, West: Road and of Gangadhara, North: Road leads to Kanekal to Rayadurga and South: Land of S. Badri Narayana.

Location: Latitude & Longitude: 14.793887 & 77.008067.

Item No. 3: All that part and parcel of residential property with land measuring 10.00 cents comprised in Sy. No. 625-B and building constructed thereon bearing D. No. 26-198, situated at Kanekal Cross Village, Kanekal Mandal, Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh. The property belongs to Avula Prabhajana Kumar.

The property is bounded by, East: Ballari to Kalyanadurg, West: Rasta, North: Plot of B. Prabhajana Reddy and South: House of K. Venkatesulu and Others.

Location: Latitude & Longitude: 14.792066 & 77.007583.

Place: : Kanekal Mandal, Ananthapur District Sd/- Chief Manager
Date: 18-12-2025 Authorized Officer

For, Northern Arc Capital Ltd
Authorised Officer

Telangana

HYDERABAD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2025

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info.southindientimes@gmail.com

KCR returned to political activity only to save his party: Congress minister

Hyderabad: Telangana Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao on Monday said BRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao returned to political activity after about two years only to save his party. On KCR's criticism that Chief Minister A

Revanth Reddy's government failed to pursue the Palamuru-Rangareddy irrigation project, Rao said the former CM failed to complete the project during the BRS regime though he had promised to take it up by "sitting on a chair" near the project site.

Referring to the recent Jubilee Hills bypoll victory by Congress, he said

people rejected the allegations made against the government during the last two years by BRS leaders K T Rama Rao and T Harish Rao. In the recently-concluded Gram Panchayat elections, BRS did not get even one-third seats though it had a tacit understanding with BJP,

he said."KCR realised that the party (BRS) is completely weakened. He (KCR) came out to only save the party's prestige at least to some extent. It is not about Palamuru project or anything. 100 per cent," Rao told reporters. KCR, as chief minister, had said in 2015 that

he would complete the Palamuru-Rangareddy irrigation project by "sitting on a chair" near the project site, but failed to fulfil his promise despite being in power till 2023 and imposing a debt burden of Rs eight lakh crore on the state, Rao alleged.

TPCC Working President Jagga Reddy Meets Wakf Board Chairman on Minority Issues

Hyderabad: Jagga Reddy, Working President of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), on Monday held a meeting with Ajmathullah Hussaini, Chairman of the Telangana State Wakf Board, to discuss issues concerning Muslim minorities in the Sangareddy constituency. During the meeting, Jagga Reddy urged the Wakf Board to take immediate steps for the allotment of four acres of land for a Muslim minority qabristan (graveyard) in Sangareddy. He also requested that Dargah Committees be constituted at the earliest in the Sangareddy Assembly constituency to address local religious and community-related matters effectively. The meeting was attended by Hafeez Shafi and Koono Santosh, who participated in the discussions and supported the demand for addressing long-pending minority issues in the region. Jagga Reddy emphasized the need for coordinated efforts between the Wakf Board and local representatives to ensure timely solutions to the concerns of the Muslim minority community in Sangareddy.

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3	Date: 19.12.2025 Place: Hyderabad		Sd/- Authorized Officer

Hyderabad: Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Monday, December 23, said Power Department employees will receive a dearness allowance (DA) of 17 per cent, benefitting over 71,000 people. Bhatti Vikramarka approved the proposals prepared by senior officials, a press release said. DA is a cost-of-living adjustment allowance paid by the government to public sector employees and pensioners to offset the impact of inflation and rising prices.

The Telangana government reviews and releases DA every year in January and July, and as part of this process, it has been fixed at 17.65 per cent for employees, artisans and pensioners to the offset the impact of inflation and rising prices.

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Hyderabad: Dr Suvarna, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Dr Suvarna on Monday expressed immense happiness and satisfaction over the successful



Tributes were paid to late Uduugula Kattaiah, a resident of Upparapalli village in Chennaraopet mandal of Warangal district, under the aegis of the Upparapalli Education, Employment, Business and Farmers Association. The Dasadina Karma (tenth-day rituals) were held on Monday at his residence. The association's Founder President Puli Devender Mudhiraj attended the programme and paid floral tributes to the portrait of the deceased. He later consoled Kattaiah's sons Uduugula Iaiyah, Ramesh, Srinu and Raju and other family members. Speaking on the occasion, Puli Devender Mudhiraj said that Kattaiah had worked tirelessly throughout his life for his family and raised his children with dedication. He added that the services being rendered by his sons are beneficial to society and deserve appreciation.

DGP SUSPENDED INSPECTOR, SI INCLUDING FORMER ACP

WARANGAL, December 22, TSIT : State Police DGP Shivdhari Reddy has issued orders suspended Nandiram Naik, who previously served as Warangal ACP, and currently CCS Inspector Gopi and SI Vitthal. When they were working under the jurisdiction of Warangal Police Commissionerate, they received a complaint that they had registered false cases in Mattewada Police Station and based on the report given by the authorities, these three police officers were suspended.

Prominent attendees included Guruswamulu Raju Guru Warangal (TSIT): The Shivanagar Sitaramachandra Swamy Temple (Ramalayam) reverberated with the chants of Ayyappa Sharanu during a grand Padipuja organized by the Hariharaputra Ayyappa Seva Samiti on Monday. The Padipuja and Maha Anna Prasada distribution were conducted under the guidance of Umamaheshwar Guruswami, with the Abhishekam of Ayyappa Swami performed as a visually enchanting festival for devotees. Division Corporator Diddi Kumaraswamy also attended and actively participated in the ceremony.

Ayyappa bhajans were led by Karunakar, Kannaiah, and Ella Goud, adding spiritual fervor to the event. Following the rituals, Anna Prasada (biksha) was distributed among devotees.

Prohibited attendees included



Malyala Rajeshwar, Ankam Ravi Tautam Madhu, Bairi Shyam Sundar, Wakala Raju, Bodakunta Krishna, Ankam Srinivas, Battula Satyam, and Manchala Krishnamurthy, President of Arya Vaishya Sangam and General Secretary of Sitaramachandra Swamy Temple. The event witnessed a large turnout, with devotees receiving the blessings of Ayyappa Swami.

Suda Chairman who participated in the swearing-in ceremony of Sarpanches



Narender Reddy assured that he will contribute his best in bringing funds. Suda chairman participated in Kothapally Mandal Elagandal, Karimnagar Rural Mandal Bahadurpate, Chaman Pally, Charla Bhootkurt, Dubba Pally, Fakirpate, Jubilee Nagar, Elabotharam villages.

Sarpanches of other villages were invited but could not attend due to lack of time. Mandal Congress President Comreddy Ramreddy Pittala Ravinder, Block Congress President Saini Tirupati, President of the village department leaders and others participated.

Armored arrangements for Sammakka-Saralamma fair in Karimnagar



electricity, roads, irrigation, municipal, and other departments, the Collector emphasized coordinated planning for all arrangements.

Phase-2 IDE bootcamp for PM SHRI school principals and teachers begins in Hyderabad



Hyderabad, December 22: The Department of School Education and Literacy, in association with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell (MIC), has launched Phase-2 of the Innovation, Design and Entrepreneurship (IDE) Bootcamp for Principals and Teachers of PM SHRI Schools. The three-day bootcamp is being held from December 22 to 24, 2025, at Narsimha Reddy Engineering College, Hyderabad, in collaboration with the Wadhwan Foundation, a leading organization promoting entrepreneurship education. The IDE Bootcamp was jointly inaugurated earlier on December 17, 2025, by Prof. T.G. Sitharam, Chairman, AICTE; Shri Dheeraj Sahu, Additional Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy; and Dr. Abhay Jere, Vice Chairman, AICTE. The programme is being conducted phase-

wise across 25 states and two Union Territories. At the Telangana state-level event, more than 190 principals and teachers participated. The bootcamp features interactive workshops, group activities and immersive working sessions aimed at fostering innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial thinking among school leaders and educators. Participants are being exposed to the "why, what and how" of innovation in education, with a focus on problem-solving, collaboration and practical strategies for driving change in schools. Several dignitaries and officials attended the programme, including Chairman Shri J. Narsimha Reddy, Secretary Shri J. Trishul Reddy, Treasurer Shri Thirlokk Reddy, College Director Dr. A. Mohan, College Principal Dr. R. Lokanadham, Program Coordinator Dr. M. Shoban, along with senior officials from higher education institutions.

ORDER FOR VIGILANCE INQUIRY INTO DESTRUCTION OF CHECKDAMS

KARIMNAGAR, December 22, TSIT : Built on the Maneru river flowing through the districts of Karimnagar, Peddapalli and Jayashankar Bhupalapalli. The state government has decided to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into whether the check dams collapsed or were destroyed.

The Hordula and Tanugula check dams between Karimnagar and Peddapalli districts collapsed on November 21.

A check dam constructed at Somanapally and Vallenkunta, a forest between Peddapalli and Jayashankar Bhupalapalli districts, collapsed on December 17.

The BRS party has accused the sand mafia of blasting these two. BRS chief KCR also mentioned the issue of check dams and said that after coming to power, those who blew them up will be arrested even if they are in the underworld.

Karimnagar, December 22, TSIT : Suda Chairman Komati Reddy Narender Reddy participated as the chief guest in the swearing-in ceremony of the Sarpanches and extended his greetings. To take advantage of the welfare schemes implemented by the state government and work together for development.

Narender Reddy assured that he will contribute his best in bringing funds. Suda chairman participated in Kothapally Mandal Elagandal, Karimnagar Rural Mandal Bahadurpate, Chaman Pally, Charla Bhootkurt, Dubba Pally, Fakirpate, Jubilee Nagar, Elabotharam villages. Sarpanches of other villages were invited but could not attend due to lack of time. Mandal Congress President Comreddy Ramreddy Pittala Ravinder, Block Congress President Saini Tirupati, President of the village department leaders and others participated.

4,881 cases disposed of in National Lok Adalat: Warangal police commissioner

Warangal, December 22 (TSIT): The National Lok Adalat held across the Warangal Police Commissionerate received an overwhelming response, with a total of 4,881 cases disposed of in a single day, said Warangal Police Commissioner Sunpreet Singh.

Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner stated that court orders have been issued to refund more than 82 lakh to victims in cybercrime cases. He said that 82,65,306, which was retained in various bank accounts, has been secured for victims by resolving 159 cybercrime cases, and orders have been passed to hand over the amounts to the affected persons.

Of the total cases settled through conciliation in the special Lok Adalat, 700 were FIR-related cases, 1,669 were e-petty cases, 2,291 were Drunk and Drive and Motor Vehicle Act cases, and 61 were Disaster Management Act cases. The Warangal Police Commissionerate stood sixth in the state in terms of the maximum number of cases disposed of and fourth in resolving FIR-related cases, he added.

Emphasising the importance of reconciliation, the Commissioner said Lok Adalat follows the principle that justice through amicable settlement benefits all parties involved.

KIIT Nanhi Pari's Silver Flight



BY. ACYUTA SAMANTA

The Bhagavad Gita speaks of four paths to spiritual fulfilment: Karma Yoga (the path of action), Jhana Yoga (the path of knowledge), Bhakti Yoga (the path of devotion), and Raja Yoga (the path of meditation). I have always believed myself to be a Karma Yogi, finding purpose through selfless action and service. My professional journey has traversed multiple domains—education, healthcare, tribal empowerment, sports, media, art, cinema, literature, and spiritualism. Each area of contribution has underlined a fundamental truth that genuine transformation occurs when we move beyond celebrating past achievements and remain focused on emerging possibilities. I have dedicated myself to community outreach initiatives like Art of Giving, Kanya Kiran, Kalinga Fellowship, India Against Negativity, Education for All, New Minds New Dreams, Health Empowerment of Rural Odisha, and KIIT Kares, besides my regular work.

Among my various endeavors, KIIT Nanhi Pari holds particular significance as the oldest continuous program. Twenty-five years ago, social worker Mr. Malay

Mohapatra approached me with a compelling vision to create a platform where adolescent girls could explore their inherent capabilities. The ancient Sanskrit text Manusmriti articulates a profound principle: "Yatra naryastu pujiante ramante tatra devatah," meaning where women receive honor, divinity manifests. With zero registration fees and complete institutional support for transportation, lodging, meals, and professional training, we ensured that every participant, irrespective of socio-economic background, could recognize her legitimate place in this forum. Thus began Nanhi Pari, and the rest is history.

KIIT Nanhi Pari integrates with our broader developmental framework, including programs such as Kanya Kiran and Kalinga Fellowship. Societies are measured not by the monuments we build but by the confidence we instill in our daughters. Over the years, KIIT Nanhi Pari has demonstrated that when young women receive resources, recognition, and belief, they redefine what success means. When a thirteen-year-old girl from a remote district walks onto the stage, she carries with her the dreams of countless women who came before her and the possibilities of generations yet to come. I believe every girl arrives with wings; society's responsibility is not to grant flight but to remove the weights that prevent it. KIIT Nanhi Pari does not shape exceptional young women; it reveals the light they have always carried. India's daughters were never powerless - they only awaited belief. KIIT Nanhi Pari and I dare to offer that belief.

The writer is the Founder of KIIT, KISS & KIMS

Telangana

HYDERABAD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2025

3



info.southindientimes@gmail.com

Mock exercise in Warangal Chinna Waddepally pond

WARANGAL TSIT: As part of mock exercise conducted in Chinna Waddepally pond area City Mayor Gundu Sudharani, Warangal District Collector Dr. Satya



Sharada, GWMC Commissioner Chahat Baj Pai and other officials inspected on Monday on the relief efforts undertaken by the SDRF teams during the floods.

INDIAN BANK Indian Bank NALGONDA BRANCH NALGONDA Ph: 9490162072

PUBLIC AUCTION - GOLD ORNAMENTS

The following borrower has taken loan from Indian Bank, Nalgonda Branch by way of pledging the gold ornaments. This is to inform to the borrower to clear the dues to the bank before 02-01-2026 if failed pledged gold ornaments will be sold on 02-01-2026 at bank premises through Public auction. Borrower will be held responsible for any loss or expenditure to the Bank. Interested persons can participate in the auction, subject to bank terms and conditions. The Branch Manager has all the rights to accept/reject the bids and postpone the auction. Bank also reserves the right to recover the balance amount after the auction as per legal proceedings. Please contact in the above mentioned address for terms and conditions before participating in the auction.

SI No	Name & Address of the borrower	Loan Account Number	Loan Amount Sanctioned	Date Of The Loan	Gross Weight	Net Weight	Auction Date	Amount Outstanding As On Date 20-12-2025
1	Mr Nagavelli Ganesh,2-34, Ashok Nagar, Zama e Mased, Nalgonda, Telangana	7798618520	Rs. 1,15,000/-	15-06-2024	30.9	22.0	02-01-2026	Rs.1,28,549/-

INCLUDING PAPER PUBLICATION CHARGES AND OTHER CHARGES

Date:22-12-2025, Place: Nalgonda Sd/-Branch Manager, Indian Bank



HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Corporate office #167-169, 2nd Floor, Little Mount, Saidapet, Chennai- 600 015.

DEMAND NOTICE

You the below mentioned Borrowers, Co-borrowers and Guarantors have availed Home Loans/ Loan Against Property facility (ies) by mortgaging your immovable properties from HFL. You defaulted in repayment; your loan/s was classified Non-Performing Assets/Debt/ Demand Notice under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 for the recovery of the outstanding dues sent on last known addresses however the same have returned unserved. Hence the contents of which are being published here with as per Section 13 (2) of the Act read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 as and by way of Alternative Service upon you.

Details of the Borrowers, Co-borrowers, Guarantor, Securities, Outstanding Dues, Demand Notice sent under Section 13 (2) and Amount claimed there under are given as under

Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ LAN/ Loan Amount/ Branch	NPA Date	Date of Demand Notice & Outstanding Amount
1. Mr. Mohammad Sathar S/o. Mohammad Shabbudin, R/o. H No 1-204/a, Boipalli Village, Midji Mandal , Mahabubnagar District, Telangana- 50357	05-12-2025	Rs.10,61,038/-
2. Mrs. Safiya begu W/o. Mohammad Shabbudin, R/o. H No 1-204/a , Boipalli Village, Midji Mandal, Mahabubnagar District, Telangana- 50357	05-12-2025	Rs.10,61,038/-

Loan Sanction date 10-12-2024 , Sanction Amount Rs.105000/- (Ten Lakh Fifty Thousand Only) Loan No.AP/HDB/KWKT/000000061

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY : All that the House Bearing No. 1-204/A (Assessment No 26) with RCC Roof Ground Floor Plinth Area of 150.00 Sq Fts, Along with Open Area of in Total Admeasuring 143.00 Sq Yards Situated at Boipalli GP & Village Midji Mandal, Mahabubnagar District and Bounded by: EAST: House of Pittala Venkataiah. WEST: 20' wide Road. NORTH: House of Beera Kannanai. SOUTH: Jachherla to Kailakurthy Road.

1. Mr. Nagappa Eesari, S/o. Mappeta R/o. H No. 22-152/1, Yadavanager Colony, Makthi Town, Narayapet District, Telangana - 509208Borrower

2. Mrs. Kousalya Eesari W/o. Nagappa, R/o. H No. 22-152/1, Yadavanager Colony, Makthi Town, Narayapet District, Telangana - 509208Co-Borrower

Loan Sanction date 11-12-2021, Sanction Amount Rs.200000/- (Twenty Lakhs Only) Loan No. AP/HDB/MBNR/A000000657

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY : All that the Above Block No.22, H.no.22-152/1, 22-152/2, in, Situated Within the Limits of Makthi Siva, Makthi Mandal, Narayapet District and Bounded By: EAST: 10 Ft Road. WEST: Plot of Ammu Begum. NORTH: Plot of Ammu Begum. SOUTH: 10 Ft Road.

1. Mr. Srikanth Vadla S/o. Vadla Venaiyah, R/o. H No. 4-291, 4-291, Vallabrapally Village, Midji Mandal, Mahabubnagar, Telangana - 509301Borrower

2. Mrs. Sudhishtha vadla R/o. H No. 4-291, 4-291, Vallabrapally Village, Midji Mandal, Mahabubnagar District, Telangana - 509301Co-Borrower

Loan Sanction date 30-08-2024, Sanction Amount Rs.1000000/- (Ten Lakhs Only) Loan No. AP/HDB/KRNR/A000000012

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY : All that the House Bearing No 4-291, (Assessment No.342), Admesuring 160 Sq Bards, with a Built Up Area of 100.00 Sq Feet, Located At Vasupur Village, Vallabrapally Gramapanchayat, Midji Mandal, Mahabubnagar District and Bounded By: EAST: 3 Feet Seri After House Of Kaitke Krishna Reddy. WEST: G.P. Road. NORTH: 3 Feet Seri After House Of Yedula Ramachandra. SOUTH: 3 Feet Seri After House Of Kavali Anjaneyulu.

1. Mr. Gandom Praveen Kumar W/o. Gandom Ramulu , R/o. No. 6-8/A, Remudula Village, Pangal Mandal, Wanaparthy District-509206Borrower

2. Mrs. Sandhyapaga Laxmi W/o. Gandom Praveen Kumar R/o. H No. 6-8/A, Remudula Village, Pangal Mandal, Wanaparthy District-509206Co-Borrower

Loan Sanction date 21-05-2025 , Sanction Amount RRs.500000/- (Six Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) Loan No. AP/HDB/MBNR/A000001218

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY : All that the House Bearing No 8-8A, (Assessment No.1089), with RCC Roof Ground Floor Plinth Area of 580.00 Sqts, Along With Open Area of in Total Admeasuring 132.00 Sq. Yards, Situated at Remaddula Village, Pangal Mandal, Wanaparthy District and bounded by: EAST: Church. WEST: Bata. NORTH: Plot Of Others. SOUTH: House Of Shanthai.

PFI was trying to procure arms from neighbouring countries: NIA counsel to Delhi court

NEW DELHI: The National Investigation Agency told a Delhi court that the Popular Front of India was trying to procure arms from the neighbouring countries and give arms training to its cadres, a special public prosecutor of the agency has said. The submissions were made before Special Judge (NIA) Prashant Sharma on Saturday, who was hearing arguments on charges against 20 accused Popular Front of India (PFI) leaders.

Mediapersons were not allowed to cover the in-camera court proceedings.

Speaking to reporters outside the court on Saturday, NIA's special public prosecutor Rahul Tyagi said he argued before the court that PFI leaders were trying to procure arms from neighbour-



bouring countries and give arms training to its cadres. On the allegations against the PFI leaders, Tyagi said, "They were also sending their cadres to Syria to learn tactics from ISIS so that

they could be implemented in India. They organised specific hit squads which were keeping a list of BJP, RSS and VHP leaders, and conducting surveillance on them."

The prosecutor alleged that the group was formed with the motive of radicalising the youth. "The case against the PFI and its leadership is that they formed the organisa-

tion to radicalise Muslim youth with a view to establishing a caliphate in India and to establish Sharia law," Tyagi said.

"They were organising camps, giving them arms training, radicalising them, and training them to wage 'Jihad' against India, for which they were collecting funds," the prosecutor said, adding that these submissions were made before the court.

The court has posted the matter for further proceedings on December 23.

In September 2022, the Central government banned the PFI and several of its associates for five years under a stringent anti-terror law, accusing them of having "links" with global terror groups such as ISIS.

BJP pushing 'one nation, one businessman' agenda, promoting monopolies: Akhilesh

LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday accused the BJP-led government of working towards a "one nation, one businessman" agenda, alleging that it was systematically promoting monopolies in the country's economic and political life.

In a post on X, Yadav claimed that the BJP wanted to concentrate businesses in the hands of a few industrialists to ensure ease of political funding. "Moving towards 'one nation, one businessman' is the BJP government's secret agenda," he said.

"Under the principle of 'one business, one source of domination', BJP leaders want to bring every sector of the country's economy into the hands of a select few so that

they do not have to go to different places for funds," Yadav alleged.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister further accused the ruling party of prioritising its "greed for money" and placing "obedient puppets" in the government and party organisation to meet political and financial objectives.

Yadav warned that monopolistic tendencies were dangerous for any country, irrespective of whether they emerged in the political, economic or social spheres. "For any nation, monopoly in any field proves fatal, be it politics, the economy or social spheres.

"Neither farmers will be heard nor the PDA (Peccda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) society. Nearly 95 per cent of the population will become victims of severe exploitation," Yadav said.

conomic control to a handful of favoured groups, Yadav said such efforts would lead to "serious and dangerous consequences".

"The next step will be uncontrolled profiteering, rising inflation and ultimately massive corruption," he claimed.

He further alleged that laws and regulations would be altered to benefit monopolistic companies, consumers would be arbitrarily charged, and workers would face increased exploitation under a "less pay, more work" formula.

"Neither farmers will be heard nor the PDA (Peccda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) society. Nearly 95 per cent of the population will become victims of severe exploitation," Yadav said.

Centre seeks report on elephant deaths in Assam, assures strict Aravalli protection

GOSABA: Union Minister Bhupender Yadav on Sunday said the Centre has sought a report on the death of elephants in a train collision in Assam's Hojai district and asserted that no relaxation has been granted on the protection of the Aravalli region. Speaking to reporters after meetings on Project Elephant and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) at the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve in West Bengal, Yadav said all states have been asked to monitor elephant movement along railway tracks and coordinate with forest departments. "Railway authorities have been directed to work with state forest departments on elephant movement along the tracks. A report on elephant deaths in Assam has been sought," the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Changes said. Seven elephants

were killed after a herd was hit by the Sairang-New Delhi Rajdhani Express early Saturday, and a calf later succumbed to its injuries. On Aravalli protection, the minister said mining is allowed only in 0.19 per cent of the 1.44 lakh sq km area, with the rest fully preserved.

The Centre will implement the Supreme Court's guidelines immediately, he added. The top court on November 20, 2025, accepted the recommendations of a committee under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on the definition of Aravalli Hills and Ranges. According to the new definition, "Aravalli Hill is any landform in designated Aravalli districts with an elevation of 100 metres or more above its local relief" and an "Aravalli Range is a collection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other".

SHANTI Bill bulldozed in Parliament not only for 'TRUMP but also for ADANI': Congress

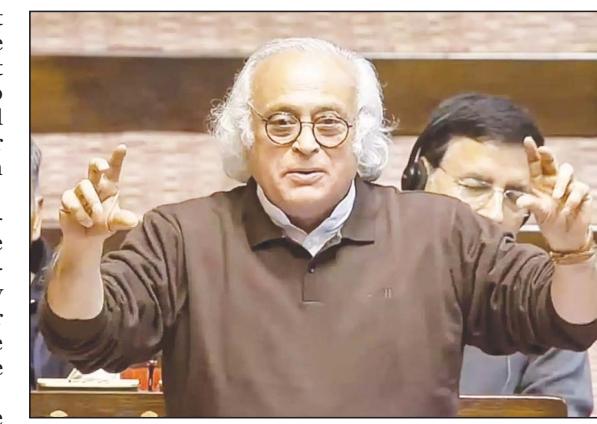
NEW DELHI: The Congress on Saturday took a swipe at the Modi government over the passage of the SHANTI Bill, saying it was "bulldozed" in Parliament not only for "TRUMP but also for ADANI".

Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, shared a screenshot of a media report on X, which claimed that the Adani group plans a nuclear energy foray after private firms get a go-ahead to enter the sector. The Congress on Saturday alleged that the SHANTI Bill was "bulldozed" in Parliament only to help Prime Minister Narendra Modi restore "SHANTI" with his "once good friend".

Ramesh had said the SHANTI Bill does away with key provisions of the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, a concern raised in the United States' National Defence Authorisation Act for 2026. Stating that US President Donald Trump has

just signed the National Defence Authorisation Act for the US fiscal year 2026, Ramesh had said in a post on X, "The Act is 3,100 pages long. Page 1,912 has a reference to the joint assessment between the United States and India on Nuclear Li-

ability Rules. "Now we know for sure why the Prime Minister bulldozed the SHANTI Bill through Parliament earlier this week that, among other things, did away with key provisions of the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, that had



Centre rejects mining push charge behind Aravalli definition, asserts 'no relaxation'

NEW DELHI: Asserting that 90 per cent of the Aravalli region will remain "protected", the Centre on Sunday rejected claims that the new definition of the Aravalli range will allow large-scale mining and cited a Supreme Court-ordered freeze on new mining leases in the region.

It said a Supreme Court-approved framework provides for stronger protection of the mountain system and places a freeze on new mining leases until a comprehensive management plan is finalised.

Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said that the SC-approved definition will bring more than 90 per cent of the Aravalli region under "protected area."

Replies to queries from mediapersons after a meeting on Project Elephant and the National Tiger Conservation Authority in the Sundarbans of West Bengal, Yadav also emphasised that "no relaxation has been granted" with regard to the protection of the Aravalli region and claimed "lies"

have been spread on the issue. "Stop spreading misinformation!" he said in a post on X, amid allegations by the Congress and others that the step will destroy the Aravallis.

"In the total area of 1.44 lakh square kilometres of the Aravalli, mining eligibility can only be in 0.19 per cent of the area. The rest of the entire Aravalli is preserved and protected," said Yadav, the Union minister for environment, forest and climate change.

The Supreme Court, on November 20, 2025, accepted the recommendations of a committee under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on the definition of Aravalli Hills and Ranges.

According to the new definition, "Aravalli Hill is any landform in designated Aravalli districts with an elevation of 100 metres or more above its local relief" and an "Aravalli Range is a collection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other".

The government, however,

asserted that it is "incorrect to conclude" that all landforms below 100 metres are open for mining.

In an explanation issued amid the controversy over the "100-metre" criterion, the government rejected claims that mining had been permitted in areas below 100 metres and said the restriction applies to entire hill systems and their enclosed landforms and not merely to the hill peak or slope. It said the definition of the Aravalli hills and range has been standardised across states on the directions of the Supreme Court to remove ambiguity and prevent misuse, particularly practices that allowed mining to continue dangerously close to hill bases. Sources in the Environment Ministry said the Supreme Court, while hearing long-pending cases on illegal mining in the Aravallis, had constituted a committee in May 2024 to recommend a "uniform definition", as different states were following inconsistent criteria while granting mining permissions.

The committee, chaired by the Environment Ministry Secretary and comprising representatives from Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, and Delhi along with technical bodies, found that only Rajasthan had a formally established definition, which it has been following since 2006.

That definition treats landforms rising 100 metres or more above local relief as hills and prohibits mining within the lowest bounding contour enclosing such hills, irrespective of the height or slope of landforms inside the contour, they said.

"People have created confusion that you can mine below the 100 metre elevation in a hill, but it is not so... The bottom area will be protected. And if there is a gap of 500 metres between two hills, then that area will also be considered part of the range. After this definition, more than 90 per cent of the area will be protected," Yadav said.

The minister asserted that the government has taken a number of steps like the

"Green Aravalli" movement for the preservation of the mountain range and is committed to their protection. "Lies are being spread on the (definition) issue," he alleged.

The sources said all four states agreed to adopt this long-standing Rajasthan definition, along with additional safeguards to make it objective and transparent. These include treating hills located within 500 metres of each other as a single range, mandatory mapping of hills and ranges on Survey of India maps before any mining decision and clear identification of core and inviolate areas where mining is prohibited.

The government said the apex court has accepted the committee's recommendation to prohibit mining in core and inviolate areas, including protected areas, eco-sensitive zones, tiger reserves, wetlands and areas close to such sites, while allowing limited exemptions only for critical, strategic and deep-seated minerals in national interest.

Odisha: Minor 'raped' in Bhubaneswar, two arrested

BHUBANESWAR: A 17-year-old girl was allegedly raped at a rented house in Odisha's Bhubaneswar, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place around 2 pm on December 18, and two accused have been arrested, they said.

"The girl was subjected to sexual assault without her consent by two persons in the rented accommodation in the city," a police officer said.

The accused had reportedly promised the girl a data entry operator job and called her to the house to discuss it, he said. A case has been registered in this connection at Shaheed Nagar Police Station, the officer said.

"Both the accused were produced before a court, which forwarded them to judicial custody," he said.

This is the second such incident in Bhubaneswar in a span of 10 days.

Meanwhile, expressing serious concern over the incident, BJD president and Leader of Op-

position in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik alleged that the state capital Bhubaneswar is becoming unsafe for women, as another minor girl was gang raped in Bhubaneswar in broad daylight. Reacting to the X post of Patnaik, BJD chief Surath Biswal said, "Naveen Babu should first revisit the old crime records of his tenure and compare the timeframe of police action in such sensitive incidents."

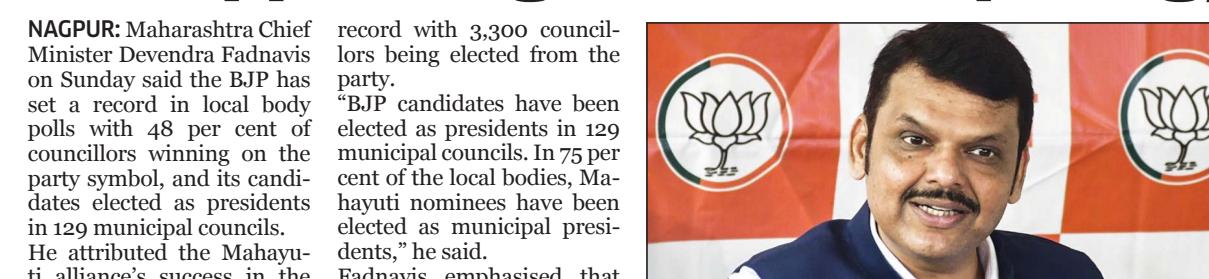
Now, under the BJP rule, police take immediate action whenever any such incident happens and arrest the accused persons, he claimed.

sure a safe environment for the people. The BJD chief advised the BJP government to become alert and take proactive steps to strictly enforce law and order in the state.

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Now, under the BJP rule, police take immediate action whenever any such incident happens and arrest the accused persons, he claimed.

BJP scored record victory in local body polls: Fadnavis; Oppn alleges EVM tampering, money power



NAGPUR: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday said the BJP has set a record in local body polls with 48 per cent of councillors winning on the party symbol, and its candidates elected as presidents in 129 municipal councils. In 75 per cent of the local bodies, Mahayuti nominees have been elected as municipal presidents, he said.

Fadnavis emphasised that the BJP's national leadership has put faith in the state leadership for elections.

"It is the team effort - the organisation and government. We fought the polls on the development plank. I led a positive campaign on the development agenda. I never criticised any political leader or party. I solicited votes on the development agenda, the work done by the government so far, and our blueprint for the future," the chief minister told a press conference.

Fadnavis said the BJP has once again emerged as the single largest party.

"48 per cent councillors have been elected on the BJP symbol, which is a record. The BJP has created another

record with 3,300 councillors being elected from the party.

BJP candidates have been elected as presidents in 129 municipal councils. In 75 per cent of the local bodies, Mahayuti nominees have been elected as municipal presidents, he said.

Fadnavis emphasised that the BJP's national leadership has put faith in the state leadership for elections.

"It is the team effort - the organisation and government. We fought the polls on the development plank. I led a positive campaign on the development agenda. I never criticised any political leader or party. I solicited votes on the development agenda, the work done by the government so far, and our blueprint for the future," the chief minister told a press conference.

In the multi-dimensional contests, Mahayuti allies

ruling Mahayuti. State Congress president Harshwardhan Sapkal congratulated the party candidates who won the posts of municipal president and councillors.

In a terse comment, he "congratulated" the state poll body for "helping" the ruling Mahayuti alliance in the elections.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut attributed the victory of Mahayuti to "tampering" of EVMs. He said the oppo-

sition couldn't withstand a "hailstorm" of money. His party colleague Ambadas Danve alleged "money and muscle power" shaped the Mahayuti win.

The Mahayuti has bagged a larger number of seats as compared to the constituents of the Maha Vikas Aghadi, thanks to the muscle and money power deployed by the ruling parties, Danve told PTI in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar.

"Now, Mumbaikaars too would reject the opposition's narrative in the upcoming BMC polls," he said. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said the "overwhelming success" of the BJP was a "victory of the (party) workers. This is a victory of our workers. Thank you to the people who supported the BJP by maintaining faith in its development-oriented working style," the Union minister stated.

Maharashtra minister and BJP leader Chandrashekhar Bawankule claimed the Mahayuti is headed to secure two-thirds seats.

The Opposition levelled all

Editorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

Draft rolls defy migration trends

The draft electoral rolls for Tamil Nadu, published late last week by the Election Commission of India (ECI) after the special intensive revision (SIR), belie well-known demographic trends. No less than 97.4 lakh voters' names have been deleted, reducing the State's voting population from 6.41 crore to 5.4 crore — a decrease of 15.2% across 38 districts. Even after conceding that these are only draft rolls and will be revised with the addition of new voters and successful challenges to deletions, the numbers run counter to nationwide trends in migration and births and deaths.

Deletions due to the SIR are particularly pronounced in the urban areas of the State. In Chennai, a major destination for in-migration, the pre-SIR voter list of 40 lakh has been scrubbed down by 14.25 lakh, a drop of 35.6%. In some Assembly constituencies in the State capital, the drop is even steeper: in Anna Nagar (down 42.2%), Villivakkam (40.7%), Thousand Lights (40.7%) and T Nagar (40.8%), the draft voter list is leaner by at least 40%. The State's 58 Assembly constituencies, home to 28.6% of pre-SIR voters, account for 45% of the deletions. These facts beg the question: where, if not to the cities, are voters moving?

Explaining the deletions, the ECI says 66.44 lakh removals were on account of either migration or untraceable addresses, 26.94 lakh due to death, and 3.39 lakh due to name duplication. The very high share attributed to migration is a red flag because, as per Census trends, in-migration into Tamil Nadu from other States exceeds out-migration. The much higher deletions in DMK strongholds compared to Opposition areas are another factor that triggers alarm.

Even compared to the previous exercise done more than two decades ago, this overhaul of the electoral rolls is remarkable. Then, 55 lakh voters were scrubbed statewide — roughly 9-10% of the then electorate — compared to 97 lakh removed now. In sheer numbers, voter deletions in Tamil Nadu dwarf those in Bihar (65 lakh) and Gujarat (73.73 lakh), and in terms of proportion (15.4%), they top every other State or Union Territory that has published post-SIR draft rolls so far. The Bihar precedent must worry every voter in the country. In that State, the net — and perhaps selective — reduction of 6% of the voter list produced a stunning electoral outcome that defied all projections, returning an incumbent government of turncoats and giving a 90% strike rate to the BJP in particular. It is no one's case that voter lists should not be refreshed. The Opposition's contention is that the SIR has been poorly timed, badly planned and hastily executed — with partisan intent to boot. It has the potential to cause mass disenfranchisement of rightful voters and therefore poses a grave peril to India's electoral democracy. Especially in crucial States like Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the manner in which the SIR is being conducted is fraught with risk. When the people's true mandate is sought to be thwarted through sleights of hand, bad outcomes follow — and can last generations — as seen after the disputed elections of 1987 in Jammu and Kashmir.



P.V. PRABHAKAR RAO,
CHAIRMAN, PV GLOBAL FOUNDATION

As India marks the 21st Death Anniversary of P.V. Narasimha Rao and reflects on over three decades of economic reforms, it is an appropriate moment to assess the significance of the choices made during 1991-96 and the continuity they have found in subsequent governments. P.V. Narasimha Rao's contribution to India lies not merely in initiating reforms, but in redefining the relationship between the State, the market and society. His leadership at a moment of profound economic distress altered India's economic trajectory in ways that continue to shape the country's present and future.

Leadership at a Moment of Crisis

When Rao assumed office in June 1991, India faced a severe balance of payments crisis, with foreign exchange reserves barely sufficient to cover a few weeks of imports. The crisis compelled difficult decisions, but it was Rao's political sagacity and administrative resolve that transformed adversity into opportunity.

The idea of economic reform had circulated within policy circles for decades. What was lacking was political ownership at the highest level. Rao provided that leadership. Within weeks of taking office, his government initiated structural reforms that dismantled the Licence-Permit-Quota system, liberalised trade, rationalised tariffs, devalued the rupee to restore competitiveness, and

opened several sectors to foreign investment.

These decisions marked a decisive break from a heavily controlled economic framework that had delivered limited growth for decades.

A STRUCTURAL BREAK IN INDIA'S GROWTH PATH

The reforms of 1991-96 triggered a structural shift. India moved from the so-called "Hindu rate of growth" of around 2-3% to sustained higher growth over the following decades. In the post-reform period, India's average growth rate rose to around 6-7%, lifting millions out of poverty and integrating the economy with global markets.

India's GDP, which stood at roughly \$275 billion in 1991, has expanded to over \$4.2 trillion today, making it one of the world's largest economies. Equally significant has been the diversification of growth — particularly in services, technology, manufacturing and exports — sectors that were previously constrained by regulation.

Poverty reduction has been one of the most consequential outcomes. While estimates vary by methodology, there is broad consensus that the proportion of Indians living in poverty has declined sharply since the early 1990s, reflecting the long-term impact of growth enabled by reform.

Reforms with a Human Face

Contrary to simplistic characterisations, Rao did not view reforms as an abandonment of social responsibility. His approach emphasised a middle path — economic efficiency combined with social protection.

During his tenure, rural development received sustained attention. Institutional decentralisation through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments strengthened Panchayati Raj institutions, linking local governance to national development priorities. Employment generation, infrastructure expansion and welfare delivery remained integral to the reform framework. Rao's insight was that growth and social justice are not competing objectives. Wealth creation enables redistribution;



without growth, welfare becomes fiscally unsustainable.

CONTINUITY AND DEEPENING OF REFORMS

India's reform journey did not end in 1996. Subsequent governments expanded and adapted the framework Rao established. In recent years, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this reform trajectory has been consolidated and deepened. Since 2014, India's economy has grown substantially in scale, crossing \$4.2 trillion and emerging as one of the fastest-growing major economies. Structural reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, large-scale infrastructure investment, financial inclusion through Jan Dhan accounts, and digital public infrastruc-

ture have strengthened economic resilience and formalisation.

India has also witnessed significant improvements in poverty reduction, welfare coverage and service delivery, aided by technology-driven governance and fiscal consolidation. The emphasis on manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy and skilling reflects an effort to prepare the economy for the next phase of growth. While challenges remain — particularly in employment generation, human development indicators and inequality — the direction of reform has remained broadly consistent with the foundations laid in 1991-96.

The Road Ahead
As India aspires to become a developed economy by the middle of this century, the

lessons of Rao's leadership remain relevant. Reform is not an event but a continuous process, requiring political courage, institutional capacity and social consensus.

P.V. Narasimha Rao demonstrated that decisive leadership, guided by pragmatism can transform a nation's prospects. The economic confidence India displays today owes much to the reforms he initiated and to the continuity of that vision in subsequent decades.

Remembering Rao is therefore not merely an act of commemoration. It is a reaffirmation of India's commitment to openness, pragmatism and reform — principles that continue to guide the country's economic journey.

(P.V.)PRABHAKAR RAO IS
THE 3RD SON OF LATE SRI.
P.V.NARASIMHA RAO

Melting danger: A dead glacier is a loss; a dying one a threat

The ice of the Himalayas is wasting away. Glacier-draped slopes are going bare. The ground atop the mountain range, which sprawls across five Asian countries, is slumping and sliding as the ice beneath it — ice that held the land together — disappears. Meltwater is puddling in the valleys below, forming deep lakes. As humans warm the planet, so much ice has been erased from around Mount Everest that the elevation at base camp in Nepal, which sits on a melting glacier, has dropped more than 220 feet since the 1980s. But this loss is not unfolding gradually.

Often it begins slowly, imperceptibly — and then it happens all at once, with catastrophic consequences for the people below. That was how it went on a warm August day last year.

Thame, a secluded village of 370 people, sits in a valley in the Everest region. Glacial melt had been pooling rapidly in a high spot above the village for more than a decade. The resulting lake was so remote that nobody had given it a name.

On Aug. 16, 2024, rocks from the surrounding mountains fell hundreds of feet into this lake, displacing an enormous amount of water. The water rushed down the valley and into another lake, heaving up more water. Soon, 100 million gallons was coursing downhill. Toward the village. People in Thame heard a crescendoing roar. By the time the water raged through, it was as if a swath of the village had never existed. The medical clinic,



gone. The school, destroyed. Two dozen homes and trekking lodges, plus fields of potatoes — wiped out.

Months later, a scientist named Scott Watson was walking the flood's path in reverse, up the steep valleys, up past mud-encrusted books in the ruined school, up to the unknown lake that had suddenly made itself very known. All across the fast-warming Himalayas, melting glaciers are creating thousands of high-altitude lakes — and thousands of new opportunities for avalanches and earthquakes to cause destruction. When falling rocks or snow land on a frozen glacier, nothing much happens. But as the ice melts and forms a lake, those falling

objects can set off a flood that menaces villages, tourist lodges, hydropower plants and anything else in its path.

Watson, a glaciologist at the University of Leeds, and his team trekked through Thame as part of an expedition in the Everest region to measure glacial lakes using sonar and drones. Sitting on these lakes in an inflatable kayak, the scientists found them anything but placid. Ice cliffs leaked noisy streams of fresh meltwater. Rocks and debris tumbled in. Behind heavy clouds, unseen landslides rumbled all around, like rolling thunder. The death of a glacier is a loss reversible only on geological time scales. But before a glacier is gone —

while it is still dying — it represents a threat. As a glacier shrinks, it sheds water that gathers in the earthen bowl where the ice once sat, forming a lake. The dirt and rock around this bowl are loose, crumbly. Maybe one day there is a landslide. Maybe a chunk of the glacier's remaining ice breaks off and plummets into the water. Picture doing a cannonball into an above-ground swimming pool, said Daniel Shugar, an expert on glacial floods at the University of Calgary — except you blow out an entire wall of the pool. "It would drain within seconds," he said. Water plunges down the valley, picking up sand, silt, gravel and boulders. It becomes a slurry so thick that it knocks down buildings.

But it isn't just their capacity for devastation that makes these floods terrifying. It's how hard it is to predict where, when and how they will happen. The lakes that flooded Thame last year were small, not on anybody's list of those most likely to cause a disaster. When you think of a glacier, you probably imagine an expanse of white. Watson and his team crossed the face of Nepal's longest glacier and found a river of dirt, boulders and milky-gray water. Ice is still there, beneath the debris. But as it melts, puddles become ponds, ponds become lakes, and lakes join up, transforming the landscape into ribbonlike waterways. One way to reduce flood hazards is by making lakes smaller. Nepal has begun lowering water levels at some high-risk lakes, though melting glaciers continue to feed them.

DIGITAL SPEED, HUMAN DELAY

WHY ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS DESERVE TIMELY HONORARIUMS
GOLDEN DAYS VS. DIGITAL DAZE

POKKULURU SUBBA RAO,

Elders often reminisce about the "golden days," when life was slower but more humane. Today, dazzled by the immediacy of digital technology, many of us dismiss their nostalgia. After all, Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, e-certificates, and online applications arrive at lightning speed. Digitalization has indeed revolutionized access and efficiency. But beneath this sheen lies a troubling paradox: while documents and services are delivered instantly, the human touch in financial dealings — especially honorariums for artists and scholars — has eroded. The Old Practice: Instant Gratification, Human Respect. In earlier times, institutions like All India Radio (AIR) and Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) upheld a dignified practice. Orators, artists, and scholars were handed cheques immediately after their programmes. This gesture was not just financial — it was symbolic of respect, recognition, and empathy. For many from middle and lower-middle classes, this immediate payment ensured stability and dignity. The satisfaction of walking away with a tangible honorarium was a morale booster, affirming the value of their contribution. The Digital Shift: Speed Without Soul. Post-digitalization, the system has changed drastically: Honorariums are now deposited directly into bank accounts. Payments are often delayed for weeks or months. Artists and scholars are left in uncertainty, facing financial hardships. Ironically, the very technology that promises speed has introduced bureaucratic bottlenecks and emotional disconnect. The human touch — the handshake, the immediate recognition — has vanished. Personal Testimony: A Stark Reality. As someone who has delivered programmes both in the pre-digital and post-digital eras, I have lived this contrast. Earlier, the cheque in hand was a source of joy and relief. Today, digital transfers arrive late, leaving contributors anxious and financially strained. This indifference disproportionately affects those who rely on honorariums for sustenance — teachers, researchers, cultural performers, and spiritual speakers. What was once a system of empathy has become one of neglect. The Larger Problem: A Common Cry. This is not just my personal grievance — it is a collective problem. Across India, countless artists, scholars, and cultural workers face similar delays. Many depend on these honorariums for daily expenses. Delays erode trust in institutions that are otherwise revered. The absence of accountability undermines the dignity of contributors. Digitalization should not mean dehumanization. A Call for Reform: Restoring Empathy in Digital Systems.

Only those making provocative speeches oppose hate speech bill: Siddaramaiah



Mysore: Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday defended the Hate Speech Prevention Bill, stating that only those who make provocative speeches are opposing it. Addressing the media in Mysore, he dismissed BJP allegations that the bill was framed to target specific individuals or parties, asserting that the Act applies equally to everyone.

Questioning the BJP's opposition, the Chief Minister asked whether peace could be established in society through hate speech. He said the bill was introduced solely to maintain peace and brotherhood, especially

at a time when hate speech incidents are on the rise. Siddaramaiah alleged that the BJP's resistance stems from its leaders making provocative statements.

Responding to allegations of embezzlement in the Griha Lakshmi scheme, the Chief Minister clarified that when funds are transferred directly to beneficiaries' accounts, the question of misappropriation does not arise. He acknowledged that the payments for February and March had not yet been released and assured that the issue would be reviewed and the funds disbursed. "Was it possible to pay Griha Lakshmi assis-

tance for 23 months without money?" he asked.

On AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge's statement that no individual is bigger than the party, Siddaramaiah said it was a principle that must be accepted. Regarding speculation about leadership change, he said the decision rests with Rahul Gandhi and the party high command, and the state leadership would abide by whatever decision is taken.

The Chief Minister dismissed media speculation on leadership change, stating that the issue was being unnecessarily discussed despite clarity already given in the Assembly. He also defended party leaders meeting the party president or Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, saying there was nothing wrong with such interactions.

Replying to queries on appointments made during his tenure, Siddaramaiah said it did not matter who made the decision as long as it was taken by the government of the day. On the state budget, he said details would be shared once preparations were complete.

Bengaluru to have 175 km metro network by December 2027: DCM DK Shivakumar



Bengaluru: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar today announced that 175 km of metro line network will be operational in Bengaluru by December 2027. Addressing a press conference after holding a meeting with BMRCL officials on the progress of metro construction, he said, "Our government is working towards easing traffic congestion in the city. Currently, 90 km of metro network is operational. We have operationalized Yellow line after we assumed office. The 24-km Yellow line has a footfall of 1 lakh passengers. According to the police, traffic has come down by about 30% on the roads along Yellow line."

"We will operationalize 41 km metro network in 2026 and additional 38 km including Airport line by December 2027. With this, Bengaluru will have a metro network of 175 km. We have plans to extend metro line to Tavarekere, Hosakote,

Phase 3 of Namma metro is Rs 25,311 crore. We are financing Rs 15,600 for the project through JICA. The tender for works to the tune of Rs 9,700 crore will be called in January," he said.

Asked if the entire Phase 3 would be converted into double decker corridor, he said, "The entire Phase 3 will be in double decker format. We have decided to make the Magadi Road stretch also a double decker project as vehicular traffic from Hassan comes via Magadi Road."

Replying to queries on appointments made during his tenure, Siddaramaiah said it did not matter who made the decision as long as it was taken by the government of the day. On the state budget, he said details would be shared once preparations were complete.

Asked about reports of Adani being the lowest bidder for tunnel road project, he said, "I haven't received complete information on this. I can't comment on it until bids are officially revealed." Asked about lowest bid amount being much higher than the original estimates, he said, "The government is not paying any money to the bidder."

Karnataka

District Congress padayatra against centre stopped by police

Mangaluru, Dec 22: The Dakshina Kannada District Congress Committee staged a protest against the central government by taking out a padayatra in the city, which was stopped by the police at Mallikatte Junction on Monday December 22. As part of the protest, Congress workers and leaders began a padayatra from the Congress Bhavan at Mallikatte towards the district BJP office. However, police intervened at Mallikatte Junction itself and stopped the procession taking the protesting workers into custody. The Congress had announced the padayatra in protest against the alleged move to change the name and structure of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The party also condemned what it termed as the misuse of the Enforcement Directorate by the central government in the National Herald case, accusing it of conspiring against senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. Several senior leaders participated in the padayatra, including AICC Screening Committee member Vijay Inder Singla, Dakshina Kannada District Congress president Harish Kumar, Manjunath Bhandary, Ivan D'Souza, Mithun Rai and Ramanath Rai, among others. Police stopped the padayatra at Mallikatte Junction and detained the participating Congress workers and leaders, bringing the protest to a halt.

Kannada Rajyotsava celebra-



Renaming of MGNREGA targets Gandhiji's legacy, BJP's end has begun: Shivakumar

Bengaluru: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday launched a sharp attack on the Centre over the renaming of the MGNREGA rural employment scheme, alleging that the move was an attempt to erase the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and signalling the beginning of the end for the BJP.

Addressing a press conference at the KPCC office, Shivakumar said the BJP had crossed a line by altering a scheme that guarantees employment as a fundamental right under Article 21.

"We never thought the BJP would dare to touch MGNREGA. Now that it has done so, the final days of the BJP have started," he said.

He alleged that the Centre was trying to dismantle a scheme meant

for the poor and described the move as shameful. Shivakumar said the Congress Working Committee meeting scheduled for December 27 would decide the course of the party's agitation against the decision. He added that Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge had called a meeting in Delhi to discuss the issue. The Deputy Chief Minister warned that changes in the funding pattern from 90:10 to 60:40 would make it impossible for states to sustain the scheme, effec-

tively "burying" rural employment. He asserted that both the Congress party and the Karnataka government would fight the decision until the Centre revoked the name change and restored the original structure of the scheme. On the National Herald case, Shivakumar alleged misuse of central agencies, claiming that the Enforcement Directorate had pursued the matter without an FIR and that courts had rejected attempts to file a chargesheet against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

70th Kannada Rajyotsava celebrated with Kempegowda awards and felicitation ceremony in Bengaluru



Bengaluru: The 70th Kannada Rajyotsava was celebrated in a grand manner by GBA Bangalore East Corporation and the Officers and Employees Kannada Sangha, along with a felicitation ceremony honouring officers, employees, and achievers from various fields. On the occasion, the prestigious Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Award was presented to distinguished achievers as well as dedicated officers and employees.

Kannada Rajyotsava celebra-

ting the use of Kannada as the administrative language in GBA municipalities. Speakers at the event emphasised that Kannada is a rich and vibrant language, having received eight Jnampith awards, and called upon people to preserve and promote

the language by speaking and conducting business in Kannada. Under the leadership and guidance of A. Amrit Raj, the Kannada Sangha has been actively working to uphold the language and culture. It was noted that Karnataka

Rajyotsava celebrations were also organised in places such as Nepal, Haridwar, Kashi, and Pahalgam by the Central Kannada Sangha, showcasing the reach and pride of Kannada culture beyond the state. As part of the celebrations, a cultural programme titled Kannada Kahale Sangeeta Rasa Sanje Sarigamapa was organised, featuring performances by Kannada Kogile artists. Singers Ganesh Karanth, Varna Chauhan, Bhagyashree Gowda, and Qasim Alivara enthralled the audience with their melodic renditions.

CONGRESS LEADERSHIP ISSUE TO ESCALATE FURTHER: CHALAVADI NARAYANASWAMY

Bengaluru: After the vague statement of the AICC president, the leadership issue in the state Congress will escalate further. Development in the state will be stunted, said Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy. Speaking to the media, he said that This government has already taken the state to the brink of destruction. Today, ministers are doing nothing but looting. He accused one of stealing land, while the other is stealing guarantees. He complained that many ministers are involved in looting. There are no ministers in a position to tour the state. They even go on a picnic tour of their own district, where no one lives. People are angry after seeing their work. He criticized this government for working in an anti-people manner.

On 25th Atal Puraskar to Dr. Govinda Rangarajan, Dr. Chandrashekhar Shetty, Nagaraj : Dr. C. N. Ashwathnarayanan



Bengaluru: The Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Foundation will celebrate the 101st birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee on this 25th at the Gyanjyothi Hall, said former Deputy Chief Minister and MLA Dr. C. N. Ashwathnarayanan.

Speaking at a press conference in the city, he said that the birthday of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is being celebrated as Good Governance Day in the whole of India.

He said that the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Foundation is celebrating Good Governance Day meaningfully every year in honor of Atal Ji. A program called 'Good Governance in Education' will be organized at the Gyanjyothi in the central part of the city. It will be held from 1 pm to 7 pm that day. It has been divided into two parts, and in one part, a dialogue will be held. A dialogue will be held on public universities,

curriculum, and artificial intelligence. He said that 15 experts in the field of education and technology will participate. He said that Sadhguru Madhusudan Sai Swamiga will inaugurate it. He said that the Atal Puraskar will be presented in the second part of the evening.

Former Chief Minister and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy will inaugurate it. The chief guests will be the immediate past Chief Minister, MP Basavaraj Bommai, and the president of the organization Prof. Krishna Gowda. He said that online registration is available.

This time, the awardees are Dr. Govinda Rangarajan, Director of the Indian Institute of Science, Dr.

Chandrashekhar Shetty, founder of Lions Hospital, ophthalmologist, Nagaraj, founder of BASE Institute, and Prayog Vijnana Kendra.

He said that such awareness programs are needed for India to grow strong, become empowered, compete with the world, and provide equality to everyone. He said that quality and complete education is the solution to all problems.

Health is Wealth – Healthy Children are the Nation's Greatest Asset



2025

Action Plan

- Total population – 2,455,245
- Total households – 589,507
- Children aged 0-5 years – 270,297

- Number of slum areas – 1,127
- Children aged 0-5 years in slum areas – 123,536
- Migrant population areas – 779
- Migrant population – 34,490
- Migrant children aged 0-5 years – 2,785
- Number of booths – 932
- Fixed booths – 726
- Transit teams – 101
- Mobile teams – 105
- Total vaccination personnel – 3,728
- Total supervisors – 186

Within the Bengaluru North City Corporation limits, Pulse Polio vaccination is being carried out in all wards through fixed booths set up at Urban Primary Health Centres, Namma Clinics, dispensaries, Anganwadi centres, and schools. In addition, mobile and transit teams have been deployed at bus stands, railway stations, government hospitals, malls, private nursing homes, medical colleges, major markets, slum areas, and other high-footfall locations. For effective monitoring and implementation of the programme, Health Officers, Deputy Health Officers, and Medical Officers of Health have been appointed as nodal officers by the Bengaluru North

City Corporation.

To create widespread public awareness, the Greater Bengaluru Authority has arranged extensive publicity through newspapers, banners, hoardings, audio announcements, social media platforms, door-to-door campaigns, and official GBA digital platforms.

Parents can easily locate the nearest Pulse Polio booth using the QR code (location-based system) provided by the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

As in previous years, organisations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, UNICEF, UNDP, Lions Club, and other non-governmental organisations have extended their cooperation and support to ensure the successful implementation of this programme.

The public is requested to note that even if children have previously received polio drops, all children below five years of age must be brought to the booths on the specified dates and administered two drops of polio vaccine*, to help sustain a polio-free world. The Bengaluru North City Corporation appeals to all citizens to extend their wholehearted cooperation.

BWSSB's 'Blue Force' Blitz: Over 4,000 Inspections in One Month; Massive



Bengaluru : The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board's (BWSSB) dedicated task force, "Blue Force," has completed a rigorous one-month operation, marking a significant milestone in the board's fight against unauthorized water and sewerage usage.

According to official data, the Blue Force teams have conducted over 4,000 inspections across the city in the last month, identifying and penalizing hundreds of unauthorized connections that were causing revenue loss and water pressure issues.

Intense Daily Operations : A Snapshot

The intensity of the drive is evident in the daily operational data. On December 20, 2025, alone, the field teams visited 237 buildings across four zones.

- 70 Illegal Connections Severed : In just 24 hours, the teams disconnected 70 unauthorized water connections. Zonal Breakdown : - The South Zone saw the highest enforcement activity with 33 disconnections out of 61 buildings visited.

- This was followed by the East Zone (18 disconnections) and the West Zone (15 disconnections). North Zone : The teams visited 44 buildings and executed 4 disconnections.

- BWSSB Chairman Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar, IAS, stated, "The Blue Force was constituted to detect illegalities that bypass our meters and rob the city of its rightful resources."

TN Coastal districts to get moderate rain on Dec 26



CHENNAI: The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) has forecast an upper air cyclonic circulation over the equatorial Indian Ocean and adjoining the southwest Bay of Bengal at 1.5 km above mean sea level. Under its influence, light to moderate rain is likely to occur at isolated places over the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu and

Puducherry on December 26.

According to the RMC, the sky condition is likely to be partly cloudy in Chennai, and early morning hours are likely to experience mist or haze till December 25. The minimum temperature will be around 22 degrees Celsius up to December 24. Furthermore, the temperature is likely to dip to 21

degrees Celsius between December 25 and December 27.

Minimum temperatures were below normal by 2-4 degrees Celsius at many places over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry areas. Generally, near normal over the rest of Tamil Nadu.

On Sunday, "Kanniyakumari recorded the highest maximum temperature of 31.1 degrees Celsius over Tamil Nadu. Tirupattur has the lowest minimum temperature of 15.0 degrees Celsius in the plains of Tamil Nadu." The weather bulletin said, "Light to moderate rain is likely to occur at isolated places over the Delta districts and Karaikal area. Dry weather is likely to prevail over the rest of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry areas till December 25. Also, light to moderate rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry areas."

Resurfacing work to begin early-2026 on primary runway at Chennai airport

CHENNAI: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has decided to begin major resurfacing work on the primary runway at the city airport in early 2026. Officials say the work may take more than 6 months to complete if carried out alongside regular flight operations.

At present, Chennai Airport handles more than 470 flight movements a day and operates with two runways. The main runway is 3.66 km long and the secondary runway is 2.89 km. The airport also has around 130 aircraft parking bays, of which about 60 are used for domestic and international passenger operations. The remaining bays used for



cargo aircraft, private jets, air ambulances, and aircraft parked for long-term maintenance. In recent years, several infrastructure upgrades have been carried out to improve aircraft movement and reduce delays. Taxiways connecting the runways to parking bays have been redesigned and widened, allowing aircraft to move faster

after landing. A curved taxiway was straightened, and additional holding points were created near the runway to enable smoother landings without delays from aircraft still taxiing. Cargo aircraft parking areas have also been expanded, increasing handling capacity. Despite these improvements, runway resurfacing remains a

critical safety requirement. As per aviation norms, runways must undergo complete resurfacing roughly once every 10 years.

At Chennai airport, the main runway was last resurfaced in 2015, while the secondary runway underwent similar work in 2024. With the main runway now due for renewal, AAI has begun preparations to award contracts for the project, with work expected to start around January 2026. Airport officials explained that if the main runway was closed entirely and resurfaced without flight operations, the work could be completed within 30 to 45 days.

Can being more flexible help people live longer?



the body or by participating in yoga.

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Checking flexibility across 20 areas in the body

The study utilized data collected from the CLINIMEX Exercise open cohort in Brazil. The researchers analyzed data from 3,139 middle-aged people (66% of the group were men) aged 46-65 years when they underwent their first exam. At the participants' first exams, the clinicians collected data on their BMI, vitals, and any health issues. The clinicians also administered a flexibility test called the "Flexitest" that checked how flexible the participants were in 20 body joint movements:

- ankle (two)
- shoulder (five)
- knee (two)
- trunk (three)
- wrist (two)
- hip (four)
- elbow (two)

They assigned a "Flexindex" score from 0 to 80 based on the flexibility of the participants. Each body movement could get a score from 0 to 4 on the 20 areas measured, and lower scores indicated lower flexibility.

The clinicians assessed flexibility in several ways, including

checking to see how far the participants could extend their elbows, checking their trunk flexion, and assessing how well their shoulders rotated. The study lasted from March 1994 to February 2023, and the participants' average follow-up period was approximately 13 years.

Higher flexibility linked with improved longevity

After analyzing the data, the researchers found that people with better flexibility levels had better survival rates for deaths related to natural or non-COVID causes.

When comparing Flexindex scores between men and women, they found that women had generally higher scores compared to men. Women had a 35% higher Flexindex score on average. Overall, the scientists saw a connection between higher Flexindex scores and improved mortality rates in both men and women.

When comparing the women with lower Flexindex scores to those with higher scores, the researchers saw that women with lower flexibility scores had a 4.78 times higher chance of dying. The men with lower Flexindex scores had a 1.87 times higher chance of dying compared to those with higher scores.

The study emphasizes the importance of physical fitness, especially in terms of focusing on flexibility and long-term health.

It establishes that people—particularly middle-aged people—need to incorporate a daily routine that targets stretching and shows that doctors may need to

focus on flexibility at annual physicals.

"An assessment of body flexibility using the Flexitest may serve as a useful complement to routine evaluation protocols for providing exercise recommendations and prescriptions to healthy and unhealthy middle-aged individuals," write the authors.

More research is needed

Ryan Glatt, CPT, NBC-HWC, senior brain health coach, and director of the FitBrain Program at Pacific Neuroscience Institute in Santa Monica, California, who was not involved in the study, spoke with Medical News Today about the study findings.

"The study suggests a connection between flexibility and longevity, with women showing a 35% higher Flexindex than men, and an inverse relationship between Flexindex and mortality risk," explained Glatt.

Glatt acknowledged that flexibility may be a reflection of overall health, but noted that more research is needed.

"Although the Flexindex is a promising tool, it's not yet proven enough to be a standard part of health assessments, and more rigorous studies are needed to confirm its significance," noted Glatt. Glatt also said gender differences could have affected the study results—the majority of the study participants were men.

"Incorporating flexibility exercises into routines, especially for older adults, seems reasonable since flexibility decreases with age, but the true impact on survival is still uncertain," he added.

How to be more flexible

Chris McDermott, MSN, APRN-IP, a Certified Life Care Planner for Intercoastal Consulting & Life Care Planning in Jacksonville, Florida, who also was not involved in the study, noted that the study "suggests that staying flexible is important for health and longevity."

"Improving flexibility can make everyday activities easier and help prevent injuries. It also plays a role in maintaining joint health and reducing stiffness," McDermott told MNT.

Muscles: Why are they important?



frowns, and mouth and tongue movements.

Skeletal muscles are continually making tiny adjustments to maintain the body's posture. They keep a person's back straight or hold their head in one position.

Skeletal muscles

Skeletal muscles move the external parts of the body and the limbs. They cover the bones and give the body its shape. As skeletal muscles only pull in one direction, they work in pairs. When one muscle in the pair contracts, the other expands, and this facilitates movement.

The muscles attach to

strong tendons, which

either attach to or directly

connect with the

bones. The tendons

extend over the joints,

and this helps keep the

joints stable. A person in

good health can

consciously control their

skeletal muscles.

Most visible body

movements

— such as

running,

walking,

talking,

and moving the

eyes,

head,

limbs,

or digits — occur when the skeletal muscles contract.

Skeletal muscles also

control all facial expres-

sions, including smiles,

most of the body's muscle strength and its increase in mass after periods of weight training.

Compared with slow-twitch muscle, it is less dense in myoglobin and mitochondria.

Striated muscles

Skeletal muscles are striated, which means that they consist of thousands of equally sized sarcomeres, or muscle units, which have transverse bands. A striated muscle appears striped under a microscope because of these bands. When the bands in the sarcomeres relax or contract, the whole muscle extends or relaxes. Different bands within each muscle interact, allowing the muscle to move powerfully and smoothly.

Smooth muscles

Smooth muscles are responsible for movements in the stomach, intestines, blood vessels, and hollow organs. The smooth muscles in the bowel are also called visceral muscles. These muscles work automatically, with a person being unaware that they are using them. Unlike skeletal muscles, they do not depend on conscious thought.



Under the leadership of the Honble Minister for Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, a training session was conducted in Anna Nagar, Chennai, on the establishment of the 'Chief Minister's Farmer Welfare Service Centres'. These centres aim to enable young agriculture graduates to start self-employment initiatives and to provide farmers with all kinds of services under a single roof

27 lakh 'dead' voters in Tamil Nadu baffling, need to scrap SIR: CPM

CHENNAI: Questioning the removal of 27 lakh voters as deceased in the draft electoral rolls, CPM State secretary P Shanmugam on Sunday urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to suspend the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR), alleging serious inconsistencies and large-scale deletions.

In a statement, Shanmugam said the poll panel had earlier claimed that forms were distributed to 99 per cent of voters and collected from 99 per cent, making it implausible that so many voters were deceased.

Tamil Nadu's average maximum death rate is around 10 per 1,000, including children and minors, he said. Based on this, annual deaths among 6.41 crore



voters would be about 7.69 lakh, far lower than the reported figure of 27 lakh, unless deaths over several years had not been removed earlier, he said.

Referring to population estimates, Shanmugam said Tamil Nadu had about 7.74 crore people at the beginning of the year, of whom around 6.26 crore were adults. Even after account-

Nilgris: Revamped Dolphin's Nose viewpoint reopens on December 22

NILGRIS: The Dolphins Nose viewpoint in the Nilgiris has been reopened to tourists from Monday after remaining closed for three months for maintenance work, the Forest Department said. The viewpoint, which falls under the Coonoor forest range, was shut from September 12 to carry out renovation works, including upgrades to pathways, toilets and installation of safety railings. With most of the work now completed, tourists are being permitted to visit the spot, Coonoor forest ranger Ravindranath said. Dolphins Nose is a popular natural viewpoint located about 12 km from Coonoor and is maintained by the Forest Department. It is a regular stop for tourists visiting Sims Park and other nearby attractions.

Sensex rallies 638 pts, Nifty settles above 26,000 on foreign fund inflows, firm global trends

Mumbai (TSIT) Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty surged nearly 1 per cent on Monday as investor sentiment remained positive amid foreign fund inflows and a rally in global markets on expectations of further monetary policy easing by the US Federal Reserve. Building on the previous session's rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 638.12 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at 85,567.48. During the day, it surged 671.97 points or 0.79 per cent to 85,601.33.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 206 points or 0.79 per cent to close above the 26,000 mark at 26,172.40.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Trent, Infosys, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Bharat Electronics and Maruti were among the biggest gainers.

However, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Titan were the laggards. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi jumped over 2 per cent, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index climbed nearly 2 per cent. Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also settled in positive territory. European markets were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended higher on Friday.

"Indian markets extend-



ed their year-end rally, supported by strong liquidity and global cues, as expectations of further Fed easing in 2026 continue to underpin growth. FIIs turned net buyers, reinforcing the positive tone, with IT and metals leading gains," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,830.89 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought equities worth Rs 5,722.89 crore in the previous trade.

"A stabilising USD-INR exchange rate, coupled with data showing foreign portfolio investors turning net buyers of domestic

equities over the past few sessions, triggered broad-based buying and short covering across derivative segments."

"Global risk appetite also remained firm, supported by expectations of further monetary policy easing by the US Federal Reserve, which helped sustain the risk-on momentum across global markets," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.86 per cent to USD 60.99 per barrel.

On Friday, the Sensex jumped 447.55 points or 0.53 per cent to settle at 84,929.36. The Nifty climbed 150.85 points or 0.58 per cent to 25,966.40.

Gleneagles Chennai showcases robotic 5 kg fibroid removal at Tirupati CME



Gleneagles Hospital Chennai, part of the Fortis Network, set a new benchmark in gynaecology by showcasing a potential world-record robotic fibroid removal during a high-level Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme held in Tirupati on Sunday. Titled "Robotics in Gynaecology: The New Standard", the event took place at Hotel Renest and brought together over 40 leading gynaecologists to discuss advances in minimally invasive surgery.

The CME was organised in association with the Tirupati Obstetric and Gynaecological Society (TOGS) and the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, SVMC, Tirupati. The scientific session was led by Dr Padmapriya Vivek, Director of Obstetrics, Gynaecology, Fertility Medicine, Robotic Surgery and Uterine Transplant at

Gleneagles Hospital Chennai.

A major highlight was the presentation of a landmark case involving the robotic removal of a 4.95 kg fibroid, a feat currently being recommended for the Guinness World Records. Dr Padmapriya explained how robotic technology enables precise removal of large fibroids through small incisions, resulting in minimal blood loss, faster recovery, and improved surgical safety.

The programme began with a welcome address by Dr Umadevi, Secretary of TOGS, and concluded with honours led by Dr G Parthasarathi Reddy, President of TOGS and HOD of OBG at SVMC. The event underscored Gleneagles Hospital Chennai's commitment to advancing women's healthcare through cutting-edge robotic technology and continuous medical education.

Business

HYDERABAD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2025

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Sakthi Group forays into aviation biz, sets up Rs 750-cr trainer aircraft unit

CHENNAI: The 104-year-old diversified Coimbatore-based Sakthi Group has ventured into aviation sector through Sakthi Aircraft Industry Pvt Ltd (SAIPL), which, in collaboration with Austria's Diamond Aircraft Industries, is pioneering India's first private trainer aircraft manufacturing facility at Tirupur, entailing an investment of Rs 750 crore.

Through this partnership, SAIPL will manufacture and deliver Diamond DA40 NG in India and also offer Diamond's other aircraft models to domestic customers. It will be complemented by a range of services

including maintenance, support, training and spares for all Diamond aircraft. Sakthi Aircraft Industry Pvt Ltd (SAIPL), which, in collaboration with Austria's Diamond Aircraft Industries, is pioneering India's first private trainer aircraft manufacturing facility at Tirupur, entailing an investment of Rs 750 crore.

Noting that the step-

by-step process involves transporting through containers to airfields to assembly operations, Manickam



said "we are also looking at three to four airfields for this purpose. Tamil Nadu will be a major location while airfields in north will be used to support our maintenance and service operations." The

investment will be met through internal accruals and debt, he said, adding the deal with Diamond dates back to about two years ago, when the Sakthi Group saw an opportunity in manufacturing training aircraft for use in flying schools.

SAIPL has already started sourcing talent as it has put a 40-member team in place in this phase of operations. "Right now the first batch consists of people from all over India predominantly south but over time we will be ramping up that would mean a team of 300-400 people," Manickam said.

India is one of the fastest growing aircraft

market, with domestic airliners placing orders for delivery of 2,500 aircraft over five years. To service an aircraft, 20 pilots are required so that they can meet the three hours per day flying rules against the current practise of 15-18 hours duties.

"The demand for pilots is 50,000, which means training 8,000 to 10,000 every year and typically, the cost of training ranges from Rs 65 lakh to Rs 1 crore in India and Rs 1.5 crore to Rs 2 crore outside," he said adding there is a shortage of at least 7,000 pilots in India given that India produces only 700-800 pilots every year.

Online fraud awareness programme held at GITAM



GITAM Deemed-to-be University, Hyderabad, organised an awareness programme on online frauds titled "Fraud ka Full Stop" on December 22, 2025, in collaboration with the Telangana State Cyber Security Bureau (TGSB). The programme was part of a six-week state-wide campaign to enhance public awareness and prevent cybercrime across Telangana.

Harshvardhan, IPS, Superintendent of Police, Cyber Security Bureau, attended the event as the chief guest. Addressing students, he highlighted the growing threat of

cybercrime and explained common fraud techniques used by cybercriminals. He cautioned that everyone is vulnerable to online fraud and warned about malicious software that can lead to blackmail, extortion, and misuse of personal data. He urged students to be careful while engaging in online gaming, betting, and chatting.

Paritosh Pankaj, IPS, Superintendent of Police, Sangareddy, attended as the guest of honour and explained various online frauds such as OTP scams, investment frauds, parcel scams, digital arrest

frauds, malicious

IDFC FIRST Bank launches global savings account for NRIs in GIFT City



Hyderabad (TSIT) IDFC FIRST Bank has introduced the IDFC FIRST Global Savings Account, a unique foreign-currency savings solution designed exclusively for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) through GIFT City, Gujarat.

The account allows NRIs to hold and operate savings accounts directly in USD and Euro, offering a distinct alternative to traditional domestic and NRI savings accounts.

The Global Savings Account provides 100% repatriability of both principal and interest without limits, zero remittance fees on international transfers, and a fully digital, paperless banking experience. NRIs can manage funds globally without conversion risk while enjoying seamless transfers from GIFT City to anywhere in the world. Interest

earned on the account and fixed deposits is TDS-exempt, making it a tax-efficient option.

Key features include an attractive interest rate of up to 4.75% on USD balances, monthly interest credit with compounding benefits, and the option to book USD and Euro fixed deposits at competitive rates. Customers can manage both their NRI and GIFT City accounts through a single mobile banking app and benefit from an integrated relationship management experience.

Commenting on the launch, Ashish Singh, Head - Retail Liabilities, IDFC FIRST Bank, said the new offering is aimed at redefining international banking for NRIs by combining higher interest rates, zero-fee remittances, currency flexibility, and a secure digital platform.

Premia Academy hosts Christmas carnival to support women empowerment

Mumbai, Dec 21 : UltraTech Cement Limited has received a tax demand order from the Joint Commissioner of Central Goods and Services Tax and Central Excise, Patna, asking the company to pay alleged dues of about Rs 390 crore. Along with this, the company has also been asked to pay a penalty of a similar amount and interest of around Rs 28 lakh.

In a regulatory filing, UltraTech Cement Ltd said the demand relates to alleged short payment of Goods and Services Tax, improper use of input tax credit and other related issues.

"The Company has received an Order from the Joint Commissioner, Central Goods and Services Tax & Central Excise, Patna," it said in



its filing. The case covers the period from the financial year 2018-19 to 2022-23. The total penalty and interest together account for nearly two-thirds of the company's profit of Rs 1,232 crore reported for the second quarter ended September 2025.

During the same quarter, the country's largest cement maker reported a strong performance, with

revenue rising 20.3 per cent year-on-year to Rs 19,607 crore.

"Order in Original

passed upholding tax liability of Rs 3,90,95,58,194 plus applicable interest on tax demand; additional interest Rs 27,68,289 and penalty of Rs 3,90,95,58,194," the company added.

However, the company said it is considering all

legal options and plans to challenge the order.

UltraTech added that it does not expect the tax demand to have any impact on its operations or financial position.

The company is scheduled to announce its earnings for the ongoing third quarter on January 24, 2026.

"The Company is reviewing the Order, considering all legal options, and accordingly would be contesting the demand, and does not expect the said Order to have any operational/financial impact on the Company," it added.

Meanwhile, UltraTech Cement shares have remained largely flat so far this year. On the latest trading day, the stock closed at Rs 11,497, up Rs 36 or 0.31 per cent.

Blenders Pride Fashion Tour redefines craft in Kolkata finale

The Tour culminated in Kolkata with a bold new interpretation of craft, shaping Fashion's Next Move.



The Blenders Pride Fashion Tour concluded its 2025 edition in Kolkata with a bold and immersive showcase that reimagined the future of fashion craftsmanship. Set against the iconic Howrah Bridge, the grand finale transformed the Hooghly River into a dramatic runway, presenting an experimental collection by designer Anamika Khanna's AK+OK, with actor Ishaan Khatter as the showstopper.

In collaboration with the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI), the showcase challenged conventional ideas of craft, portraying it as a dynamic and evolving force. Anamika Khanna deconstructed traditional techniques such as zardozi, chikankari, and mirror

work, reconstructing them through futuristic silhouettes, metallic elements, and cosmic-inspired graphics.

The show unfolded on a barge anchored in the Hooghly River, turning it into a floating theatre

of fashion. With divers emerging onto the stage, dramatic lighting, smoke effects, and responsive lasers, the presentation built momentum and visual intensity. The finale reached its peak with Ishaan Khatter's arrival in a speedboat, culminating in a powerful closing sequence against the illuminated Howrah Bridge.

Industry leaders praised the event for seamlessly blending heritage and innovation. The Kolkata finale marked a defining moment for the tour, reinforcing Blenders Pride Fashion Tour's role in shaping the next chapter of Indian fashion.

Can't be forced to return, faces political assassination: Sheikh Hasina



NEW DELHI: Former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday dismissed calls for her return to the country amid ongoing legal proceedings, saying the action against her was politically driven and insisting she would not go back under the present circumstances, even as Bangladesh witnessed fresh unrest last week, including the killing of a Hindu man.

"You cannot demand my return to face my political assassination," Hasina said, reiterating that she has challenged Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus to take the matter to The Hague, expressing confidence that an independent court would acquit her. She said she would return only when Bangladesh has a legitimate government and an independent judiciary.

Elaborating on her position in an email interview with ANI, Hasina said the verdict delivered by the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) was not a judicial exercise but a political one, describing it as a "political assassination in judicial robes." She said she was denied the right to defend herself and to appoint lawyers of her choice, alleg-

ing that the tribunal had been used to conduct a "witch hunt of the Awami League."

Despite the allegations, Hasina said her trust in Bangladesh's constitutional framework remains intact. "Our constitutional tradition is strong, and when legitimate governance is restored and our judiciary regains its independence, justice will prevail," she said.

Her comments follow a ruling by a Bangladesh court in November that found Hasina guilty of "crimes against humanity" in connection with the July-August 2024 uprising, with local media reporting that International Crimes Tribunal-1 imposed the death penalty. According to the Dhaka Tribune, the tribunal convicted the former

Prime Minister on all five charges of crimes against humanity. The report said the judgement concluded that Hasina, along with former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, had orchestrated and enabled atrocities during the July-August movement.

The ICT verdict, she said, has also triggered demands for her extradition, which she dismissed as coming from "an increasingly desperate and adrift Yunus administration," while others recognise the proceedings as a politically driven "kangaroo tribunal." She expressed gratitude for India's continued hospitality and the support extended by political parties across India.

Explaining her exit from Bangladesh, Hasina said she left to prevent further bloodshed and not because she feared accountability. Placing developments within a regional context, Hasina addressed the worsening of India-Bangladesh relations, including Dhaka's decision to summon the Indian envoy. She blamed the interim administration for issuing hostile statements against India, failing to protect religious minorities and allowing extremists to influence foreign policy.

Israeli army targets Hezbollah sites in Lebanon



JERUSALEM: The Israeli military carried out airstrikes in southern Lebanon on Monday, saying it targeted Hezbollah sites.

"The IDF (Israel Defence Forces) struck several Hezbollah terrorists in the area of Sidon in southern Lebanon," a military spokesperson said in a statement.

On Friday, the two sides held talks again as part of a security dialogue, focusing on Hezbollah's disarmament and the return of residents to their

homes in Lebanon's southern border villages, according to Israeli and Lebanese sources.

The meeting, under US coordination, took place in

the town of Naqoura in southwest Lebanon, near Israel's northern border, Xinhua news agency reported. Israeli Deputy Director for Foreign

Policy at the National Security Council Yosef Dreznin represented Israel in the talks, while Lebanon's former ambassador to the United States, Simon Karam, led the Lebanese delegation.

According to an Israeli statement, the meeting centered on Hezbollah's disarmament and the advancement of economic projects, highlighting a mutual interest in countering Hezbollah and ensuring long-term security for communities on both sides of

the border. A statement by the Lebanese presidency said that during the talks, Karam highlighted Lebanon's firm position on the humanitarian and national importance of enabling displaced villagers to return safely to their homes. A ceasefire agreement between Hezbollah and Israel has been in force since November 27, 2024 but Israel has continued to carry out occasional strikes aiming at eliminating Hezbollah threats.

COLOMBO: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will arrive in Sri Lanka on Tuesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's special envoy and meet with the island nation's leadership, the Indian High Commission here said on Monday. "The visit underscores India's Neighbourhood First Policy and takes place in the context of Operation Sagar Bandhu launched to address the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

It said that during his visit as PM Modi's Special Envoy, the minister will meet with the Sri Lankan leadership. India was the first country to respond to Sri Lanka's international appeal for help following the devastation caused by the cyclone.

India's Operation 'Sagar Bandhu' provided relief and recovery assistance of immens proportions.

Since the launch of Operation Sagar Bandhu on November 28, India has provided over 1,134 tonnes of humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka, including dry rations,

tents, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, clothing, water purification systems, and 14.5 tonnes of medicines and surgical equipment. Indian Naval ships INS Vikrant, INS Udaygiri, INS Sukanya, LCU-54, LCU-57, LCU-51, and INS Gharial delivered large volumes of relief material to Colombo and Trincomalee, apart from Indian Coast Guard Ship Shurya.

Two teams of the National Disaster Response Force conducted immediate search and rescue operations, while an 85-member Indian Army Field Hospital set up in

Mahiyanganaya provided life-saving medical care to more than 7,000 patients. Medical centres using BHISHM Arogya Maitri cubes were established in severely affected areas, and 248 tonnes of Bailey Bridge components with 48 engineers were airlifted to restore critical connectivity.

Indian Air Force and Navy helicopters evacuated survivors, transported troops, and delivered relief supplies reflecting India's steadfast commitment to Sri Lanka during a time of crisis.

Is crypto an opportunity or a threat?

The fascination with cryptocurrencies shows no sign of fading. With the passage of the Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for US Stablecoins Act, known as the Genius Act, in July, US lawmakers added to the sense that crypto is here to stay. But look beyond the hype and an uncomfortable issue remains unresolved: Are cryptocurrencies a genuine innovation capable of serving the common good or a speculative threat to financial and social stability?

Of course, not all cryptocurrencies are alike. Unbacked ones, such as Bitcoin or Ethereum, have no underlying assets and derive their value purely from people's belief that they have any. But backed cryptocurrencies, including stablecoins, attempt to anchor their value through holdings of real-world assets, such as dollars or short-term government bonds.

Nonetheless, the same two questions apply to both categories: Are they viable? And, if so, do they benefit society? While humility requires that we not claim certainty about the answer to the first question, the second one must be met with a resounding no. Crypto innovation undoubtedly has some valuable features — including blockchain-based applications, smart contracts and decentralized finance — but the proliferation of private digital assets has also widened the gap between private and social interests.

To be sure, the welfare implications of cryptocurrencies are more complex for dysfunctional countries

where the state expropriates individuals or companies through financial repression or other means or uses transaction data to oppress political opponents or minorities. In these cases, crypto can technically replace dollar banknotes and offer lower transaction and concealment costs. But this specific use case does not vindicate cryptocurrencies, because other digital assets could do the same job. Bitcoin is the archetype of an unbacked cryptocurrency with no intrinsic value. Its valuation represents what economists call a pure bubble: it will collapse if confidence evaporates. But not all bubbles burst immediately. Gold has been trading for millennia at prices far above its "fundamental" value (which could be measured by the price that its industrial use would command if it stopped being held for speculative purposes).

Yet history offers many examples of bubbles that ended in ruin — from the Dutch tulip mania of the 1630s to the South Sea Bubble of 1720 and the recurring stock market and real estate crashes that have been with us ever since.

Could Bitcoin become the new gold? Possibly. But its value could also fall to zero. At most, we can be confident that very few of the hundreds of thousands of cryptocurrencies that have emerged will survive. It would be folly for regulated banks or insurance companies (whose losses are often borne by taxpayers) to speculate heavily in such assets without strict capital requirements.

The social damage stem-

ming from unbacked crypto is clearer. Unlike productive risk-taking, speculation in digital tokens creates a variety of harms. One cost is a diversion of seigniorage. In traditional systems, the gains from issuing money flow to the community via the state;

revenues lack any form of investor protection, as we saw with the initial coin offering craze a few years back. Heralded as a means of liberation from the power of financial intermediaries (from venture capital funds to banks), the direct issuance of securities to savers neglects the fundamentals of finance. Dispensing with

the same. Proponents retort that stablecoins are fully backed by cash, bank deposits, Treasury bills or money-market funds and that these reserves are regularly audited. Yet recent episodes cast doubt on such assurances. Tether, the largest stablecoin, was fined for misrepresenting its reserves and has never undergone a full inde-

pendent audit. Circle, whose USDC is the second-largest stablecoin, had 8 percent of its reserves tied up in Silicon Valley Bank when that institution failed in 2023. The crisis was resolved only because uninsured depositors like Circle were bailed out with public funds.

Looking ahead, one can anticipate that the industry will eventually invest in uninsured bank deposits, riskier interest rate bets and so forth. Institutions constrained to hold only low-yield securities often search for yield in disguise, taking hidden risks to increase returns. Relatedly, while the Genius Act forbids issuers from paying interest on stablecoins, platforms are not bound by the rule. This loophole allows platforms to operate like banks without meeting the corresponding



Unlike productive risk-taking, speculation in digital tokens creates a variety of harms

but with crypto, that privilege is privatized or wasted: issuers reap the windfall, while "mining" (running computations to process blockchain transactions) wastes vast amounts of energy and computing equipment. Another problem is crime. Bitcoin and similar assets are notorious for facilitating tax evasion, money laundering and illicit finance. While hard currencies have long been used for the same purposes, the ease and global reach of crypto transactions lower the barriers for wrongdoing. Then there are the implications for macroeconomic policymaking. Central banks can stabilize economies and prevent financial contagion only if they control liquidity during crises.

And unbacked cryptocur-

rency

trusted, well-capitalized and reputable intermediaries to monitor projects does not make markets freer; it makes them more fragile. Technological progress should improve financial efficiency, not roll back centuries' worth of hard-won insights.

Stablecoins were conceived as a response to the volatility of unbacked crypto. By pegging their value to the dollar or other safe assets, they promise the best of both worlds: the efficiency of digital tokens and the stability of traditional money. At first glance, this seems like progress. But financial history is full of supposedly safe innovations — money-market funds, structured securities, mortgage derivatives — that sowed the seeds of later crises. Stablecoins may do the

same. Proponents retort that stablecoins are fully backed by cash, bank deposits, Treasury bills or money-market funds and that these reserves are regularly audited. Yet recent episodes cast doubt on such assurances. Tether, the largest stablecoin, was fined for misrepresenting its reserves and has never undergone a full inde-

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capital and liquidity standards. They have become yet another addition to the growing shadow banking system of institutions that rely on implicit public backing but escape prudential supervision.

Politics further amplifies the risks. The current US administration's endorsement of crypto is driven by a

genuine, small doubts can trigger big runs, as when Lehman Brothers' collapse in 2008 led to mass redemptions from US money-market funds, forcing the Treasury and Federal Reserve to intervene. The same thing happened in 2020, when the start of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a "dash for cash." A similar dynamic could easily occur with stablecoins if

investors fear that the backing assets are insufficient or illiquid. Unfortunately, the Genius Act remains vague about stablecoin redemption rules. Finally, stablecoins' model of "narrow banking" — holding only safe assets like Treasuries — has systemic implications. If deposits migrate from banks to stablecoins, who will provide loans to businesses and households? By borrowing short and lending long, traditional banks perform the vital function of maturity transformation. Their activities are socially useful and the risks are made tolerable by capital requirements, supervision and deposit insurance. Stripping banks of deposits without replacing these safeguards would limit credit creation, increase financial vulnerability and weaken the real economy.

Russian general killed by bomb under his car in Moscow



MOSCOW: A Russian general was killed Monday morning after an explosive device detonated underneath his car in Moscow, and investigators said Ukraine could be behind the attack, the third such killing of a senior military officer in a year. Lt. Gen. Fanil Sarvarov, head of the Operational Training Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces' General Staff, died from his injuries, said Svetlana Petrenko, the spokesperson for Russia's Investigative Committee, the nation's top criminal investigation agency. "Investigators are pursuing numerous lines of enquiry regarding the murder. One of these is that the crime was orchestrated by Ukrainian intelligence services," Petrenko said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that President Vladimir Putin had been immediately informed about Sarvarov's killing. The Defense Ministry said that Sarvarov had previously fought in Chechnya and taken part in Moscow's military campaign in Syria. Just over a year ago, on Dec 17, 2024, Lt. Gen. Igor Kirillov, the chief of the military's nuclear, biological and chemical protection forces, was killed by a bomb hidden on an electric scooter outside his apartment building. Kirillov's assistant also died.

Jaishankar to arrive in Sri Lanka on Tuesday as PM Modi's special envoy



COLOMBO: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will arrive in Sri Lanka on Tuesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's special envoy and meet with the island nation's leadership, the Indian High Commission here said on Monday. "The visit underscores India's Neighbourhood First Policy and takes place in the context of Operation Sagar Bandhu launched to address the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

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Since the launch of Operation Sagar Bandhu on November 28, India has provided over 1,134 tonnes of humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka, including dry rations,



NZ beat WI by 323 runs in third Test to seal series 2-0

MOUNT MAUNGANUI: Jacob Duffy claimed a fifer in the second innings as New Zealand registered a massive 323-run victory in the final Test against the West Indies and sealed the three-match series 2-0. The first Test at Hagley Oval was drawn, while New Zealand won the second by nine wickets.

Duffy's five-wicket haul in the second innings gave him his career-best match figures of 9 for 128, while Ajaz Patel recorded his best innings and match figures at home (3-23 and 6-136, respectively) as the West Indies were dismissed for 138 in their chase of 462 runs. The visitors began the final day on 43 without loss; the Windies openers, Brandon King and

John Campbell, got through the first hour intact, having reached 74 for no loss by the drinks break.

Afterwards, the West Indies lost five wickets for 11 runs and 10 overs. The breakthrough came shortly after drinks, when Duffy got the better of King (67), who was undone by a short ball that climbed awkwardly and took the glove.

Soon after, left-arm spinner Patel struck, ending Campbell's 105-ball stay. That wicket triggered a rapid slide: Kavem Hodge prodded defensively and lobbed a chance off Ajaz to short leg, where Rachin Ravindra reacted sharply to complete a stunning catch on the rebound.



Duffy's five-wicket haul in the second innings gave him his career-best match figures of 9 for 128, while Ajaz Patel recorded his best innings and match figures at home

deliveries before a probing back-of-a-length ball seamed away, took the outside edge, and was safely pouched low at first slip by Daryl Mitchell.

From a solid 87 for no loss, West Indies were quickly reduced to 99 for 5 at Lunch, with Shai Hope and Roston Chase steadying the ship. The duo's partnership, which lasted 56 balls, yielded only 6 runs before Chase became Duffy's fourth victim.

Hope stone-walled the New Zealand attack in his 78-ball stay, scoring three runs, before Ajaz trapped him in front. Glenn Phillips struck next to dismiss Kemar Roach, while Tevin Imlach dug in to offer some resistance, with

Anderson Phillip providing support as West Indies reached 138/8 at Tea.

After the break, Ravindra trapped Phillip lbw, and with the second new ball taken, Duffy removed Jayden Seales for a duck as New Zealand wrapped up the match in the final session.

Brief scores: New Zealand 578/8d (Devon Conway 227, Tom Latham 137; Justin Greaves 2-83) & 306/2d (Tom Latham 101, Devon Conway 100; Kavem Hodge 2-80) beat West Indies 420 (Kavem Hodge 123*; Jacob Duffy 4-86, Ajaz Patel 3-113) & 138 (Brandon King 67; Jacob Duffy 5-42, Ajaz Patel 3-23) by 323 runs.

Ashes: Jhye Richardson likely to be added to Australia's camp ahead of Boxing Day Test



the third Ashes Test.

With skipper Pat Cummins expected to sit out the Melbourne Test, and potentially the rest of the series, this will open the vacancy in the pace attack, meaning Richardson is very close to being in consideration.

The fact that Richardson has been called into camp to bowl in front of the coaching staff shows he remains very much in Australia's plans, despite playing his last Test in December 2022. Moreover, with veteran spinner Nathan Lyon being ruled out of the series with a hamstring injury, Australia will need to figure out a replacement for the veteran of 141 Tests.

Todd Murphy is likely the

frontrunner to replace Lyon in the squad, with Corey Rocciccioli, Matthew Kuhnemann, Mitch Swepson and Cooper Connolly also in the fray. Murphy is likely the frontrunner to replace Lyon in the squad. He was selected for his Test debut at 22 during Australia's Border-Gavaskar Trophy tour of India in 2023. He took a stunning 7-124 on debut and dismissed Virat Kohli four times throughout the series.

Murphy was called in as Lyon's injury replacement during the 2023 Ashes and returned to the Test team against Sri Lanka in January this year, taking one wicket in Australia's innings victory.



Man United captain Bruno Fernandes set to miss games after injury against Villa

BIRMINGHAM (ENGLAND): Manchester United captain Bruno Fernandes could be out for "a while" after pulling up with an injury against Aston Villa on Sunday.

United coach Ruben Amorim said Fernandes had sustained a soft tissue injury in the first half of the Premier League game at Villa Park. Villa won 2-1. "I think it's soft tissues, so it's going to take a while. We'll see," Amorim told

Sky Sports. Fernandes appeared to hurt his hamstring when pulling up. He played on until the break but was replaced by Lisandro Martinez for the start of the second half.

Fernandes was then seen walking uncomfortably along the sideline as he made his way to the bench for the second half. "I think he is going to lose some games, but I don't know for sure," Amorim said in his post-match news conference.

"I don't want to talk about the matter, it is a guy who is always fit and he has shown he can always recover."

United is already without Bryan Mbeumo, Amad Diallo and Noussair Mazraoui, who are playing in the Africa Cup of Nations.

Amorim's options were further depleted on Sunday, with midfielder Kobbie Mainoo ruled out with a calf injury picked up in training.

"During this year,

especially in this time, we have so many problems, but we have to cope with that," Amorim said. Mainoo would have been the obvious replacement for Fernandes.

Even before Fernandes' injury, Amorim said Mainoo's absence was bad timing. "He is going to be fine in a few weeks, I think, I don't know," Amorim said. "Let's focus on the players that we have and are ready to play."

INDIAN ATHLETICS IN 2025

Neeraj hits 90m high but no end to country's doping woes

Young Sachin Yadav outperformed Chopra to emerge as a potential world-class javelin thrower with a fourth-place finish.

NEW DELHI: Despite a rare blip in form, Neeraj Chopra was the biggest saving grace for India's doping-marred athletics landscape after getting the 90m "monkey off his back" even as the sport's administrators worked towards making the country a hub of big-ticket events in a bitter-sweet 2025.

The 27-year-old Chopra went past the coveted mark, considered the gold standard in javelin throw, in the Doha Diamond League but suffered a heartbreak when he failed to win a medal in the World Championships final in Tokyo later in the year.

Young Sachin Yadav outperformed Chopra to emerge as a potential world-class javelin thrower with a fourth-place finish. But the doping menace showed no signs of decline with several top Indians caught in the net, including Olympian javelin thrower Shiyopal Singh and former Asian Games medalist discus thrower Seema Punia. An athlete-coach duo was also suspended for doping in a first of its kind instance, while two minor athletes too joined the Hall of Shame. There was a silver lining though, as India staged two World Athletics Continental Tour events, with Chopra

hosting and winning one of them. The country also mounted bids on some high-profile continental and global events, including the 2031 World Athletics Championships with Ahmedabad as the proposed venue.

MARRIAGE AND 90M HIGH FOR CHOPRA

One of the most eligible bachelors in the country, Chopra tied the knot with tennis player Himani Mor in an intimate ceremony in a private resort in Himachal Pradesh with just a few close relatives and family members present. The outside world got to know of the event only after Chopra himself posted the marriage photos in his social media handles. A few months later, Chopra sent his spear to 90.23m to become the third Asian and 25th overall to achieve the feat.

Chopra clinched three more major titles -- the Paris Diamond League, the Golden Spike meet and the inaugural NC Classic. He realised his dream of hosting a world-class event in front of the home crowd and family members. He, however, came up short in the Diamond League Finals, finishing second to German Julian Weber. He was bidding



to regain the trophy he had won in 2022, but was barely able to touch the 85m mark. But the most unexpected happened during the World Championships in Tokyo in September at the very venue where he achieved fame and Olympic gold in 2021. Struggling with back pain,

defending champion Chopra was ousted after the fifth and penultimate round with a best effort of 84.03m that left him eighth overall.

He was outperformed by debutant compatriot Yadav (86.27m) who logged a creditable fourth-place finish. Chopra, who had also won a

silver in the 2022 edition, has not finished outside the top-2 since winning gold in 2021 Tokyo Games. After that, he has either won or finished second in 24 international events.

NEVER-ENDING DOPING MENACE

India continued to occupy the second spot in the global list of athletes ineligible to compete due to doping offences, with 128 athletes in the list released by Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU). Some of the country's top athletes caught for doping included Shivpal, Pune Half Marathon winner Pradhan, Vilas Kirulakar, sprinter Sekar Dhanalakshmi and 2014 Asian Games medalist hammer thrower Manju Bala. Two minors were also handed three-year bans by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

Former Indian junior team head coach Ramesh Nagpuri was suspended for "complicity" in doping. Two more coaches -- Karamveer Singh and Rakesh -- were also suspended for "complicity" and "administration of prohibited substances" respectively.

Asian Games silver medal-winning long distance runner Kartik Kumar accepted a three-year ban from the US Anti-Doping Agency after test

ing positive for a range of banned anabolic agents during out-of-competition tests there. Towards the end of the year, 18-year-old Sanjana Singh, who had won gold medals in women's 1500m and 5000m in the SAAF Senior Athletics Championships in Ranchi, and her coach Sandeep Singh were provisionally suspended for a doping offence. Later, former Asian Games gold-winning discus thrower Seema Punia got a 16-month ban for failing a dope test, adding to her checkered doping record, which included two previous violations, one of them at the junior level when she was merely 17.

Alarmed by the rising doping cases, the AIU set up an anti-doping cell to track down coaches and training centres suspected to be involved in substance abuse. It also made it mandatory for all coaches -- qualified and unqualified -- to register on its portal from this season onwards if they wanted to continue training athletes. It will also not recommend anyone who trains with unregistered coaches for national honours like the Arjuna and Khel Ratna award. However, except for relay runners, no other athlete currently trains at national camps

under the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). Most of them train individually or at the National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs) managed by the Sports Authority of India (SAI). Some of them also train at private facilities administered by entities such as Reliance Foundation and JSW Sports.

INDIA AS HOSTS OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

India successfully hosted a World Athletics Continental Tour bronze level meet on August 10 at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. The event will be upgraded to silver level next year, to be held at the same venue on August 22, 2026. India also made bids for 2028 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships -- with Bhubaneswar as venue -- and the 2026 Asian Relays. The AIU decided to introduce the National Indoor Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar in March next year, to prepare for the 2028 Asian Indoor Championships for which it has made a bid. Meanwhile, Adilene Sumariwalla's reign as AFI chief came to an end with 2002 Asian Games gold-winning shot putter Bahadur Sagoo replacing him.



Shambhala pre-release event highlights Aadi Saikumar's journey and strong industry support

The pre-release event of Shambhala, starring versatile actor Aadi Saikumar, was held in a grand manner on Sunday, creating strong buzz ahead of the film's theatrical release on December 25. The film is produced by Rajashkar Annabhimoju and Maheedhar Reddy under the Shining Pictures banner and directed by Yagandhar Muni. Archana Iyer, Swasika, Ravi Varma, Madhunandan, and Shiva Karthik play key roles. Several prominent personalities from the film industry, including Kiran Abbavaram, Manchu Manoj, Priyadarshi, Anil Ravipudi, S Thaman, TG

Vishwa Prasad, Naveen Yerneni, and Mythri Shashi, attended the event and extended their best wishes to the team. Speaking at the event, Kiran Abbavaram praised the positive buzz surrounding Shambhala and recalled the support he received from Sai Kumar early in his career. Manchu Manoj lauded the film's trailer and expressed confidence in its success. Director Anil Ravipudi highlighted Aadi's willingness to experiment across genres and called him a brilliant actor deserving of a major hit.

Aadi Saikumar expressed gratitude for the overwhelming support, noting that the teaser and trailers launched by Dulquer Salmaan,

Prabhas, and Nani significantly raised expectations. He credited director Yagandhar Muni's dedication and the producers' commitment to quality for the film's strong impact. Veteran actor Sai Kumar shared his pride as a father, calling Shambhala a special milestone in Aadi's career. He expressed confidence that the film's content and positive word-of-mouth would resonate with audiences. With strong backing from industry figures and positive early responses, Shambhala is gearing up for a festive Christmas release, aiming to strike a chord with audiences through its blend of science, spirituality, and emotion.

Director Maruthi unveils Theatrical Trailer of 'Bad Girlz'

Bad Girlz' is an entertainer directed by Phani Pradeep Dhulipudi, who has previously directed the successful '30 Rojullo Premichadam 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 Manchodu', contradicts with the title in an interesting way. Sasidhar Nalla, Emmadi Soma Narsaiah, Ramisetti Rambabu, and Ravula Ramesh are producing this film. The film is slated for release as a Christmas gift on December 25.

Maruthi, the star director of Prabhas's upcoming film The Raja Saab, has released the theatrical trailer for this movie. Speaking on the occasion, the director said: "The trailer is very good and looks very promising. Director Phani Pradeep Dhulipudi (Munna) is a long-time friend of mine; he is a gentle soul in the industry and possesses great musical knowledge. Everyone knows how big of a hit the song 'Neeli Neeli Aakasham' from his first film

was. Now, he is coming before us with Bad Girlz. He has attempted to convey a good message in a fresh way. Making a film with five new actresses and completing it

how today's girls are, their way of thinking, and what they desire. Please watch it and support 'Bad Girls'."

Director Phani Pradeep Dhulipudi shared his excite-

Now, the theatrical trailer has been launched by Maruthi, the director of the upcoming film The Raja Saab. After watching the trailer, he praised it highly. We are releasing the film as a



without compromising on production values is a testament to his passion. While the title is Bad Girlz, the film itself is very positive. The movie is releasing on December 25th, and everyone has worked very hard. Concept-based films like this, which give importance to women, must succeed. This film is based on the concept of

ment about the project, stating: "Our film is a complete entertainer. Imagine the hilarious energy of films like Jathi Ratnalu and MAD, but featuring girls in those roles—that is exactly what our movie is. The film feels very new and fresh. Recently, director Buchi Babu Sana released our teaser, which received a fantastic response.

Christmas gift on December 25th. It is a solid entertainer with excellent music by Anup Rubens and lyrics for all songs penned by Oscar-winner Chandra Bose. Tracks like 'Ila Choosukuntane', 'Lelo', and the title song are already receiving great appreciation. Please watch it in theaters on December 25th."

New poster of RK Deeksha unveiled



The new poster of the upcoming Telugu film RK Deeksha was officially launched by Telugu Film Producers Council Secretary Thummala Prasanna Kumar. The film is produced under the banners of RK Films and Sigdha Creations, written and directed by Dr. Prathani Ramakrishna Goud, and presented by D.S. Reddy. Kiran plays the lead role in the film, while popular Dhee Jodi fame Aqsa Khan and Alekhya Reddy appear as the female leads. The cast also includes Tulasi, Anusha, Keerthana, Pravallika, and Rohith Sharma in key roles. Music is composed by Raju Kiran and the film is edited by Meghana Sreenu. Speaking at the poster launch,

Dr. Prathani Ramakrishna Goud expressed gratitude to Thummala Prasanna Kumar for his support and said it was a proud moment to revive the title Deeksha, earlier associated with a legendary NTR film. He highlighted the challenges faced by small filmmakers due to high digital and theatrical costs and appealed for support to sustain small-budget cinema. He added that the film features impactful elements, including a special song dedicated to soldiers. Presenter D.S. Reddy said RK Deeksha focuses on themes of determination, devotion, and inner strength. Lead actor Kiran, actresses Aqsa Khan and Tulasi, and other cast members urged audiences to support the film.



Vrusshabha will mesmerize audiences with grand visuals: Bunny Vas

The pre-release event of the much-anticipated film Vrusshabha, starring Malayalam superstar Mohanlal, was held grandly in Hyderabad on Sunday. The high-budget pan-Indian film is set for a theatrical release on the 25th of this month through Geetha Film Distributors. Directed by Nandakishore, Vrusshabha has been simultaneously made in Malayalam and Telugu and is produced under the banners of Connekk Media, Balaji Telefilms, and Abhishek S Vyas Studios.

Speaking at the event, producer and distributor Bunny Vas said the film boasts grand making, strong emotional content, and stunning visuals that will mesmerize audiences. He revealed that the makers invested heavily in production quality and said the film reaches another level from the "King episode" onwards. Praising the performances, he said Samarjit Lankesh showed great ease as an actor and expressed confidence that he would emerge as a major star. Bunny Vas also highlighted the powerful action sequences, emotional depth, and impactful music com-

posed by Sam CS. Actors associated with the film shared their excitement and experiences. Balagam Sanjay called acting alongside Mohanlal an unforgettable experience and said the film's grandeur and CG work would impress audiences. Actress Nayan Sarika described Vrusshabha as a gripping and unpredictable

while hero Samarjit Lankesh said the film combines intense action with strong emotional elements centered on love and a father-son relationship.

Produced by Shobha Kapoor, Ekta Kapoor, and a team of noted producers, Vrusshabha features a multi-lingual cast and has been positioned as a true pan-



film with a mind-blowing climax, adding that she felt proud to make her Malayalam debut with such a prestigious project. Actor Ali praised director Nandakishore's track record and wished the team success,

India project. With strong buzz and multiple films releasing during the festive season, the makers expressed confidence that Vrusshabha will stand out and attract audiences to theates on the 25th.

Sunny Leone's Gippa Gippa song from Trimukha creates buzz

The much-awaited song Gippa Gippa from the film Trimukha, starring Sunny Leone along with Yogesh, Sahithi Dasari, and Akriti Agarwal, has been officially released and is generating massive buzz across platforms. Launched as a perfect New Year treat, the song has quickly gone viral, with audiences playing it on repeat and showering it with overwhelming appreciation. Packed with high energy and grand visuals, Gippa Gippa has struck an instant chord with viewers and is trending widely on social media. The vibrant presentation and catchy beats have contributed to its rapid popularity, making it one of the most talked-about releases of the season. Reacting to the response, the producers expressed their delight, stating that the reception has exceeded their expectations. They highlighted that the phenomenal reaction clearly reflects Sunny Leone's strong fan following and star power, which continues to draw huge attention digitally.



Indian animated film Mission Santa set for global Christmas release

The Indian animated feature film Mission Santa is set for a worldwide theatrical release on December 25 as a special Christmas offering. Developed to international standards, the high-energy animated adventure will premiere simultaneously in India, France, Germany, and several other countries, including major cities across the Telugu-speaking states. Following the success of the animated film Narasimha Avatar, which received wide appreciation across India, Mission Santa marks another significant step forward for Indian animation. The film promises a rich cinematic experience with quality animation, emotional depth, fast-paced storytelling, and thrilling adventure, making it a complete family entertainer. According to the makers, Mission Santa is designed to appeal to audiences of all age groups—children, parents, and grandpar-

ents alike. Its highlights include stunning visual effects, engaging characters driven by courage and conviction, and a narrative that blends emotion with excitement. The film is also being projected as a milestone for the Indian animation industry. While the story, script, and character design were developed in Los Angeles, the entire animation production was executed in India under the supervision of senior animation experts. More than 150 Indian animation professionals worked on the project over a span of nearly 20 months. Produced by Broadvision India and Studio56, Mission Santa aims to elevate Indian animation from a service-based sector to a globally recognised creative force. Releasing in English, the film is expected to deliver a premium animated theatrical experience to audiences worldwide.