

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

22-12-2025

Total pilgrims: 60,764
Tonsures: 33,077
Hundi vanukulu: 4.01 CR
Waiting Compartments:
Out side line at ATGH

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens). 12 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889

NATION | NEWS

Rajnath launches BRO manual to streamline strategic road construction



WORLD | NEWS

Jaishankar begins visit to Sri Lanka as PM Modi's special envoy



SPORTS | NEWS

Contemplated retirement after 2023 World Cup final defeat: Rohit



INBRIEF

Four of family die in house fire in WB's Howrah

HOWRAH (TSIT): Four members of a family were charred to death after a fire broke out at their house in West Bengal's Howrah district around midnight, officials said on Monday. The incident occurred at Sauria village under the Joypur police station limits. The deceased were identified as Durjodhan Dolui (72), his son Dudhkumar Dolui (45), daughter-in-law Shibani Dolui (40), and granddaughter Shampa Dolui (15). Officials said the victims were asleep when the fire engulfed their kuccha house. Two fire tenders were pressed into service and managed to douse the blaze, but the family could not be rescued in time.

CAF jawan shoots colleague dead inside camp in Chhattisgarh

RAIPUR (TSIT): A Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) constable allegedly shot his colleague dead inside a barrack camp during the intervening night of Sunday and Monday in Khairagarh district, around 130 km west of Raipur. The incident took place at the 17th CAF battalion's Ghagra base camp following an altercation between the two jawans. Police said the accused has been identified as Arvind Gautam, while the deceased was Sonbir Jaat, who was serving as a mess commander.

J&K police vows vigil against terrorism and crime

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat reaffirmed the UT police's commitment to maintaining strict vigilance over terrorism and all forms of criminal activity. Speaking at the inauguration of the 14th Police Martyrs Memorial T20 Cricket Tournament 2025-2026 in Kathua, the DGP emphasized that the police will closely monitor drugs, gangsters, mafia networks, and especially terrorism. "The constant aim of the police is to stamp out anti-national and anti-social activities in Jammu and Kashmir," DGP Prabhat stated. He highlighted ongoing operations by the J&K Police and security forces targeting terrorists, overground workers (OGWs), sympathizers, drug traffickers, and individuals involved in hawala money rackets.

CM Directs Departments to Submit Employee Details by January 26

HYDERABAD (TSIT): Chief Minister has directed all Secretaries to submit comprehensive details of employees working in their respective departments—including regular, outsourcing, and contract staff—to the Chief Secretary by January 26. The Chief Minister also instructed the Heads of Departments (HODs) to verify whether outsourcing employees are receiving their due salaries along with EPF and ESI benefits. He emphasized that this verification process must be completed within the stipulated deadline of January 26. In a significant administrative decision, the Chief Minister clarified that government offices should not function from rented buildings. Accordingly, officials have been instructed

- Chief Minister orders all departments to submit details of regular, outsourcing, and contract employees and verify their salaries and benefits by January 26.

- Government offices operating from rented buildings must be shifted to government-owned premises by January 26.

to vacate all rented premises and shift government offices to government-owned buildings by January 26. The Chief Minister

stressed strict adherence to these directions and called for timely compliance from all concerned departments.

'CONSPIRACY TO SELL ARAVALI':

Gehlot accuses Centre of turning CEC into 'puppet'

Jaipur, Dec 22 : Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has strongly criticised the Union government's move to change the definition of the Aravali range, calling it misleading, factually hollow, and driven by vested interests. He also rejected Union Minister Bhupender Yadav's claim that mining would be permitted on only 0.19 per cent of the Aravalli area, terming it an attempt to mislead the public through selective statistics. Gehlot said the new "100-metre definition" of the Aravali cannot be viewed in isolation. When examined alongside two major policy decisions taken by the Union government, it becomes clear that this is not an exercise in environmental protection but a deliberate plan to hand over the Aravali ecosystem to the mining mafia through institutional capture. He shed light on how the protector was turned into a predator and how the CEC was neutralised. Gehlot alleged that through a notification issued on September 5, 2023, the Union government deliberately weakened the Central Empowered Committee (CEC)—formed in 2002 under the supervision of the Supreme Court to protect

the environment—by removing it from the Court's oversight and placing it under the Ministry of Environment. The committee, which was earlier an independent, court-monitored body, was converted into a permanent government committee through executive notification. Earlier, CEC members were appointed with the Supreme Court's approval. Post-notification, the Central Government assumed complete control over appointments, effectively turning the CEC into an instrument of the government. "This is the same CEC whose independent report led to the arrest of a powerful BJP minister, Janardhan Reddy, in an illegal mining case in Karnataka on September 5, 2011," Gehlot said.

Revanth pay tributes to ex-PM Narasimha Rao

HYDERABAD : Andhra Pradesh Governor S. Abdul Nazeer, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and leaders from various political parties in both Telugu states on Tuesday paid tributes to former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao on his death anniversary. Governor of Andhra Pradesh S. Abdul Nazeer paid tributes to Narasimha Rao on his death anniversary. The Governor said Narasimha Rao was a visionary statesman, a distinguished scholar, and an outstanding administrator, whose leadership played a pivotal role in shaping modern India. He made historic contributions to economic reforms, national integration, and India's global standing, and his legacy continues to inspire generations.

AP to lead quantum technology revolution in India, says CM Naidu

AMARAVATI (TSIT) : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday exuded confidence that Andhra Pradesh will lead the quantum technology revolution in India. He said the state government has prepared an action plan to produce experts in quantum and related fields. He was addressing over 50,000 students of quantum technology, professionals and industry partners on a digital platform under an initiative aimed at building a future-ready quantum workforce and strengthening the Amaravati Quantum Valley ecosystem. The Chief Minister announced that the state would train one million experts in areas such as quantum mechanics and algorithms, 300,000 people in the quantum software and hardware sectors, and 100,000 experts in advanced research. Stating that Amaravati will be developed as India's Quantum Valley on the lines of Silicon Valley in the US, he exuded confidence that quan-

tum computing devices will be produced here in the next two years. He claimed that the announcement of the quantum programme received an overwhelming response. Through a single announcement to train quantum experts, 54,000 people registered. The programme is being implemented through a strategic partnership led by WISER (The Washington Institute for STEM, Entrepreneurship and Research) and Qubittech as the India partner. "Twenty-five years ago, I presented a vision for IT. Today, I am presenting a vision for Quantum. Just like Silicon Valley anchored the digital age, Amaravati's Quantum Valley will anchor the knowledge economy of the future," he said.

Intel flags ISI plot to incite anti-India fury in Bangladesh, push New Delhi into military response

NEW DELHI (TSIT): With the situation in Bangladesh going from bad to worse, Intelligence agencies have learnt that there is a deliberate attempt by the ISI to provoke India. The plan is to provoke India into attacking Bangladesh, so that it garners international attention, agencies have learnt. The ISI-backed elements are provoking people, stating that India is protecting ousted leader Sheikh Hasina, while backing her party, the Awami League. The August 2024 uprising managed to create an anti-Hasina wave across the country, and this is being taken advantage of by the ISI. Following her ouster, she fled to India and remained in New Delhi since then. Following the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina government and the subsequent takeover by Muhammad Yunus as caretaker of the interim government, chaos ensued throughout the country. Street violence has become a daily routine apart from the persecution of the minority community. An official stated that there is a significant

amount of anti-India sentiment that the ISI has managed to cultivate over the past year. However, the systematic persecution of the minority community, especially the Hindus, is a clear attempt to provoke India. In the last couple of days, disturbing visuals of a Hindu man being lynched have been in circulation. ISI-backed handles are deliberately making these clips go viral in India so that it provokes the general public. The aim is to provoke the Indian public to such an extent that they put pressure on the government to act militarily against Bangladesh. The other intention is make India look like the aggressor in the international community, an official said. An official says that India's intention is not to be the aggressor. However, it will do everything it can to protect its integrity and sovereignty. Moreover, the ISI is well aware that any such action could derail the February 2026 elections. This is what the ISI and Jamaat-e-Islami have been planning, as they want the elections to be postponed or cancelled. If this were to take place, they would run the country the way they like with their proxy Muhammad Yunus, another official said. In addition to the lynching incidents, two student leaders have been shot in a span of a week. Osman Hadi and Moteleb Sikder, both top student leaders, were shot, and this has led to an increase in violence.

RBI data expose TDP-JSP lies, says Jagan Mohan Reddy

AMARAVATI (TSIT): Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said on Tuesday that the lies of TDP-JSP have been exposed with the statistics released by the RBI about the state's performance in the manufacturing and industry sectors during 2019-24. YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president said that after forming the government, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Jana Sena Party (JSP) persistently made the allegations that brand AP was destroyed owing to the YSRCP government, that investors abandoned AP owing to the YSRCP government and that no industrial growth was witnessed during the period of the YSRCP government. "If this picture were remotely true, then AP's performance in the manufacturing and industry front should have been miserable. But the facts bring to light a totally different picture," Jagan Mohan Reddy said in a post on 'X'. The former CM highlighted the statistics released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) this month. The sta-

tistics revealed that in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), Andhra Pradesh stood number one in South India and number five in India in the manufacturing sector during 2019-24. Similarly, in the industry sector growth, Andhra Pradesh stood number one in South India and number eight in India during the same period. "Is this destruction of Brand AP or a booming economy because of transformative leadership?" he asked. Meanwhile, YSRCP leader and former minister Ambati Rambabu strongly criticised Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, stating that his recent speeches are strange, aggressive, and confusing, aimed not at governance but at protecting Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

Revanth has no understanding of river water issues: KTR

Hyderabad (TSIT): Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday accused Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of having "zero understanding" of river water issues and branded irrigation ministers as "dangerously ignorant." Addressing a felicitation meeting of newly elected Sarpanches, Deputy Sarpanches and Ward Members at the BRS party office in Nalgonda, Rama

Rao congratulated the grassroots representatives and said their victory has infused renewed confidence and energy into the party. KTR, as the BRS leader is popularly known,

alleged that the Congress government is indulging in diversionary politics and case dramas only because it has failed to answer the serious questions raised by former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) on irrigation projects and governance. He challenged the Chief Minister to stop leaking stories from behind the scenes and come openly before the cameras to declare what cases he intends to file.

RBI announces Rs 3 trillion liquidity boost through OMOs, forex swap

MUMBAI (TSIT): The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday announced a fresh set of steps to inject a large amount of money into the banking system to ease tight liquidity conditions. Through a mix of open market operations (OMOs) and a foreign exchange swap, the central bank will add nearly Rs 3 trillion to the system over the coming weeks. As part of the

plan, the RBI will buy government bonds worth Rs 2 trillion through OMOs. These purchases will be done in four equal tranches of Rs 50,000 crore each on

December 29, January 5, January 12 and January 22. In addition, the central bank will conduct a three-year USD/INR buy-sell swap of \$10 billion on January 13, which will also help release rupee liquidity into the banking system. Market participants said such a large injection was widely expected, even before the RBI stepped in to sell dollars in the foreign exchange market last week. The

main reason for the liquidity squeeze is the RBI's recent intervention in the currency market. Last week, the central bank sold dollars aggressively to prevent a sharp fall in the rupee, which had weakened due to uncertainty around a possible trade deal with the US and continued foreign portfolio investor outflows from Indian equity and debt markets.

Chaos at Bangladesh High Commission as VHP, Bajrang Dal protesters clash with police

Protesters forced several barricades down as police struggled to contain the surge.

NEW DELHI: Holding saffron flags and shouting slogans against the lynching of a Hindu man in Bangladesh, hundreds of supporters of the VHP and the Bajrang Dal broke barricades and clashed with police near the fortified Bangladesh High Commission on Tuesday. Protesters forced several barricades down as police struggled to contain the surge.

The high security area witnessed a beefed-up police presence in the morning ahead of the protest announced by the Hindu right against the lynching of a Hindu man



in the strife-torn neighbouring nation.

A sea of banners and placards bobbed in the air, reading denunciatory messages against the Bangladesh government. The area had been

secured with three layers of barricading and more force from the police and paramilitary. A placard read: "Hindu rakt ki ek ek boond ka hisaab chahiye (Each drop of blood of a Hindu must be

accounted for)." On December 18, Dipu Chandra Das, a 25-year-old garment factory worker, was lynched to death by a mob and his body set on fire over alleged blasphemy in Baluka in Mymensingh.

According to the police, Das was first beaten up by a mob outside the factory over blasphemy allegations and hanged from a tree. The crowd then left the body of the deceased on the side of the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and later set it on fire.

"A Hindu man was brutally assaulted and killed.



Vice President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan in a group photo during the National Conference on "AI Evolution" in New Delhi.....

Unnao rape case: Delhi HC suspends jail term of Kuldeep Sengar, grants bail



NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday suspended the jail term of expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar, who is serving life imprisonment in the Unnao rape case.

A bench of Justices Subramonium Prasad and Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar released Sengar on bail while directing him to furnish a personal bond of Rs 15 lakh with three sureties of the like amount.

The high court also directed Sengar not to come within a 5 km radius of the victim's house and not threaten her or her mother. "Violation of any of the conditions would lead to cancellation of bail," the court said. Sengar's sentence has been suspended by

the high court till the pendency of his appeal challenging his conviction and sentence in the rape case. He has challenged the December 2019 trial court verdict in the rape case. The minor girl was kidnapped and raped by Sengar in 2017. The rape case and other connected cases were transferred to Delhi from a trial court in Uttar Pradesh on the directions of the Supreme Court on August 1, 2019. Sengar's appeal against his conviction in the case of the survivor's father's custodial death case is also pending, where he has sought suspension of sentence on the ground that he has already spent a substantial time in jail. He was sentenced to 10 years in jail in the custodial death case.

Kerala CMO interfering in Sabarimala SIT probe through IPS officers, alleges Cong

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Opposition Congress on Tuesday levelled grave charges against Kerala CMO in connection with the ongoing SIT probe into the Sabarimala gold loss case and accused it of interfering with the investigation through intermediaries. While talking to reporters here, Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan alleged that two IPS officers were assigned by the CMO to exert intense pressure on the SIT that probes the case.

He said the opposition was refraining from naming the officers concerned only out of propriety, but warned that he would be compelled to disclose their identities if they did not stop exerting pressure upon investigating officers.

Stressing the need for a sincere and impartial investigation, he said it is a case involving the theft of gold belonging to Lord Ayyappa. He said the opposition is closely monitoring the probe and would point out any lapses in the investigation.

Satheesan said the investigation would now move forward in the right direction only because of the High Court's intervention. He clarified that the opposition has not so far expressed any lack of confidence in the SIT and said he expects the real culprits to be brought before the law at the earliest. Satheesan said the opposition would wait for a few more days to assess how the SIT probe progresses and cautioned that the situation should not reach a stage where a CBI investigation becomes inevitable. He



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alleged that it was only because the probe is under court scrutiny that it is moving forward to some extent. Otherwise, he claimed, the investigation would have gone nowhere. Had the probe remained entirely under

the government's control, Satheesan said, key accused like former TDB chiefs A Padmakumar and N Vasu would not have been arrested.

Sabarimala Lord Ayyappa Temple has been at the centre of a huge political controversy over the loss of gold for some time.

A Special Investigation Team is probing the loss of gold and related complaints, and several persons, including two past presidents of the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB), have been arrested in this regard.

The SIT recently told a Vigilance Court that Pankaj Bhandari of Smart Creations and Ballari-based jeweller Govardhan Roddam played a central role in a conspiracy to steal gold from artefacts of the Sabarimala temple. The SIT on Friday arrested both Bhandari and Roddam.

Countdown for launch of ISRO's Bluebird Block-2 Mission begins in Sriharikota

SRIHARIKOTA: The 24-hour countdown for the launch of LVM3-M6 rocket, which will carry a new generation US communication satellite commenced here on Tuesday, ISRO said.

In a dedicated commercial mission, ISRO is scheduled to launch the Bluebird Block-2 spacecraft on board its heavy lift launch vehicle LVM3-M6 at 8.54 am from the second launch pad at this spaceport on Wednesday.

Weighing 6,100 kg, the communication satellite would be the heaviest payload to be placed into the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) in LVM3 launch history, the Bengaluru-

prayers at the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple in Tirumala on December 23.

According to the Indian space agency, the 43.5 metre tall LVM3, also known as Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle MkIII, is a three stage rocket with a cryogenic engine designed and developed by ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre. The vehicle uses two S200 solid rocket boosters to provide the huge amount of thrust required for lift off. The booster has been developed by Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.

After a flight of about



Rahul Gandhi, Tejashwi Yadav are part-time politicians: Nitin Nabin

Patna, Dec 23 : BJP National Working President Nitin Nabin on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, calling them part-time politicians.

Addressing a large gathering during his felicitation ceremony at Miller High School Ground in Patna, Nabin urged BJP workers to avoid part-time politics and asserted that BJP leaders and workers believe in full-time commitment. "BJP members do full-time politics. We should not do part-time politics like Rahul Gandhi," Nabin said. Launching a direct attack on the Congress leader, Nabin said that Rahul Gandhi repeatedly disrespects national institutions and the country itself. "When Rahul Gandhi is in the country, he abuses the Constitution and the Election Commission. When he goes abroad, he abuses the country. Such people should be punished," Nabin said. Without naming RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, the BJP leader took an indirect swipe at him, accusing him of lack-



ing seriousness toward legislative responsibilities. "There is a leader in Bihar who also does part-time politics. When the Assembly is in session, he leaves," Nabin said.

Calling the present time a "time of change," Nabin urged BJP workers in Bihar to step forward and dedicate themselves to the development of Bihar and the nation.

He emphasised that party workers must actively work to take government schemes to the grassroots. "There is no shortcut in politics. One has to work continuously with a long-term vision," he said. Nitin Nabin said that Patna and Bihar hold a special place in his heart, irrespective of where he is posted. "Wherever I may be, Patna and the people of

Bihar live in my heart. I cannot forget the love of the people of Bankipur and the respect given by party workers," he said.

Tuesday marked Nitin Nabin's first visit to Patna after becoming the BJP's National Working President. He received a grand welcome, and the Bihar BJP organised a large felicitation ceremony in his honour at Miller School Ground. Addressing the event, Nabin expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP National President J.P. Nadda, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, saying they had shown immense faith in Bihar.

Highlighting the BJP's organisational culture, Nabin said the party empowers even grassroots workers.

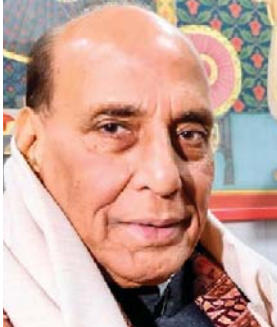
Rajnath launches BRO manual to streamline strategic road construction

New Delhi, Dec 23 : Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday released the 'Guide on Preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for Road Infrastructure Projects' prepared by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), in South Block, New Delhi.

The BRO is entrusted with the construction and maintenance of highways and strategic roads in some of the most remote and challenging terrains of the country, and the DPRs serve as a comprehensive document covering engineering design, construction methodology, execution strategy, quality control and cost analysis.

"BRO has developed the guide to provide a concise, comprehensive and uniform reference encompassing specifications, standards, guidelines & procedures for DPR preparation. It is intended to assist engineers at every stage of project formulation, whether for new construction or upgradation of existing road infrastructure," the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said in its press note.

The guide aims to



address the issues of time and cost overruns arising from inadequately prepared DPRs.

"It is expected to significantly enhance the quality and consistency of the reports, ensuring timely execution of projects & contributing to improved strategic connectivity and socio-economic development of border regions through systematic planning, technical accuracy, quality assurance & cost-effectiveness," it added.

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways Secretary V. Umashankar, DG Border Roads Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan, and other senior civil and military officials were present on the occasion. Notably, earlier in December, Rajnath

Singh dedicated to the nation 125 strategically significant infrastructure projects of BRO, reiterating the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's commitment to keep strengthening the border infrastructure. Describing connectivity tools as lifelines for security, economy, and disaster management, Rajnath Singh had said, "There are numerous benefits of robust infrastructure in border areas. It ensures military mobility, smooth transportation of logistics, an increase in tourism & employment opportunities and, most importantly, stronger faith in development, democracy and the government."

The 125 projects launched on December 7 are spread across two Union Territories -- Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir -- and seven states -- Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Mizoram. These include 28 roads, 93 bridges and four other projects, all completed at a cost of Rs 5,000 crore, the highest-value inaugurations in the BRO's history.

Threats to church pastor, insult to Muslim community: Complaint filed in Bengaluru over viral video

Bengaluru, Dec 23: A complaint has been filed at the Koramangala police station against a man identified as Satyanishta Arya for allegedly threatening a church pastor and making derogatory remarks targeting the Christian and Muslim communities.

According to the complaint, the accused allegedly entered a programme with deliberate



intent and not only threatened a church pastor but also spoke in a derogatory manner against Christians and Muslims. Police said

Satyanishta Arya had created social media accounts in his name and was allegedly posting messages and speeches that repeatedly spread communal hatred. It is further alleged that he had opened a bank account in a bank within the Koramangala limits and was seeking financial assistance through messages, claiming it was for the protection of religion.

K'taka village witnesses daily two-hour blackout to boost children's education

Belagavi, Dec 22 : In a bold grassroots initiative, villagers in Halaga village of Belagavi taluk in Karnataka have launched a daily 'Digital Off' experiment to keep children away from excessive screen time as an antidote to remain focused during study hours.

Inspired by a similar movement in Maharashtra, the campaign is targeted at breaking the growing addiction to mobile phones and television across age groups.

At 7 PM every evening, a siren from the Gram Panchayat office announces the start of a two-hour



blackout of all digital devices.

The villagers voluntarily turn off the TVs and mobile phones from 7 PM to 9 PM, shifting that time

to education and household involvement.

The move is timely, especially for students who are preparing to write SSLC exams.

Parents have also been encouraged to ensure that their children are not distracted during this time and that they study.

The women of the village have also taken well to the shift, moving away from the TV serials they were regularly exposed to before. A former Gram Panchayat President, speaking to IANS, reiterated the educational purpose behind this experiment.

"This is one of the steps that has been taken for the education of children. We want to create a disciplined environment for them," he said.

Chair fight: Rajanna writes letter to Rahul

Tumakuru: As the leadership change and power-sharing dispute in the state Congress escalates day by day, a letter written by former minister and MLA K.N. Rajanna to Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi regarding the developments in the state Congress has been revealed.

In a letter written by former minister K.N. Rajanna to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on November 17, he battled for Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Siddaramaiah was the main reason for the Congress party coming to power in Karnataka in 2013 and 2023. He mentioned in the letter that Siddaramaiah is a leader who provides justice to the non-Hind communities. It is said that former

minister Rajanna has written and sent 4 letters to Rahul Gandhi so far, and in all these letters, he has given full marks to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as a non-Hind leader. He also mentioned in the letter that he worked hard for development in the department when he was the Minister of Cooperation and that he brought about changes.

is said that he also mentioned that he is loyal to the Nehru family. Former Minister Rajanna, who also mentioned in the letter about the damage to the party if Siddaramaiah is removed from the post of Chief Minister and the benefits to the party from Siddaramaiah, has already written 4 letters to the high command, one letter a week, and all the letters are said to be in favor of Siddaramaiah.

chair fight in the state Congress party has already reached a fever pitch, and the revelation of the letter written by former Minister Rajanna to Rahul Gandhi at this time has created a stir in the Congress.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has met former Minister Rajanna twice and held discussions. However, only K.N. Rajanna has not changed his stance. The fact that he has never made a statement that he is in favor of the CM and has written a letter to Rahul Gandhi has disturbed the leaders of the DCM faction. Considering all this, the chair battle in the state does not seem to be stopping anytime soon. There are also talks in Congress circles that the intervention of the high command is needed to put a full stop to all this.

Pulse Polio Vaccination Programme Successfully Conducted in Bengaluru Central City Corporation: Rajendra Cholan

Bengaluru: The Pulse Polio Vaccination Programme has been successfully implemented within the jurisdiction of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation, with vaccination coverage exceeding the estimated target by the third day, stated Commissioner Rajendra Cholan. During the four-day programme, it was estimated that approximately 1,85,588 (1.85 lakh) children would be vaccinated within the Bengaluru Central City Corporation limits. Within the first three days, 1,86,889 (1.86 lakh) children were administered the Pulse Polio vaccine, achieving 100.54 per cent coverage. By vaccinating more children than the estimated target, the programme was declared a success. The Commissioner expressed his gratitude to Additional Commissioner (Development) Daljit Kumar, Joint Commissioners K. Ranganath and Hemant Sharan, Health Officer Shivakumar, as well as doctors, medical staff, and all voluntary organizations for their active participation and support in the successful execution of the programme.

VB-G RAM G Is Anti-Dalit and Anti-Backward Classes: Prepare for a Mass Struggle Against the Centre – Dr. Anand Kumar

Bengaluru : Dr. Anand Kumar, National Coordinator of the AICC SC Department and Maharashtra In-Charge said that, Replacing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) with the "Viksit Bharat Employment Guarantee and Livelihood Mission – VB-G RAM G" is an anti-Dalit policy. Every citizen must raise their voice against this scheme, which strikes at the livelihood of the poor, the backward classes, and rural communities.

Speaking at the National Executive Committee meeting of the AICC SC Wing held in New Delhi, he said that remaining silent against historic blunders that snatch employment from crores of poor people and suppress Dalits would amount to an injustice we inflict upon ourselves. In today's times, silence itself



is the biggest crime. If India's soul is to be protected, safeguarding the rights of the poor must be the top priority. Protesting against policies like VB-G RAM G is a democratic duty. The time has come to prepare for a mass struggle, he said.

He alleged that the BJP has deliberately weakened NREGA, India's only guaranteed social safety net for the rural poor, and is treating the oppressed with contempt. Villages were developing through MGNREGA,

providing secure livelihoods and enabling people to live with dignity and self-respect. Unable to tolerate this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set fire to the employment aspirations of the poor. He warned that such Dalit-betraying governance will not last long.

Dr. Anand Kumar said the Congress has always stood at the forefront in protecting the Constitution and the poor. India is a nation built on the principles of equality, justice,

and humanity. However, in recent times, political tendencies that undermine these values have increased, weakening the very soul of India. Systematic attempts to strip the rights of the poor, Dalits, and backward classes are a matter of grave concern.

Many welfare schemes designed for the poor have remained only on paper. Fundamental rights such as employment, education, healthcare, and food security are today being sacrificed for political gain. Corporate interests are being given priority, while the voice of the common citizen is being suppressed, deepening social inequality, he said. By betraying the promise of equal opportunity for every citizen, the government is directly attacking constitutional values. This reflects an agenda of centralizing power and a repressive mindset.

Congress has murdered Gandhiji not once but many times: MP Basavaraj Bommai



Bidar: Former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai alleged that, The Congress has murdered Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi not once but several times. The Congress party invokes Gandhi's name only to gain political benefit and out of fear that this advantage may slip away, it keeps talking about Gandhi.

Asked about dropping Gandhi's name from the NREGA scheme here on Tuesday, he told reporters that Gandhiji had advised the dissolution of the Congress party. However, Jawaharlal Nehru did not dissolve it, and it was then that Gandhi was assassinated. By imposing the

Emergency, Gandhi was "killed" once again. By repeatedly acting against Gandhi's principles, the Congress has murdered him many times, he alleged.

The former CM said that by separating Gandhi and Ram, the Congress is committing a sinful act. Ram and Gandhi are not different; Gandhi's soul constantly chanted the name of Ram. Gandhi, who upheld the ideals of Ram, spoke of the concept of Ram Rajya. Today, the name of Ram that existed in Gandhi's soul has been attached to the employment guarantee scheme. Earlier, the scheme carried Nehru's name, and during elections, Gandhi's name was added.

Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University PG Centre inaugurated at Bagalur



Bidar: Former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai alleged that, The Congress has murdered Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi not once but several times. The Congress party invokes Gandhi's name only to gain political benefit and out of fear that this advantage may slip away, it keeps talking about Gandhi.

Asked about dropping Gandhi's name from the NREGA scheme here on Tuesday, he told reporters that Gandhiji had advised the dissolution of the Congress party. However, Jawaharlal Nehru did not dissolve it, and it was then that Gandhi was assassinated. By imposing the

Emergency, Gandhi was "killed" once again. By repeatedly acting against Gandhi's principles, the Congress has murdered him many times, he alleged.

The former CM said that by separating Gandhi and Ram, the Congress is committing a sinful act. Ram and Gandhi are not different; Gandhi's soul constantly chanted the name of Ram. Gandhi, who upheld the ideals of Ram, spoke of the concept of Ram Rajya. Today, the name of Ram that existed in Gandhi's soul has been attached to the employment guarantee scheme. Earlier, the scheme carried Nehru's name, and during elections, Gandhi's name was added.

Bengaluru: Minister for Higher Education Dr. M.C. Sudhakar on Tuesday announced that the state government will soon take steps to fill all permanent teaching and non-teaching vacancies in public universities and provide the required infrastructure to strengthen higher education across Karnataka. He was speaking after formally inaugurating the Postgraduate Centre of Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University at Bagalur, under the Byatarayanapura Assembly constituency, at a programme held on the premises of the Government Pre-University College.

Dr. Sudhakar emphasised that while expanding access to higher education is important, equal focus must be placed on



maintaining academic quality. He said the government is committed to improving standards in public universities through timely recruitment and infrastructure development.

Presiding over the event, Revenue Minister and Byatarayanapura MLA Krishna Byre Gowda assured that the land required for the new Postgraduate Centre would be provided. He also stated that prompt steps would be taken for the construction of a public hospital and a

sports complex in the area.

In his introductory address, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ramesh B. said the Postgraduate Centre is a significant initiative aimed at delivering quality higher education at an affordable cost to students from poor and middle-class families. He urged students to enrol in large numbers and make full use of the opportunity, adding that the university is prioritising skill development and employment-oriented education.

ICICI Home Finance

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Branch Office: Shop No. 2/30, 1st Floor, T.C. V/1673/1-4/2 M G Corporate Centre, Medical College PO, Ulloor, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695011
[See proviso to rule 8(6)] Notice for sale of immovable assets

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

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Legal Heirs, Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction	One Day Before Auction Date	SARFAESI Stage
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)
1.	Rajamma (Borrower) Ramesh Rajan (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LHTVM00001455444 LHTVM00001457530	Sy No 270/5-3 Veyiloor Village Trivandrum Taluk Trivandrum Kerala 695302	Rs. 7,26,782.74/- December 18, 2025	Rs. 10,09,891/- Rs.1,00,989/-	January 02, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	January 09, 2026 02:00 PM To 03:00 PM	January 08, 2026 Before 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession
2.	Lathika S (Borrower) Santha (Co-Borrower) Sheela (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LHTVM00001535802 LHTVM00001535873	Maranallor Village Kattakada Taluk Re Sy No 66/19-1-1 66/21-1 66/22-1 Trivandrum Kerala- 695512	Rs. 33,95,409.16/- December 20, 2025	Rs. 37,81,175/- Rs. 3,78,117/-	January 02, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	January 09, 2026 02:00 PM To 03:00 PM	January 08, 2026 Before 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- <https://BidDeal.in>) of our auction agency ValueTrust Capital Services Private Limited. The Mortgagees/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till January 08, 2026 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before January 08, 2026 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit signed copy of Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before January 08, 2026 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd.-Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Home Finance Company Limited on 9920807300. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit <https://www.icicifc.com>.
Date: December 24, 2025 Place: Trivandrum
Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited", CIN Number:- U65922MH1999PLC120106

Editorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

Bangladesh

on edge

The political unrest in Bangladesh in the wake of the murder of a popular and powerful youth leader and the lynching of a young Hindu man has turned the country into a powder keg. The response of the interim government to both incidents is indicative of the regime striving to balance domestic political compulsions and foreign policy requirements. Yunus has not only condemned the brutal lynching of the Hindu youth Dipu Chandra Das and followed it up with swift arrests, but also appealed for restraint and peace. Regarding the killing of youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi, he linked the demand for restraint, responsibility, and a firm commitment to reject hatred with “honouring his (Hadi’s) sacrifice.” Hadi, a spokesperson for the Inquilab Mancha, or Platform for Revolution, and a prominent leader of the 2024 uprising that led to the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina government, was going to fight elections as an independent candidate. The turmoil is complicating the prevailing fluid situation as Bangladesh hopes to conduct general elections in a couple of months. Predictably, the journey from overthrowing the government to announcing the date for general elections has been fraught with confusion and uncertainty. From banning the Sheikh Hasina-led party from participating in elections to the emergence of a fledgling party spawned by a popular protest movement, to the jitteriness of mainstream parties such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, these are challenges that are not easy for the country to grapple with. Adding to the grim scenario are the radical Islamic forces lurking in the shadows.

The protests in the wake of Hadi’s assassination not only turned violent but also led to an outburst of anti-India sentiment. The simmering discontent against India, perceived to be shielding Sheikh Hasina and consequently entangled in the country’s domestic politics, soon deteriorated into raging anti-India sentiment bordering on hatred. This unseemly turn of events should be a major cause of concern for New Delhi. India has its reasons to stonewall Dhaka’s demand for the extradition of Sheikh Hasina, who has been convicted of the so-called “crimes against humanity,” but it cannot afford to be seen as “playing partisan politics,” especially by people vulnerable to being swayed by emotions and orchestrated campaigns by anti-India elements.

Part of the trouble lies with India as well. The government turned a blind eye and did not rein in the pro-government media, which is whipping up unwarranted passions through provocative debates, while the party and its supporters are trying to fish in troubled waters for narrow electoral gains in West Bengal. The media’s embarrassing misinformation propaganda during Operation Sindoor and jingoistic rhetoric in the right-wing ecosystem have been counterproductive, and the government does not seem to have learned lessons from them. Keeping an eye on the ball by India will not be enough. Firstly, in the larger national interest, the government should rein in those whipping up hysterical sentiments. Secondly, political parties should refrain from using the situation for narrow electoral gains. Thirdly, for the demand to protect Hindu minorities in Bangladesh to be effective and morally persuasive and to counter unwarranted finger-pointing, India should, in the long run, set the example concerning the treatment and safety of its own minorities.

Capital shifts: The global

economy's hidden rebalancing

MARCELLO ESTEVÃO

Next year, global growth is expected to be near 3.1%, almost the same as this year. To many observers, such steadiness suggests a world economy drifting sideways, neither slowing nor accelerating. But the stability implied by the headline figure is not the product of inertia. It reflects a rebalancing that is quietly reshaping how global savings and investment interact.

The core message of the Institute of International Finance’s latest Capital Flows Report lies in shifting growth patterns. The United States is cooling after a strong post-pandemic period, while Europe and Japan, long seen as weak links, have found firmer footing. China’s structural slowdown continues, but India and a broader set of Asian economies are growing faster.

Emerging markets as a group may still be expanding at close to 4.2% annually, but the strongest performers within that group have changed. The world economy’s engines are rotating, and they are no longer pulling in the same direction.

This redistribution shows up most clearly in capital flows. Nonresident flows into emerging markets reached about \$1.18 trillion in 2025, well above historical averages. But this surge does not mark the start of a boom. Much of the strength reflected bank-related flows, official financing, and balance-sheet rebuilding in emerging Europe and parts of Asia. As these temporary drivers fade, flows are projected to moderate to roughly \$1.13 trillion in 2026 — a normalization rather than a retreat.

Capital-flow ratios put this into perspective. Nonresident inflows amounted to about 2.6% of emerging-market GDP in 2025 and are expected to fall to 2.3% in 2026. That is below pre-pandemic norms, but the aggregate figure is misleading because inward flows to China have collapsed. Excluding China, other emerging markets are absorbing capital at roughly the same pace as in the mid-



2010s. The apparent softness reflects China’s weight, not a broad deterioration in fundamentals. What matters, then, is direction. Capital is rotating away from China and toward emerging markets offering credible policy frameworks, resilient domestic demand, and clearer investment opportunities.

Several Asian economies are attracting larger shares of foreign direct investment and portfolio flows, and emerging Europe is recovering after a turbulent period. Latin America has stabilized across a range of external indicators, while some commodity importers are beginning to absorb larger inflows. These shifts are incremental, but they signal a world in which capital circulates more selectively than it did during the liquidity-heavy decade after the 2008 financial crisis.

China’s evolving role sits at the center of this configuration. The country remains the largest source of external

savings among emerging markets, with a current-account surplus of roughly \$500 to \$700 billion. But the recycling of that surplus has changed. Instead of accumulating primarily as central bank reserves, a growing share now flows outward through firms, banks, and households investing abroad.

China has thus become a structural exporter of capital, helping to explain why global reserve accumulation remains modest even with a somewhat softer dollar. Chinese savings increasingly support investment in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East rather than flowing into traditional reserve channels.

A second shift is visible in external balances. Asia, excluding China, has emerged as a major surplus center. Vietnam continues to attract foreign direct investment with unusual consistency. India finances its deficit without strain, supported by strong services exports.

South Korea and Malaysia have benefited from the global tech upswing and the depth of their information and communication technology sectors. By contrast, commodity exporters are channeling more resources toward domestic transformation. Saudi Arabia’s external surplus has narrowed as it invests heavily in logistics, manufacturing, and non-oil sectors. Latin America remains broadly balanced, while emerging Europe is more mixed, though not under systemic pressure. Several African economies are gradually regaining market access as reforms strengthen their macroeconomic frameworks.

Together, these changes amount to a subtle but meaningful redrawing of global imbalances. Surpluses are concentrating in parts of Asia, commodity exporters are looking inward, and many emerging economies are managing their external

accounts more effectively.

Technology adds another dimension. The rapid build-out of artificial-intelligence computing capacity made a visible contribution to US GDP in early 2025. These capital-intensive, energy-hungry investments are beginning to influence where global savings flow and where production capacity expands.

Emerging economies with domestic digital capabilities and strong exports of ICT services are well positioned to anchor the next phase of digital investment. Their participation, however, will depend not only on macroeconomic stability and regulatory clarity, but also on access to reliable energy and skilled labor.

All this is unfolding against familiar risks. The US fiscal trajectory remains uncertain, and China’s domestic demand is weak as its property correction continues. Geopolitical tensions have disrupted trade and raised costs, while AI complicates economic measurement as intangible investment grows.

Yet the global system has absorbed these pressures through exchange-rate adjustments and portfolio shifts rather than sudden stops or external crises. That resilience reflects the underlying rotation in capital flows. The dollar illustrates the point. It weakened against most emerging-market currencies in 2025 as US growth cooled, but the adjustment was orderly. Several emerging-market currencies remain undervalued even after appreciation. The IIF’s baseline for 2026 is a broadly stable, perhaps slightly softer, dollar. Hedging costs have fallen, local-currency markets have deepened, and adjustment is occurring through foreign-exchange channels rather than reserve drawdowns. The world economy is not drifting; it is rebalancing. Growth remains steady, but its composition has changed. Capital flows remain strong because their channels have shifted. With technology redrawing comparative advantage, policymakers should focus less on headline growth rates and more on the structural reorientation shaping the coming decade.

Conservative reckoning: Vance avoids

red lines in fight over bigotry

The bitter infighting over antisemitism, free speech and bigotry during Turning Point USA’s annual national conference not only exposed fissures in President Donald Trump’s movement but also laid bare a challenge for his potential successor.

How would his likely heir apparent handle an explosive debate among Republicans over whether extremists and conspiracy theorists should be embraced or excluded from the conservative coalition?

On Sunday, Vice President JD Vance gave an answer, suggesting he was more than willing to forgo imposing any moral red lines.

“When I say that I’m going to fight alongside of you, I mean all of you — each and every one,” Vance said at Turning Point USA’s annual gathering, AmericaFest. “President Trump did not build the greatest coalition in politics by running his supporters through endless, self-defeating purity tests.”

Vance’s plea for a big-tent coalition, however, belied the cracks visible in the past week in his party. The

annual conservative gathering was just a year ago a platform united under Trump and elevated by its co-founder, Charlie Kirk. Kirk’s assassination in September galvanized Republicans and fueled conspiracy theories among them. This year, the event showcased intense jostling over the direction of Trump’s movement and whom it would platform.

Last week, Ben Shapiro warned that the “conservative movement was in serious danger” from those willing to amplify conspiracies, including Candace Owens, a podcaster widely accused of antisemitism who has also spread unfounded theories about Kirk’s death.

On Friday, Vivek Ramaswamy, an Indian American running for governor of Ohio as a Republican, also criticized a faction of the party. He went after those who have embraced the idea that so-called “heritage Americans” — a predominantly white group whose families have been in the country for multiple generations — have a greater claim to the nation than more recent arrivals.



Those comments appeared to put Ramaswamy at odds with Vance, who has spoken out against “importing millions and millions of low-wage serfs” and argued that mass migration was the

“theft of the American dream.” Ramaswamy also took on those who have issued derogatory attacks against Vance’s wife, Usha Vance. And he said Fuentes and others promoting hateful views had “no place in

the future of the conservative movement.” Vance, however, left open the possibility that they did.

“I didn’t bring a list of conservatives to denounce and deplatform,” Vance said, arguing that Kirk had

welcomed debate. “We have far more important work to do than canceling each other.” Vance has previously disavowed Fuentes, calling him a “total loser” during the 2024 campaign. On Sunday, he again criticized antisemitism and “ethnic hatred,” including attacks on his wife, while playing down Fuentes’ influence.

But as vice president, Vance has repeatedly refused to pick a side in intraparty fights over bigotry. When the emergence of a Telegram group chat showed Republican elected leaders and young party activists using racist and homophobic language, as well as invoking Adolf Hitler, Vance compared them to “anything said in a college group chat.” He also embraced false claims about Haitian Americans in the 2024 race, declining to condemn those who spread racist conspiracy theories.

On Sunday, Vance declined to issue warnings about extremist figures like other speakers at the conference, instead arguing that the coalition was open to all as long as they “love America.” After receiving the endorsement for presi-

dent of Erika Kirk, the widow of Charlie Kirk, Vance encouraged supporters to unite around Trump’s immigration policies and the targeting of diversity initiatives. The White House has argued that they have unfairly led to the disenfranchisement of white men.

“We don’t treat anybody different because of their race or their sex, so we have relegated DEI to the dustbin of history,” Vance said. “In the United States of America, you don’t have to apologize for being white anymore.” While Vance has not announced plans to run for president, he showed signs Sunday that he had his eyes on the future. He criticized Democrats’ potential leaders, including Gov. Gavin Newsom of California, and mocked Rep. Jasmine Crockett, a Black Democrat in Texas running for Senate, for what he called a “street girl persona.” Crockett said the vice president was seeking to distract. “Republicans like JD Vance attack my nails and lashes because they can’t keep up with me when it comes to debating the issues,” she said.

HCLSoftware to Acquire Jaspersoft from Cloud Software Group

Make Every Christmas Moment Special with California Almonds

NOIDA December 22, 2025 – HCLSoftware, the software business division of HCLTech, today announced its intent to acquire Jaspersoft, a business unit of Cloud Software Group and provider of a leading embedded analytics and pixel-perfect reporting platform.

HCLSoftware's Data & AI division (Actian) is seeing increased demand for its metadata management, data catalog and data governance solutions and has demonstrated good growth over the last five years, driven by enterprise data management solutions. The acquisition will further enhance Actian's proposition by enabling an end-to-end, immersive data management experience, while expanding reach through a large, global developer community comprised of data engineers and architects actively building, deploying and extending data platforms across the



modern enterprise environment. Jaspersoft provides a comprehensive business intelligence and reporting platform that enables organizations to create pixel-perfect reports, interactive dashboards and advanced visualizations. Jaspersoft has consistently served as an industry leader for pixel-perfect reporting, making it the solution of choice for regulated industries such as government, banking and financial services.

"As GenAI adoption accelerates, our customers want business intelligence solutions that can deliver consistent analytics and reports and offer flexibility to fully own the analytics experience," said Marc Potter,

CEO Actian & Portfolio General Manager of HCLSoftware's Data & AI division. "With Jaspersoft, Actian will provide seamless AI-powered embedded analytics with strong architectural flexibility, allowing high-volume pixel-perfect reports and interactive dashboards to be seamlessly integrated into customer-facing applications, driving scalable self-service business intelligence."

"Jaspersoft has earned the trust of organizations worldwide through its embedded analytics capabilities," said Steven Schneider, General Manager of Analytics business unit at Cloud Software Group. "We believe HCLSoftware is a strong strategic owner for the business and look forward to Jaspersoft continuing to serve customers under HCLSoftware's ownership." The acquisition is expected to close within six months of signing.

Christmas is just around the corner, bringing excitement, warmth, and the promise of festive indulgence. The season encourages us to savour flavours that spark joy, combined with cherishing meaningful moments. This year, elevate your holiday meals and gifting traditions with the wholesome goodness of California Almonds. Naturally rich in 15 essential nutrients, they offer a satisfying crunch while promoting heart health, providing lasting energy, and helping in appetite control, which is especially valuable during a month filled with gatherings, elaborate meals, and travel.

The versatility of California Almonds is one of their greatest strengths. Whether enjoyed whole, chopped, or shredded, they add texture and flavour to every dish. From spiced fruitcakes and decadent cookies to traditional Indian sweets and modern baked treats, almonds enhance festive cuisines with ease. As more families in India embrace mindful eating, California Almonds



are also becoming a popular addition to breakfast, offering a nutritious start to the busy December days.

In the spirit of Christmas giving, California Almonds make a thoughtful and premium choice. Curated hampers and homemade almond treats convey warmth and celebration while offering a meaningful way to share health and happiness. Perfect for loved ones, friends, and colleagues, California Almonds bring a touch of affection and seasonal indulgence to every gift.

Bollywood star Soha Ali Khan shared, "Christmas has always held deep sig-

nificance for me - filled with warmth, shared meals, and small family traditions. Each year, I strive to achieve a balance of indulgence and nourishment at my festive gatherings. California Almonds feature prominently in many of my dishes, not only for their depth of flavour but also for their benefits to our health. Even starting the day with a handful of almonds makes a noticeable impact."

Sheela Krishnaswamy, Nutrition and Wellness Consultant, said, "It's natural to enjoy treats during festivals, but maintaining good health doesn't have to be complex. Almonds are known to support heart health by helping to lower LDL and total cholesterol levels. Their adaptability allows them to fit seamlessly into festive menus, enhancing both taste and nutritional benefits. Starting the day with almonds can also provide a gradual release of energy, that, along with a balanced diet, helps you get through many events of the season." Ritika Samaddar,

Regional Head – Dietetics at Max Healthcare, New Delhi, noted, "The Christmas period is abundant with culinary treats, but it's beneficial to include foods that promote steady energy and satiety. California Almonds are nutrient-rich and aid in weight management by helping sustain a feeling of fullness. Their low glycemic index helps in preventing spikes in blood sugar levels. Adding almonds, whether in breakfast dishes or festive recipes, is an easy and effective way to ensure that celebrations are both enjoyable and balanced." Dr Madhumitha Krishnan, Ayurveda Expert, mentioned, "For centuries, almonds have been esteemed in Ayurveda for their nourishing and fortifying attributes. Ancient texts emphasise their role in promoting vitality and skin health. California almonds being warm, balancing to the doshas, with beneficial fats that help achieve healthy skin and glowing appearance in the winter season - a quality many cherish during festive times.

ICAR-IIMR observes Kisan Samman Diwas, highlights millet farming and farmer welfare

Hyderabad: Reaffirming its commitment to farmer welfare and sustainable agriculture, the ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research (ICAR-IIMR), Hyderabad, observed Kisan Samman Diwas at its campus on Monday as part of Swachatha Pakhawada. The programme was organized in line with the nationwide initiative of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to honour farmers on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Late Chaudhary Charan Singh.

The event focused on creating awareness about the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025, which aims to strengthen rural livelihood security by enhancing employment opportunities, ensuring income stability,



ty, and aligning rural development initiatives with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. C. Tara Satyavathi, Director,

ICAR-IIMR, highlighted the crucial role of farmers in nation-building and food security. She emphasized the growing importance of millets as climate-resilient crops,

particularly for dryland and rainfed regions, citing their nutritional value, low input requirements, and resilience to climatic stress. She urged farmers to adopt

improved millet production technologies, scientific post-harvest practices, and value addition to enhance income and sustainability.

Scientists from ICAR-IIMR interacted with farmers and showcased initiatives across the millet value chain. An exposure visit to NutriHub and the Shree Anna Processing & Training Unit provided insights into modern processing, packaging, and enterprise development. Around 250 farmers and stakeholders from Sangareddy district participated in the programme.

Dr. Tara Satyavathi expressed gratitude to farmers and reaffirmed ICAR-IIMR's commitment to promoting millets as "Shree Anna" and advancing inclusive, farmer-centric agricultural development.

GITAM Hyderabad celebrates pre-Christmas festivities with joy and grandeur

Hyderabad: GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, celebrated the spirit of Christmas with great enthusiasm at Shivaji Auditorium on Monday, marking pre-Christmas festivities in a vibrant and joyful atmosphere. The auditorium was beautifully decorated with colourful bells and stars, setting a festive tone for the celebrations.

The programme began with a warm welcome address, followed by melodious Christmas carols that ushered in the festive spirit. Students of GITAM showcased their talents through soulful singing, energetic dance performances, and a thoughtfully enacted Nativity scene, highlighting the core values of Christmas—love, caring, sharing, and spreading goodness.

An engaging English play depicting the significance of Christmas



and focusing on the birth and sacrifice of Jesus Christ captivated the audience with its powerful message. Reflections on the symbolism of Christmas ornaments such as the star, bell, wreath, candle, candy cane, and Santa Claus added meaning to the celebrations. A cheerful appearance by Santa Claus, who distributed gifts, further delighted the audience.

Prof. B. Sudheer Prem Kumar, Former Vice-Chancellor of Rayalaseema University and Secretary, APSCHE, Andhra Pradesh, delivered an inspiring mes-

sage on the true essence of Christmas. Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; DVVSR Varma, Resident Director; Ambika Philip, Director – Hospitality & Campus Life; and Dr. Joseph Jayakar, Associate Professor, Department of English, also participated. The celebrations concluded with the ceremonial cutting of the Christmas cake, followed by a snack party, ramp walk, and games. The event fostered a strong sense of community, spreading warmth, harmony, and festive cheer across the GITAM Hyderabad campus.

Immerse in Dubai's Winter Wonderland

In the symphony of global winter festivities, Dubai emerges as a mesmerizing canvas where Arabian grandeur converges with playful enchantments. From shimmering souk bazaars and theatrical ballets to multicultural markets and mountain escapes, the City of Gold unveils its unique ways of celebrating the season, blending opulent shopping sprees and family adventures - proving that the desert city knows how to sparkle through the season.

MADINAT JUMEIRAH FESTIVE MARKET

No winter in Dubai feels complete without this free outdoor extravaganza at Madinat Jumeirah's Fort Island, the Arabian mini-city of five-star resorts. From 5th to 31st December, a towering 36-foot Christmas tree anchors the 1,750sqm sparkling wonderland with twinkling lights, homegrown market stalls offering artisan crafts, live music, mulled grape, mince pies, festively decorated abra rides past Burj Al Arab, Venetian carousel, North Pole mini train, snow light zone, and endless festive vibes – the perfect Arabian escape blending heritage charm with holiday magic.

GLOBAL VILLAGE

Dubai's favorite multicul-

tural family entertainment destination relaunches for its landmark 30th season from 15 October 2025 to 10 May 2026, transforming into a vibrant global hub across 30 stunning pavilions representing 90 cultures. Hunt for unique treasures like Turkish stained-glass lanterns, colorful Indian embroidered purses, and intricate European jewelry from artisan stalls, while savoring a world of international cuisines from every corner of the globe. Thrill the family with adrenaline-pumping rides, glide across the outdoor Snowfest Ice Rink, uncover the weird and wonderful at Ripley's Believe It or Not, and immerse in cultural journeys along the Road of Asia – making Global Village the city's ultimate shopper's paradise and endless entertainment odyssey for all ages.

HATTA WINTER FESTIVAL

Escape to Hatta's majestic Hajar Mountains where the Hatta Winter Festival ignites Wadi Hub from 5th December to 31st January, turning this highland haven into a thrilling cultural adventure zone. Free entry unlocks artisan bazaars brimming with local crafts and Hatta honey delights, live bands beneath crisp mountain skies, authentic Emirati dance shows, interactive family work-



shops, kayaking adventures, scenic hiking paths, and mountain bike trails – weaving Bedouin traditions with Dubai's bold winter pursuits for breathtaking high-altitude magic.

WINTER CITY AT EXPO CITY DUBAI

From 6th to 31st December 2025, Al Wasl Plaza at Expo City Dubai will transform into Winter City – a dazzling festive wonderland. Families can enjoy live shows, creative workshops and twinkling lights, with falling snow and a spectacular tree lighting bringing the season to life.

It's a joyful setting, where the magic of winter meets Dubai's festive spirit.

CHRISTMAS IN WINTER DISTRACT

From 13-28 December, the grounds in front of Jumeirah Emirates Towers will transform into a beautiful Winter District. Get ready to hop on your sleigh and head to the North Pole for a magical experience with family and friends. This year's edition promises tons of holiday cheer, dazzling lights and Santa-approved fun for everyone. Explore a bustling Christmas market brimming

with handcrafted gifts and seasonal treats, as well as family-friendly attractions including a snow play area for the little ones. Santa will be ready to meet you at his grotto as you sing along to the tunes with Christmas carolers. With carnival games, kids' workshops and decorations, there will be plenty of opportunities to capture your holiday moments. Mark your calendars and gather your loved ones for this pop-up.

DUBAI SHOPPING FESTIVAL NIGHTS

Dubai Festival City Mall's Festival Bay relaunches e&

DSF Nights through 11 January 2026 as the electrifying heart of Dubai Shopping Festival's 30th season, delivering non-stop waterfront excitement from 5th December 2025 with free Saturday megastar concerts from Nora Fatehi to Mahmoud El Esseily, Sunday X Factor talent showdowns with judges like Ragheb Alama, and nightly Imagine laser-water spectacles synced to Arabic anthems from 4:30pm (tickets AED 50-AED 250). Families chase daily raffle dreams amid trendy food trucks like Helipad by Frozen Cherry, Samsung AI pop-ups, character meet-and-greets with Modesh & Dana, and closing fireworks, blending retail frenzy with multicultural street-party vibes at this must-visit lifestyle destination.

MEET SANTA AT SKI DUBAI

The jolliest time of the year is on its way, and from 1st to 25th December, Ski Dubai will once again transform into a magical winter wonderland. Santa and his cheerful elves will set up their festive grotto on the snowy slopes, ready to welcome families for a dose of holiday cheer. Enjoy a cosy cup of hot chocolate, take in the sparkling decorations and capture the perfect photo with the man in red.

THE WINTER WONDERVERSE AT HOUSE OF HYPE

Dubai Mall's House of Hype transforms into Winter Wonderverser from 13th to 28th December, turning the city's most famous shopping address into an immersive seasonal playground. Visitors step into a world of falling "snow", glowing light installations and futuristic sets designed for exploration, play and plenty of photos – all wrapped into a timed, ticketed experience starting from AED 99 per person. Interactive zones, digital art backdrops and live entertainment fuse to craft a winter escape blending pop-up theme park vibes with retail dazzle, perfect for family photo ops before mall dining and shopping.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT AT EXPO CITY DUBAI

From 20th to 24th December 2025, Al Wasl Plaza will host the third annual Carols by Candlelight, a heartwarming celebration featuring the Firdaus Orchestra and local school choirs. Audiences can enjoy festive classics performed by vocalists, musicians and dancers, set against Christmas-themed projections under Expo City Dubai's iconic dome. Expect surprise visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus, with entry also including access to Winter City.

Jaishankar begins visit to Sri Lanka as PM Modi's special envoy



COLOMBO: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar landed in Colombo on Monday to hold talks with Sri Lanka's top leadership as the island nation begins reconstruction efforts following Cyclone Ditwah.

Jaishankar is visiting Sri Lanka as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's special envoy. "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 (MEA) said in New Delhi.

The cyclone that hit the island nation in late November killed over 640 people and damaged crops, tea estates and critical transport infrastructures including roads and bridges.

India had launched Operation Sagar Bandhu to help Sri Lanka deal with the crisis. On Tuesday, Jaishankar will hold talks with the top Sri Lankan leadership.

"Landed in Colombo this evening. Thank Deputy @ TourismMin Ruwan Ranasinghe for the warm reception. Look forward to my meetings with Sri Lankan leadership tomorrow," the external affairs minister said on X.

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.

Several Indian naval ships including INS Vikrant, INS Udaygiri, INS Sukanya and INS Gharial delivered large volumes of relief materials to Colombo and Trincomalee.

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. 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.

Major Russian drone and missile attack on Ukraine kills at least 3



KYIV: Russia fired more than 650 drones and three dozen missiles at Ukraine in a large-scale attack that began during the night and stretched into daylight hours Tuesday, officials said. At least three people were killed, including a 4-year-old child.

The barrage struck homes and the power grid in 13 regions of Ukraine, causing widespread outages in bitter temperatures, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, a day after he described recent progress on finding a peace deal "quite solid."

The bombardment demonstrated Russian President Vladimir Putin's intention of prosecuting the invasion of Ukraine, Zelenskyy said in a post on the Telegram messaging app. Ukrainian and European officials have complained that Putin is not sincerely engaging with US-led peace efforts. The attack "is an extremely clear signal of Russian priorities," Zelenskyy said. "A strike before Christmas, when people want to be with their families, at home, in safety. A strike, in fact, in the midst of negotiations that are being conducted to end this war. Putin cannot accept the fact that we must stop killing."

Japan gets local consent, clearing last major hurdle to restart the world's largest nuclear plant

TOKYO: The governor of Niigata on Tuesday formally gave local consent to put two reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant in the north-central prefecture back online, clearing a last hurdle toward restarting the plant idled for more than a decade following the 2011 melt-downs at another plant managed by the same utility.

Gov. Hideyo Hanazumi, in his meeting with Economy and Industry Minister Ryosei Akazawa, conveyed the prefecture's "endorsement" to restart the No. 6 and No. 7 reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, accepting the government's pledge to ensure safety, emergency response and understanding of the residents. Restart preparations for No. 6 reactor have moved ahead, and utility company TEPCO is expected to apply for a final safety inspection by the Nuclear Safety Authority later this week, ahead of a possible resumption in January. Work at the other reactor is expected to take a few more years.

The move comes one day after the Niigata prefectural assembly adopted a budget bill that included funding necessary for a restart, supporting the governor's earlier consent.

"It was a heavy and difficult decision," Hanazumi told reporters. Hanazumi also met with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, who also supports the nuclear energy, and asked her to visit to observe the safety at the plant. Japan once planned to phase out atomic power following the disaster at the Fukushima plant caused by an earthquake and tsunami. But in the face of global fuel shortages, rising prices and pressure to reduce carbon emissions, the government has reversed its policy and is now seeking to increase nuclear energy use by accelerating reactor restarts, extending their operational lifespan and considering building new ones. Of the 57 commercial reactors, 13 are currently in operation, 20 are offline, and 24 others are being decommissioned, according to the nuclear authorities. The Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, which comprises seven reactors, is the world's biggest. The plant has been offline since 2012 as part of nationwide reactor shutdowns in response to the March 2011 triple melt-downs at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi plant.

Reactors No. 6 and 7 at Kashiwazaki-Kariwa had cleared safety tests in 2017, but their restart preparations were suspended after a series of safeguarding problems were found in 2021. The Nuclear Regulation Authority lifted an operational ban at the plant in 2023. Its resumption again faced uncertainty following the Jan. 1, 2024, earthquake in the nearby Noto region that rekindled safety concerns among local residents about the plant and evacuation in case of a major disaster. The industry ministry sought an early resumption approval from Niigata two months later.



At least 5 killed after Mexican Navy plane on medical mission crashes in Texas

GALVESTON : A small Mexican Navy plane transporting a young medical patient and seven others crashed Monday near Galveston, killing at least five people and setting off a search in waters along the Texas coast, officials said.

Four of the people aboard were Navy officers, and four were civilians, including a child, Mexico's Navy said in a statement to The Associated Press. Two of the passengers were from a nonprofit that provides aid to Mexican children with severe burns, including transports to a Galveston hospital. US Coast Guard Petty Officer Luke Baker said at least five passengers had died but did not identify which passengers.

The cause of the crash is under investigation. Mexico's Marines said in a statement that it is sending "its deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragic accident." The crash took place Monday afternoon in Galveston Bay near the base of



the causeway that connects Galveston Island to the mainland. Emergency responders and search teams rushed to the scene near the popular beach destination along

the Texas coast that is about 50 miles (80.5 kilometres) southeast of Houston. Sky Decker, a professional yacht captain who lives about a mile (1.6 kilometres) from the crash site, said he jumped in his boat to see if he could help. He said he picked up two police officers who directed him through thick fog to a nearly completely submerged plane. Decker jumped in the water and found a badly injured woman trapped beneath chairs and other debris. "I couldn't believe. She had maybe 3 inches of air gap to breathe in," he said. "And there was jet fuel

in there mixed with the water; the fumes were really bad. She was really fighting for her life." He said he also pulled out a man sitting in front of her who had already died. He described both of them as dressed in civilian clothes. Mexico's Navy said the plane was helping with a medical mission in coordination with the Michou and Mau Foundation, which provides emergency transports to children with life-threatening burns to Shriners Children's Hospital in Galveston, according to the nonprofit's website.

Oman, India show the benefit of 'economic statecraft'

Oman and India recently signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement that will offer duty-free access to over 98 percent of India's exports to Oman. Bilateral trade between the two countries reached \$10.6 billion in 2025. More than 6,000 India-Oman joint ventures operate in Oman. Outward foreign direct investment from India to Oman is \$675 million. This latest agreement aims to increase bilateral trade and promote India's exports of textiles, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural goods. India will offer tariff liberalization of almost 77.8 percent of its total tariff lines, which involves more than 94 percent of imports from Oman by value. India will cut tariffs on select goods, such as dates and petrochemicals, from Oman. The recent development in the region is the classic example of adopted effective economic statecraft policy.

In his 1985 book "Economic Statecraft," David Baldwin reevaluates the effectiveness of economic statecraft and other forms of economic techniques. The "statecraft" is the foreign policy tool used by the state holders with the aim to influence other global actors. Economic statecraft includes all economic tools that are used in foreign policies. There are forms of positive economic statecraft — so-called "carrots": financial aid, investments, subsidies for exports and imports, favorable tariff discrimination — and negative forms, referred to as "sticks": embargos, boycotts, license denial, blacklisting, tariff increases, and freezing assets. Highlighting their significance, Baldwin argues that "economic techniques usually cost more than propaganda or diplomacy and thus tend to have more inherent credibility."

Earlier, in 1945, Albert Hirschman published a book, "National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade," that examined the role of trade in economic relationships between states. The importance of trade is that "it (the trade) conducted between country A, on the one hand, and countries B, C, D, etc., on the other hand, is worth something to B, C, D, etc, and that they would, therefore, consent to grant A certain advantages — military, political, economic — in order to retain the possibility of trading with A." Andreas Grimmel and Viktor Eszterhai examine the Belt and Road initiative as a case study of China's economic statecraft, and compare the effect of Baldwin's "classical" exercise of economic statecraft which is engaged at a specific dimension of actor's behavior with Hirschman's policy, which aims to make countries adapt their policy objectives themselves, primarily voluntarily, with the aim to match those of the economically influential state more commonly.



SIGNING NEW TRADE DEALS BECAME A VITAL PILLAR

The uncertain and challenging geopolitical global landscape leads to the diversification of geopolitical allies. Oman and India prioritize their economic statecraft as the key strategic policy in this process, which is relevant to the comparison of propositions of Baldwin and Hirschman. In general, signing new trade deals became the vital pillar of India's economic statecraft strategy — either to overcome negative forms of economic instruments, following Baldwin's argument, or to indirectly influence other countries, adopting the argument of Hirschman. Signing the agreement comes at a vital time when the US government applies "sticks" against India by imposing a 50 percent tariff on Indian goods. At the same time, by signing over 15 trade agreements and with ongoing talks with the EU, Chile, and New Zealand, India's policy helps to boost its influence across the world. Oman is also taking advantage of the economic statecraft policy as it allows it to diversify its international partners. According to a 2025 report by the World Bank, entitled "Global Economic Prospects," the economies of Oman and the GCC countries are undergoing deep transformations amid fluctuating oil reve-

nues, shifting global economic dynamics, and climate change. Qasim Al-Maashani focuses on the current Oman economic landscape, and argues that the sultanate has conducted important fiscal reforms aimed at reducing the public deficit and managing debt. To attract foreign direct investment and boost non-oil industries, the sultanate launched privatization initiatives and public investment programs. Oman has free trade agreements with the US, Singapore, and Australia. Oman has developed a Vision "Oman 2040" program that targets foreign direct investment net inflow percentage of gross domestic product (10 percent), non-oil share of GDP (more than 90 percent), real GDP growth (5 percent), and real GDP per capita (increase by 90 percent).

INDIA'S POLICY HELPS TO BOOST ITS INFLUENCE

The UAE also concluded a trade agreement with India in February, 2022. There are already positive signs of this pact: Since signing the deal, India-UAE bilateral trade has grown from \$72.8 billion to \$100 billion. The UAE adopts the economic statecraft policy primarily by using "carrots." For example, the UAE has many CEPAs in force, including with Indonesia, Israel, Turkey, Cambodia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Kenya. It aims to strengthen its economic ties by signing trade agreements with Chile, the Philippines, and Ukraine, which means it will continue adopting the policy of economic statecraft in the future. Meanwhile, India will maintain its interests in building the strategic dialogue with the Gulf, while evaluating benefits of this policy; it is in negotiations with Qatar to conclude an agreement soon. India and Oman are prioritizing "economy" rather than relying on "military" power resources. As Baldwin explains: "Military techniques, of course, usually entail higher costs and even more credibility, but their costs may be too high." He further writes that "compared to other techniques of statecraft, economic measures are likely to exert more pressure than either diplomacy or propaganda and are less likely to evoke a violent response than military instruments." He concludes: "They are not merely inferior substitutes for force but first-best policy alternatives." Indeed, it seems the winning policy within the current realities of international affairs is reliance on economic statecraft, primarily on "carrots." The most effective way to find the absolute "win-win" is to sign trade deals, as it allows the economy to diversify and gives international partners the opportunity to indirectly influence each other.

Contemplated retirement after 2023 World Cup final defeat: Rohit

NEW DELHI: In a stunning revelation, former India captain Rohit Sharma has said that he contemplated retirement after the heartbreaking loss to Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup final as he "felt that the sport had taken everything out of me."

Under the captaincy of Rohit, the Indian team enjoyed a dream run in that tournament at home and marched into the final with nine consecutive wins. However, Australia dashed its hopes in the game that mattered the most, with Travis Head scoring a match-winning hundred.

"After 2023 World Cup final, I was completely distraught and felt like I didn't want to play

this sport anymore because it had taken everything out of me and I felt I had nothing left," Rohit said during a Masters Union event in Gurugram on Sunday.

"It took some time and I kept reminding myself that this is something I truly love, that it was right in front of me, and I couldn't let it go so easy.

Slowly, I found my way back, regaining the energy and getting myself moving again on the field. "Everybody was extremely disappointed, and we just couldn't believe what had happened. It was a very tough time for me personally because I had put everything into that World Cup not just two or three months before it,



Rohit, who has retired from T20Is and Tests and was removed from ODI captaincy earlier this year, continues to play the 50-over format and would like to end his career with one final attempt at the 2027 World Cup.

but ever since I took over the captaincy in 2022," he added. Rohit, who has retired from T20Is and Tests and was removed from ODI captaincy earlier this year, continues to play the 50-over format and would like to end his career with one final attempt at the

2027 World Cup. "My only goal was to win the World Cup, whether it was the T20 World Cup or the 2023 World Cup. So when it didn't happen, I was completely devastated. There was no energy left in my body. It took me a couple of months to recover and bring myself

back," said Rohit.

Less than a year after that loss to Australia in Ahmedabad, Rohit led the Indian team to the T20 World Cup title in the Americas, but overcoming the pain of the defeat in November 2023 was extremely difficult.

"I guess when you invest so much into something and don't achieve the result, it's a very natural reaction. That's exactly what happened with me. But I also knew that life doesn't end there. "It was a big lesson for me how to deal with disappointment, reset, and start fresh. I knew that something else was coming the 2024 T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies and I had to shift all my focus towards that."

Karnataka Police deny permission for Vijay Hazare Trophy match at Chinnaswamy Stadium



BENGALURU: Karnataka Police have denied permission for the Vijay Hazare Trophy match between Delhi and Andhra Pradesh at Chinnaswamy Stadium, citing serious safety and crowd control concerns.

The decision was taken after a thorough inspection by Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar, officials from the Greater Bengaluru Authority, and the Fire Department, who raised critical gaps in venue infrastructure and emergency preparedness.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh made the statement in this regard on Tuesday, while addressing media persons. "The committee had gone to the stadium on Monday, on the instructions of the Home Department. Officers from various departments, including fire, Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (Bescom), Greater Bengaluru Authority

(GBA) and police, had inspected the stadium. As per the report from the officers, permission has not been granted for the match on Wednesday at the Chinnaswamy Stadium. The committee has also given a detailed report," Commissioner Singh stated. The Bengaluru City Police Commissioner had already issued a 17-point advisory outlining mandatory safety measures. The committee verified whether these points have been complied with and submitted its findings to the government.

Police sources stated the stadium gates were too narrow to handle large crowds, especially with Virat Kohli expected to attend. Sources further revealed that in a last-ditch effort, Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) President Venkatesh Prasad met with state Home Minister G. Parameshwara, pleading for an

exception, but authorities stood firm. Parameshwara announced on Monday that a committee was formed to inspect and assess whether the Chinnaswamy Stadium is fit to host the Vijay Hazare Trophy cricket match.

The minister chaired a meeting at the Vidhana Soudha with officials from the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and senior police officers to discuss arrangements for the upcoming match.

"KSCA has requested permission to hold the Vijay Hazare Trophy match without allowing public spectators. Only the match will be conducted, and no audience will be permitted," Parameshwara had said. Notably, 11 people were killed in a stampede near the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru during the Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) victory celebrations on June 4.

Gill, Arshdeep named in Punjab squad

The league-stage fixtures conclude on January 8, three days before India's first ODI.

India openers Shubman Gill and Abhishek Sharma, along with pacer Arshdeep Singh, have been named in Punjab's 18-man Vijay Hazare Trophy squad. Alongside the trio, the squad also includes Prabhsimran Singh, Naman Dhir, Anmolpreet Singh, Ramandeep Singh, Sanvir Singh, Harpreet Brar, Gurnoor Brar and Krish Bhagat. Punjab, who were last season's quarter-finalist, are slotted in Elite Group C and will begin their campaign against Maharashtra on December 24, playing all seven league matches in Jaipur. The league-stage fixtures conclude on January 8,

three days before India's first ODI. Gill, Abhishek and Arshdeep's availability, however, remains unclear, as India are scheduled to play three ODIs against New Zealand starting January 11, followed by five T20Is from January 21.

Gill, who was dropped from the T20I squad for the T20 World Cup and the New Zealand T20Is, will captain the ODI side, while Abhishek and Arshdeep are part of the T20I squad.

Earlier, Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant had already been included in Delhi's probables list, and the duo will be available for Delhi till India's ODI series



Suryakumar to play two Vijay Hazare matches in Jan

NEW DELHI: India T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav and all-rounder Shivam Dube have informed the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) of their availability for two Vijay Hazare Trophy matches scheduled on January 6 and 8.

Mumbai begin their 50-over campaign in Jaipur from December 24, with their opening league match against Sikkim. Suryakumar and Dube are expected to feature in Mumbai's fixtures against Himachal Pradesh on January 6 and Punjab two days later. An MCA official confirmed that both players had communicated their availability and would be added to the squad for those matches.

The official also said that Rohit Sharma, who is part of the squad, is currently slated to play two league

games. The move follows a directive from the BCCI asking players who were part of India's recent 3-1 T20I series win over South Africa to participate in at least two Vijay Hazare Trophy matches. The board has reiterated its push for senior and contracted players to turn out regularly in domestic competitions when international commitments allow. Earlier this year, chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar underlined the importance of domestic cricket for international players, stressing that it helps them stay sharp during breaks from international action. He had said that whenever players are free, they should be playing domestic cricket, as it remains a vital pathway to maintaining form and match fitness.

T20 WC

Cummins doubtful for T20 World Cup? It's quite grey right now, says Aus head coach



MELBOURNE: Australia skipper Pat Cummins' chances of playing at next year's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka are "quite grey at the moment" as he battles a back stress issue that has affected his participation in the ongoing Ashes series against England.

Cummins returned to play the third Ashes Test in Adelaide after missing the opening two matches, picking up six wickets to help Australia clinch the series 3-0.

However, the Australian Test and ODI skipper will take no fur-

Cummins returned to play the third Ashes Test in Adelaide after missing the opening two matches, picking up six wickets to help Australia clinch the series 3-0.

ther part in the series and even his participation at the T20 World Cup is also uncertain. All-rounder Mitchell Marsh is Australia's T20I captain.

"Looking forward to the World Cup, whether he will be there or not, I can't

really say. It's quite grey at the moment. We're hopeful," head coach Andrew McDonald was quoted as saying by 'ESPNCricinfo'.

The fast bowler was diagnosed with a lumbar stress reaction during

Australia's tour of the West Indies in July. He underwent rehabilitation before being cleared for a carefully managed return in Adelaide.

"He's pulled up fine. He won't play any part in the rest of the series and that was a discussion that we had a long time out around his return," McDonald said.

"We were taking on some risk and people that reported on that would understand the risk associated with that rebuild. We've now won the series and that was the goal.

"So, to position him for further risk and jeopardise him long-term is not something that we want to do and Pat's really comfortable with that," he added. The T20 World Cup is scheduled to begin on February 7 across India and Sri Lanka with the summit clash set for March 8.

Australia's first match is on February 11 against Ireland at Colombo. Although Cummins captains the Test and ODI teams, all-rounder Mitch Marsh leads Australia in the shortest format.

Team official to investigate drinking habits of England cricketers during Ashes tour



MELBOURNE: England's managing director of men's cricket Rob Key says he will investigate the drinking habits of the England team following reports that their mid-Ashes beach resort break may have involved over-indulging of alcohol.

England lost each of the first three tests to allow Australia to retain the Ashes in just 11 days of on-field action.

The England squad visited the resort town of Noosa on the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane between the second and third tests, a long-planned part of the itinerary designed to help players relax and unwind on the long tour. Key, who did not join the players in Noosa, said he had no problem with the break, but would not be happy if he found evidence of over-indulging.

"If there's things where people are saying that our players went out and drank excessively, then of course we'll be looking into that," he said Tuesday in Melbourne, where the fourth test begins Friday.

Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol for an international cricket team is not something that I'd expect to see at any stage and it would be a fault not to look into what happened there. From everything that I've heard so far, they actually were pretty well behaved. Very well behaved."

He added: "We've got enough ways of finding out exactly what happened and everything that I've heard so far that they sat down, had lunch, had dinner, didn't go out late, all of that, had the odd drink. I don't mind that. If it goes past that,

then that's an issue as far as I'm concerned."

Key also said he had previously looked into reports that players had been spotted drinking the night before a match in New Zealand shortly before the Ashes.

A short clip of white-ball captain Harry Brook and Jacob Bethell was shared by a member of the public on social media, said to have been taken while they were out in Wellington before the third one-day international on Nov. 1. "I didn't feel like that was worthy of formal warnings, but it was probably worthy of informal ones," he said. "I think that was a bit of a wake-up call actually for what they're going into. I don't mind players having a glass of wine over dinner. Anything more than that, I think is ridiculous, really."

Anil Ravipudi wishes grand success to content-driven film 'Dhandoraa' ahead of December 25 release

Successful director Anil Ravipudi extended his best wishes for the grand success of the film 'Dhandoraa', which is gearing up for a theatrical release on December 25. He attended the film's pre-release event as the chief guest and praised the team for bringing a bold, content-driven cinema to audiences. Produced by Ravindra Banerjee Muppaneni of Loukya Entertainments, known for acclaimed films Color Photo and Bedurulanka 2012, Dhandoraa is directed by Muralikanth. The film stars Shivaji, Navdeep, Nandu, Ravi Krishna, Manika Chikkala, Mounika Reddy, Bindu

Madhavi, Radhya, and Aditi Bhavaraju in key roles. Speaking at the event, Anil Ravipudi said he greatly admired producer Banerjee's passion and taste in cinema. He lauded the film's title and expressed hope that lyricist Kasarla Shyam would receive a National Award for the title song. Praising the teaser and trailer, he said Dhandoraa would be remembered for a long time for its courage in exposing societal flaws. He also appreciated director Muralikanth's conviction and said that while promotions may attract attention, strong content alone brings audiences to theatres. He wished the team a big success on December 25. Actor Shivaji said Anil



Ravipudi's presence would help the film reach wider audiences. He praised producer Banerjee's story selection and director Muralikanth's passion, stating that he chose Dhandoraa as part of his return to meaningful cinema. He asserted that the film had uncompromising content and would grow from a small film into a big success by release day. Actor Navdeep said the film's uniqueness had already reached audiences through premieres held since December 23, adding that the teaser and trailer surprised even those familiar with the story. He praised Kasarla Shyam for capturing the soul of the film through the title song. Producer Ravindra

Banerjee Muppaneni said the journey began three years ago and emphasized that in Dhandoraa, the story is the hero and content is the heroine. Director Muralikanth thanked Anil Ravipudi and the producer for believing in good cinema, stating that he already considers the film a success. Actors Bindu Madhavi, Ravi Krishna, and distributor Shashidhar Reddy, along with DOP Venkat R. Sakamuri and executive producer Edward Stevenson Perez, expressed strong confidence in the film's content, performances, and music, urging audiences to watch Dhandoraa in theatres on December 25.

Shambhala best experienced in theatres, Hindi version planned: Aadi Saikumar



Actor Aadi Saikumar said that films like Shambhala are best enjoyed in theatres for a complete cinematic experience and revealed that the team is also planning to release the film in Hindi after its Telugu release. The film, which has generated strong buzz with its teasers, trailers, posters, and songs, is set for a grand theatrical release on December 25. Interacting with the media on December 23, coinciding with his birthday, Aadi expressed confidence in the film's success. He said Shambhala has turned out extremely well and that audiences would enjoy the experience. Speaking about the competition on December 25, he stated that it is a festive season for films and wished success to Srikanth Garu's son Roshan's film Champion, highlighting their close family bonding. Aadi noted that the buzz began right from the release of the first still, with teasers and trailers launched by Dulquer Salmaan, Prabhas, and Nani receiving an overwhelming response. He highlighted the importance of action sequences and costumes in the film, revealing that special care was taken as the story is set in the 1980s, and that the climax action episode would be a major highlight. Talking about the technical aspects, Aadi said the film has limited but carefully executed VFX, while Sricharan Pakala's background score would elevate the film to another level, with strong themes for every

character. He added that Shambhala does not rely heavily on songs, as the genre demands a more immersive narrative experience. Reflecting on the title, Aadi said Shambhala holds significant mythological importance, which excited him from the moment he heard the story. He also shared that he suffered a minor injury during a fire sequence, noting that such incidents are common during action shoots. Commenting on the growing OTT trend, Aadi stressed that audiences still seek grand cinematic experiences and that Shambhala was made on a lavish scale without compromise. He praised director Ugandhar for his passion and clarity of vision and appreciated the producers for their strong support and extensive promotions. He confirmed that after the Telugu release and positive word of mouth, the team plans to begin promotions for the Hindi version. Aadi also spoke about the challenges of night shoots in extremely cold conditions, especially during the climax, and said all characters in the film are well written, with Archana's role expected to leave a strong impact. On the possibility of a sequel, he said a Part 2 would be considered if the audience makes the film a hit. Sharing details about his upcoming projects, Aadi said his film Sub Inspector Ugandhar for ETV Win has turned out well and will be released soon.

'Eesha offers both thrills & a complete theatrical experience': Akhil Raj

Actor Akhil Raj said that the upcoming horror thriller 'Eesha' promises both edge-of-the-seat thrills and a powerful theatrical experience for audiences. The film, produced by Bunny Vaas and Vamsi Nandipati under the banners of Vamsi Nandipati Entertainments and Bunny Vaas Works, is set for a grand theatrical release on December 25. Directed by Srinivas Manne, Eesha features Akhil Raj and Trigun in lead roles, with Hebah Patel as the female lead. Siri Hanmanthu, Babloo, and Prithviraj play key supporting roles. The film is presented by noted producer K. L. Damodar Prasad and produced by Hem Venkateswara Rao under the banner of HVR Productions. Interacting with the media, Akhil Raj said he had signed Eesha even before



the success of Raju Weds Rambayi and was selected through an audition. He expressed confidence that audiences would embrace the film. Describing his first reaction to the script, he said he was shocked and instantly hooked, adding that the film offers superb twists, striking visuals, and impressive sound design that elevate it into a true theatrical experience. Akhil Raj noted that the lighting patterns, visuals, and sound design play a crucial role in creating fear and suspense. "The sound design is terrifying and crafted to genuinely scare people," he said, adding with a smile that those with weak hearts might find it difficult to watch. Speaking about his role, he said he plays Vinay, one of four childhood friends, and described working with actors Trigun, Hebah Patel, Siri, and Mime Madhu as a valuable learning experience. He

praised director Srinivas Manne for his clarity and conviction, particularly in handling thrilling elements. Recalling challenges during the shoot, Akhil Raj shared that he suffered from a month-long fever after being bitten by an insect during the Araku schedule. He also stated that he chose the horror genre to showcase his versatility, moving away from roles similar to his character Raju. He believes Eesha will earn him wider recognition. Reflecting on the impact of Raju Weds Rambayi, Akhil Raj said the film completely changed his life and gave him recognition in the industry. Talking about future projects, he revealed that four to five films are currently in discussion and that he is working on a project directed by Bhadri, featuring Tarun Bhascker and Anupama. Eesha is slated to hit theatres on December 25.

Romantic melody 'Yedo Yedo' from The Rise of Ashoka released



The makers of The Rise of Ashoka have released a soulful romantic melody titled "Yedho Yedho", adding another musical highlight to this ambitious project. The film features Sathish Ninasam in a powerful dual role as both lead actor and producer, marking a significant milestone in his career. The Rise of Ashoka is jointly produced by Vardhan Hari, Jaishnavi, and Sathish Ninasam under the banners of Vriddhi Creation and Sathish Picture House, and is directed by Vinod V. Dhondale. The film stars Sapthami Gowda, widely appreciated for her performances in Kantara and Thammudu, as the female lead oppo-

site Sathish Ninasam. Earlier, the film's striking posters and the powerful song "Vinara Maadeva" received an encouraging response from audiences, creating strong anticipation around the project. Continuing this momentum, the team has now unveiled "Yedo Yedo", a soothing duet that beautifully captures the romance, emotional bonding, and chemistry between the lead pair. With the complete video song now released, viewers are treated to picturesque visuals, nuanced character moments, and glimpses into the emotional journey of the protagonists. Sathish Ninasam and Sapthami Gowda look charming together, with their on-

screen chemistry, elegant dance movements, and stylish appearances seamlessly complementing the romantic mood of the song. Penned by Jayachandra J.D., "Yedo Yedo" is rendered melodiously by Sai Charan and M.D. Pallavi. The music, composed by Poornachandra Tejaswi, is gentle, soulful, and instantly appealing. Santhu Master's choreography stands out for its simplicity and grace, enhancing the song's emotional connect. The song has been released in the audio market by Lahari Music. The makers are currently focused on completing the remaining post-production work and are gearing up to bring The Rise of Ashoka to theatres soon.

Second single 'Labore Labore' from Vanara released

Vanara marks the debut of Avinash Thiruveedhula as both hero and director. Simran Choudhary plays the female lead, while Nandu will be seen in the role of the antagonist. The film is presented by Shantanu Patti and produced under the Silver Screen Cinemas banner by Avinash Buyani, Alapati Raja, and C. Ankith Reddy. Sai Madhav Burra's dialogues and Vivek Sagar's music are set to be major highlights of the film. Made as a mythological rural drama, Vanara is all set for a New Year

special worldwide grand theatrical release on January 1. Today, the makers released the film's second single titled "Labore Labore". Music director Vivek Sagar has composed the song with an engaging and energetic beat. Bharadwaj Gali has penned apt lyrics that perfectly suit the situation. The song has been powerfully sung by Rahul Sipligunj and Sai Madhav. The lyrics narrate the valor and legend of Vanara, drawing inspiration from mythological elements, and the song stands out with its vibrant energy and catchy rhythm.

