

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

28-12-2025

Total pilgrims: 85,823
Tonsures: 23,660
Hundi kanukulu: 4.80 CR
Waiting Compartments: 13

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) : 6-8 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889

NATION | NEWS
West Bengal police warn against fake loan scams using CM Mamata Banerjee's name

WORLD | NEWS
Trump says progress made in Ukraine talks but 'thorny issues' remain

SPORTS | NEWS
Gautam Gambhir Told To 'Become Ranji Trophy Coach' In Sensational Verdict By Ex-England Star

INBRIEF

RBI TO AUCTION GOVT BONDS WORTH RS 32,000 CRORE ON JAN 2

New Delhi (TSIT): The government of India on Monday announced the sale (re-issue) of "6.48 per cent Government Security 2035" for a notified amount of Rs 32,000 crore through price-based auction using the multiple price method. The auction will be conducted by the Reserve Bank of India's Mumbai Office on January 2. The Government will have the option to retain additional subscription up to Rs 2,000 crore against the security, according to a Finance Ministry statement. Up to 5 per cent of the notified amount of the sale of the security will be allotted to eligible individuals and institutions as per the Scheme



for Non-Competitive Bidding Facility in the Auction of Government Securities, the statement said. Both competitive and non-competitive bids for the auction should be submitted in electronic format on the Reserve Bank of India Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber system) on January 2, 2026. The non-competitive bids should be submitted between 10:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., and the competitive bids should be submitted between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., the statement explained. The result of the auction will be announced on January 2, and payment by successful bidders will be on January 5.

CM Revanth inspects Legislative Council renovation works



HYDERABAD (TSIT): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday inspected the ongoing renovation and modernization works of the Telangana Legislative Council building located within the Assembly premises. He was accompanied by Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukender Reddy. During the inspection, the leaders reviewed the progress of repair works being carried out to strengthen the building's infrastructure and enhance facilities for members and officials.

Officials briefed the Chief Minister on the scope of the renovation, project timelines, and the quality standards being followed. Revanth Reddy directed them to ensure that the works are completed within the stipulated time while maintaining high standards of safety and construction quality. The inspection gains significance as the Telangana Legislature is in session, with the government focusing on upgrading institutional infrastructure to meet current and future requirements.

2 Telangana women killed in California car crash



Hyderabad (TSIT): Two women from Telangana were killed in a tragic car accident in California while they were in the United States in search of employment. The incident occurred when the vehicle they were traveling in met with a severe crash, resulting in their death on the spot. According to preliminary information, the victims had recently arrived in the US and were pursuing job opportunities. Local authorities

ties have initiated an investigation into the cause of the accident, while formal identification procedures are underway. The news has sent shockwaves through their families and native places in Telangana. Relatives and friends have appealed to the authorities for support in completing legal formalities and repatriating the bodies to India. Further details regarding the circumstances of the accident are awaited.

UNNAO RAPE CASE: People trying to take political advantage, says SC on allegations against HC judges

NEW DELHI: (DEC 29) After expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar's lawyers said that allegations were made against the Delhi High Court judges who suspended his life sentence in the Unnao rape case, the Supreme Court on Monday observed that some people are trying to take "political advantage". The high court had suspended the jail term of Sengar, who was serving life imprisonment in the Unnao rape case, saying he had already served seven years and five months in prison. "We understand it. We are not sitting in ivory towers. We understand that people are trying to take political advantage and there are people who

are trying to take advantage," Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, who was heading a three-judge vacation bench, said. Senior advocate N Hariharan, appearing for Sengar, pointed out

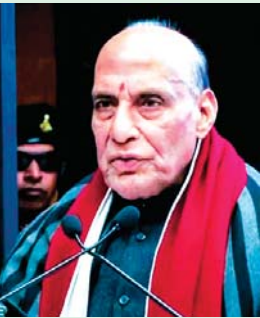


that some people were making allegations against the high court judges who dealt with the case. He said such persons should refrain from mak-

ing statements or allegations against the judges. "They are doing that on national television," Hariharan said. Another lawyer, who also appeared for Sengar, said photographs of the high court judges were also being circulated. Hariharan said there is a video circulating leveling allegations against the judges and this was a cause of concern. The bench observed that such people are simply forgetting that Sengar was convicted by the judiciary only. "Very frankly, these judges are one of the finest we have," the bench, also comprising Justices J K Maheshwari and Augustine George Masih, said during the hearing.

Rajnath clears 79,000 cr arms procurement

NEW DELHI (TSIT) The defence ministry on Monday approved procurement of long-range rockets, missiles, radar systems and military platforms worth Rs 79,000 crore to bolster the military's combat prowess.



The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, green-lighted the proposals. The DAC approved procurement of loiter munition systems for the Army's artillery regiments. It also cleared acquisition of low level lightweight radars, long-range guided rocket ammunition for Pinaka rocket system and integrated drone detection and interdiction system (Mk-II) for the Indian

Army, the defence ministry said. Loiter munition will be used for precision strike of tactical targets, whereas low level lightweight radars will detect and track small size, low flying unmanned aerial systems, it said. It said long range guided rockets are being procured to enhance the range and accuracy of Pinaka rocket systems for effective engagement of high value targets.

Andhra Cabinet approves formation of two new districts



AMARAVATI (TSIT): The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet, on Monday, approved formation of two new districts, taking the total number of districts in the state to 28. The Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu approved formation of Polavaram and Markapuram districts. Polavaram district will

have Rampachodavaram as its headquarters. Briefing the media on the Cabinet decisions, state Revenue Minister Anagani Satya Prasad said that the Cabinet approved proposals for changes in 17 out of the total 26 districts. A total of 25 changes were made in these 17 districts, Minister Satya Prasad added.

Telangana Assembly to meet from Jan 2 to 7



HYDERABAD (TSIT): The Telangana Legislative Assembly will hold its session from January 2 to January 7, as decided by the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) at a meeting chaired by Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar on Monday. The Assembly will remain in recess until January 1. The BAC meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers D. Sridhar Babu and Ponnampallabharathi, along with leaders of various political parties. The committee also finalized the agenda and number of working days for the upcoming session. The Winter Session of the Telangana Legislature began earlier with obituary references in both Houses. The Assembly paid tributes to former MLAs Ram Reddy and Damodar Reddy and

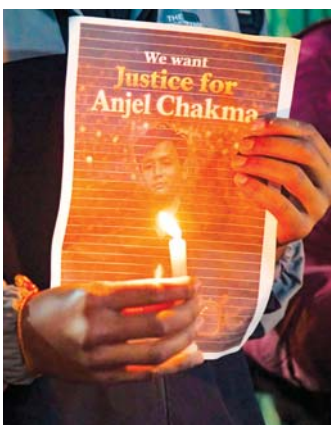
Konda Laxma Reddy, while the Legislative Council mourned former MLAs Madhavaram Jagapathi Rao and Ahmed Peer Shabbir. During the initial proceedings, the government introduced several ordinances in both the Assembly and the Council. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy tabled ordinances related to municipal laws, GHMC amendments, BST amendments, and audit reports of Samagra Shiksha and PM Schools for Rising India. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka introduced the Telangana Public Service Commission amendment ordinance, while Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka tabled the Panchayat Raj amendment ordinance. Bills will be brought in the session to give statutory backing to these ordinances.

NATIONAL DISGRACE

Leaders call for zero tolerance against hate crimes targeting northeastern people

Dehradun (TSIT) Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami spoke to the father of the student from Tripura, who was killed in an alleged racial attack here, on phone on Monday and assured strict punishment for the accused, as leaders cutting across political lines called for comprehensive efforts to end "hate crimes" against the people from the northeastern states. Rahul Gandhi and other opposition leaders targeted the BJP, alleging that the murder of MBA student Anjel Chakma (24) was a fallout of the ruling dispensation "normalising" hate and encouraging a "divisive mindset". Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav demanded that the Supreme Court step in and ensure justice. Former Union minister Shashi Tharoor said the brutal killing "is a national disgrace", and political and religious leaders must speak out against the abuse of the people from the Northeast as "silence is complicity". Union minister Kiren Rijiju expressed "dismay and anger" over the killing and called upon the people to fight against

such "mindset" together, saying any such incident is "very shameful" and harms the country. He said the issue should not be politicised. Asked about Rahul Gandhi and other opposition leaders holding the BJP responsible for the incident, Rijiju said, "Be it a youngster coming from the north east, Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal... a student from any of the states in the country, we are all Indians. Everyone should be sad if any such incident happens with anyone from any part of the country. This is not a matter on which politics should be done. Be it the northeast or in any other part of the country, why should anyone from other regions be subjected to such discrimination on the lines of race, religion, caste and looks." AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal said the country needs strict action and a national law against racism and hate crimes. "Justice must be swift and exemplary," he said on X. Speaking in the same vein, Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi demanded that the case be investigated in a time-bound manner and the guilty be given



the harshest punishment to convey a message across the country that there is zero tolerance for such crimes. Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal said Union Home Minister Amit Shah must speak up against the hate crimes. In a post on X, he said the murder is "a shocking display of a hate crime, of bigotry, of the silence of our leaders in government who by their inaction are complicit." Gandhi said on X, "What happened to Anjel Chakma and his brother Michael in Dehradun is a horrific hate crime. Hate doesn't appear overnight. For years now, it has been fed daily — especially

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami spoke to Tarun Prasad Chakma, the father of the deceased Tripura student, and assured strict punishment for the accused

to our youth — through toxic content and irresponsible narratives. And it's being normalised by the hate-spewing leadership of the ruling BJP." Tharoor said the Northeast is "not a distant appendage to the Indian identity; it is central to it. Yet, people from the region are routinely subjected to racial profiling, exclusion, and abuse. This must end." "We must demand justice ... not only in the courts, but in the conscience of the nation. His death must not be reduced to a statistic or a fleeting headline. It must ignite a movement for education, empathy, and reform. Schools must teach the histories and cul-

tures of all Indian communities. Media must portray Northeast Indians with dignity. And society must unlearn its biases," the Congress MP said on X, and called for building "a society where no Indian is made to feel foreign in their own land". Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma said this tragedy highlights the "continuing challenges faced by people from the Northeast in parts of mainland India. Discrimination and racial prejudice have no place in our Constitution, and the rule of law must prevail to ensure justice". Assam Chief Minister and BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma said the death of the student from Tripura "following brutal racial abuse in Dehradun is heartbreaking and unacceptable" and urged Dhami to ensure strict action against the culprits so that justice is served. Dhami, in his phone conversation with Anjel Chakma's father, Tarun Prasad Chakma, said he is saddened by the incident and that the state government stands with the victim's family.

West Bengal police warn against fake loan scams using CM Mamata Banerjee's name

Kolkata, Dec 28: The West Bengal police on Sunday issued a warning about fraudulent government loan advertisements circulating on social media that falsely use Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's name and photographs. Authorities cautioned that individuals falling for these scams could lose significant sums of money.

In an official advisory shared via its X handle, the state police highlighted the modus operandi of these scams, which often promise "instant loans," "loans without CIBIL score," "government-approved financial schemes," or "guaranteed loans with no verification." The police clarified that no such schemes have been announced or endorsed by the chief minister or the West Bengal



government. "These advertisements are completely fake and fraudulent. The use of the hon'ble chief minister's name or image is unauthorised and illegal," the advisory stated.

The police noted that scammers typically use Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp ads, or reels to redirect users to fake apps, websites, or WhatsApp numbers. They then ask for personal information such as Aadhaar, PAN, OTPs, and bank details, demand processing fees or advance payments, and disappear after collecting money or misusing the victim's identity. To avoid falling victim, the West Bengal Police advised the public not to trust offers claiming "No CIBIL," "Instant approval," or "Government-backed" loans on social media. People are urged not to click

suspicious links, install unknown loan apps, or share OTPs, bank details, or identity documents. Only authorised banks, NBFCs, or official government websites should be trusted for loan services.

The advisory also warned that strict legal action would be taken against those misusing the Chief Minister's name or image to run such fraudulent advertisements. Victims are urged to report scams immediately to the Cyber Crime Helpline (1930) or via cybercrime.gov.in and preserve screenshots, links, phone numbers, and transaction details for investigation. "Strict legal action will be taken against persons involved in impersonation, cheating, cyber fraud, and misuse of public authority names and images," the police statement added.

Amit Shah highlights preventive healthcare and medical ethics at IMA centenary event

Gandhinagar, Dec 28: Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday emphasized India's efforts to build a comprehensive healthcare ecosystem, focusing on preventive care, wellness, and accessible services for all. He was speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected office-bearers of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) in Ahmedabad, attended by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

Addressing doctors on the IMA's centenary year, Shah highlighted that achieving a Viksit Bharat requires a healthy population, and doctors play a pivotal role in shaping the nation's future. "The focus of healthcare must gradual-



ly shift from illness to wellness," he said. Shah noted the transformation in India's health sector under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, citing initiatives such as the Swachhata Mission, Fit India Movement, Khelo India, International Yoga Day, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, ABHA, Mission Indradhanush, promotion of generic medicines, telemedicine, and video counselling.

Goods train derailment disrupts Howrah-Patna-Delhi rail route

Jamui, Dec 28: Eight wagons of a goods train derailed in Bihar's Jamui district late Saturday night, disrupting rail services on the busy Howrah-Patna-Delhi route, railway officials said. The accident occurred between Lahabon and Simultala railway stations under the Asansol division of Eastern Railways at around 11.25 pm. No casualties have been reported in the incident. The derailment affected the movement of



nearly two dozen trains overnight, causing inconvenience to passengers travelling on the route. Railway authorities said accident relief trains were rushed to the spot from

Asansol, Madhupur and Jhajha stations. Restoration work is currently underway to clear the track and resume normal train operations at the earliest.

Youth dies by suicide in police custody near Gurgaon, probe ordered

Gurgaon, Dec 28: A 22-year-old man arrested in a theft and house trespass case allegedly died by suicide while in police custody at Farrukhnagar near Gurgaon on Friday, prompting authorities to order a magisterial inquiry into the incident.

The deceased has been identified as Asif, a resident of Rampura in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi. Police said he was arrested by the Farrukhnagar Crime Branch on December 26 from Farrukhnagar Mod and



was kept at the Crime Branch office after his arrest. According to the police, around 3.45 pm on Friday, Asif allegedly tore the cover of a quilt provided to him and used it to hang himself from

the grill of a ventilator. He was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead.

Following the incident, four police personnel from the Farrukhnagar Crime Branch were transferred to the Gurgaon District Police Lines on Saturday to ensure an "impartial investigation", officials said. A case has been registered against unknown persons based on a complaint filed by Asif's family members.

Another tiger found dead in MP; 2025 toll rises to 55, highest since project Tiger



Sagar, Dec 29: Yet another tiger death has been reported from the 'Tiger State' Madhya Pradesh, taking the total number of tiger mortalities in the state so far in 2025 to 55 — the highest in any single year since the launch of Project Tiger in 1973. The latest incident was reported from the Bundelkhand region's Sagar district. An adult female tiger, aged between eight and ten years, was found dead near Hilgan village along the Sagar-Dhana Road on Sunday. The carcass was located in the Dhana Forest Range under the Sagar South Forest Division. Villagers who spotted the carcass in the morning immediately informed forest department officials. A team led by Dhana Forest Ranger Pratik Srivastava rushed to the spot and initiated on-site investigations.

According to senior officials in the state forest department, the exact cause of death will be determined only after the necropsy. However, the absence of visible injury marks or evidence of poisoning has raised suspicion that the tigress may have died due to electrocution from an illegal electric trap set up in the area. Forest officials are also probing whether the tigress had been residing in the area

for a prolonged period or had strayed from nearby reserves such as the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve or the Panna Tiger Reserve.

Data available with the department shows that out of the 55 tiger deaths reported in Madhya Pradesh this year, 11 were unnatural. Of these, around eight deaths were caused by electrocution, largely due to electric traps laid by villagers to protect crops from wild boars and antelopes or during bush hunting.

Electrocution-related tiger deaths have emerged as a major concern for the forest department. Officials point out that such incidents are often linked to villagers resorting to illegal traps due to delays and complexities in compensation for crop damage caused by wild animals. Reacting to the incident, Bhopal-based wildlife activist Ajay Dubey shared a video of the dead tiger on social media and questioned the lack of accountability. "When will this cycle of tiger deaths finally end? Fifty-five tigers have been lost in Madhya Pradesh so far this year. Today, another tiger's carcass was discovered in Dhana, Sagar—suspected to belong to the Panna Tiger Reserve. Who will answer for this mounting crisis?" he wrote.

Centre issues show-cause notice to Chhattisgarh over dam safety lapses

Raipur, Dec 29: Following safety breaches in two dams in Chhattisgarh, the Centre has issued a show-cause notice to the state government for failing to comply with the provisions of the Dam Safety Act, 2021. The latest notice, served by the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), pertains to the breach of the Rajadera dam in Dhamtari district on November 2. The incident triggered serious concerns over public safety after a large volume of stored water gushed out, flooding several villages and damaging standing paddy crops.

According to officials, the notice seeks an explanation from the state government



within 30 days, failing which legal action will be initiated under Sections 41 and 42 of the Dam Safety Act, 2021.

This comes close on the heels of another dam-related tragedy in the state. On September 2, a breach at the Luti Tank led to the death of five people, with around a dozen reported missing, besides extensive damage to property and livestock. Following that incident, the NDSA had flagged serious concerns over systemic non-compliance with dam safety norms in the state.

During a pre-monsoon inspection of the Rajadera dam, the NDSA had identified multiple operational and structural deficiencies and

directed the authorities to take immediate corrective measures. Inspectors reported deformation and instability in both upstream and downstream areas, unchecked vegetation growth and animal burrows on embankment slopes, cracks on the dam crest, deteriorated slope protection, and problems related to drainage and overall structural integrity.

The notice pointed out that despite clear warning signs and documented deficiencies, no effective remedial action was taken before the onset of the monsoon, raising questions over administrative accountability and dam safety governance in the state.

Talk on 'Gen Z and the Future of Indian Democracy' Held at GITAM

Hyderabad, December 29, 2025: The Department of Political Science, GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences (GSHS), Hyderabad, organized a guest lecture on "Gen Z and the Future of Indian Democracy" on December 29. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Ajay Gudavarthy, Associate Professor at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, and a noted political theorist and analyst. He provided a nuanced understanding of Gen Z's engagement with democracy, highlighting rapid intergenerational shifts in values, ethics, and political practices.

Dr. Gudavarthy observed that while Gen Z displays radical individualism and a degree of social indifference, it is



also less prejudiced and more inclusive. He noted that contemporary youth-led political movements are often leaderless and episodic, driven more by exemplary action than ideological preaching, thereby reshaping traditional ideas of collective politics. He further discussed the paradox of confidence and anxiety

among Gen Z, linking it to expanding social democratization alongside shrinking economic opportunities in the post-liberalization era. He also emphasized the growing convergence of identity, political subjectivity, and consumption in shaping present-day youth politics.

Concluding the session, Dr. Gudavarthy encouraged students to pursue meaningful goals and contribute creatively to society. The lecture was followed by an interactive discussion with students and faculty.

The programme was coordinated by Mr. Supriy Ranjan and attended by Dr. Shamuel Tharu, In-Charge Director, GSHS; Dr. Mayank Mishra; Ms. Rishija Singh, and others.

Dispelling Myths About Colostomy in Children

* COLOSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP LAUNCHED AT KIMS CUDDLES HOSPITAL

* ANNOUNCED ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL PEDIATRIC SURGERY DAY

Hyderabad, December 29, 2025: A colostomy is a temporary surgical arrangement performed in children when they are born with certain congenital conditions, or when they suffer from intestinal cancer, severe infections, or other bowel-related problems. In this procedure, the normal route of bowel movement is temporarily diverted, and the end of the large intestine is brought out through the abdominal wall. A disposable bag is attached at this opening to collect stool. By regularly cleaning and changing this bag, personal hygiene can be maintained. This procedure is known as a colostomy.



However, families of children who undergo colostomy often experience intense fear, doubts, and social challenges. To address and dispel these concerns, a Pediatric Colostomy Support Group was launched on Monday at KIMS Cuddles Hospital, Secunderabad, under the guidance of pediatric surgery specialists, on the occasion of National Pediatric Surgery Day.

The initiative is led by Dr. M. Yoga Nagendhar, Chief Consultant Pediatric

Surgeon, Pediatric Urologist, and Robotic Surgeon. Through this group, awareness about colostomy will be created, scientific knowledge will be shared, and comprehensive support will be provided to parents of children who have undergone colostomy. Dr. Yoga Nagendhar stated that this is the first such support group in India.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. M. Yoga Nagendhar said "Colostomy is only a temporary arrangement to allow the body to heal. A part of

the large intestine is brought to the surface of the abdomen and an opening is created, through which bowel movements pass into a colostomy bag. In children, colostomy is usually a temporary diversion done to allow the intestines to recover after surgery. There are several reasons for performing a colostomy, including improper formation of the anus, Hirschsprung's disease, intestinal problems in newborns such as necrotizing enterocolitis, intestinal injuries due to accidents, severe infections, or bowel obstructions."

Dr. Babu S. Madarkar, Clinical Director, Chief Neonatologist, KIMS Cuddles Secunderabad, emphasized the importance of family support. He said that parents often feel overwhelmed by the challenges of managing a colostomy bag, including frequent bag changes, preventing skin

irritation, making dietary adjustments, and knowing when to consult doctors. Due to lack of awareness, colostomy can also become a social issue. "To address these challenges, the Pediatric Colostomy Support Group established by KIMS Cuddles Hospital will provide essential support to such families. The group will offer necessary training and guidance to parents, educate them on colostomy bag management, and connect families facing similar situations so they can support one another. Information will be provided on when surgeries are required and what outcomes can be expected. Expert nurses and surgeons will guide families on stoma hygiene, diet, and early identification of complications. This initiative will help families overcome isolation and gain confidence," he explained.

EDITORIAL

Lessons from 'The Man in The High Castle'

The Man in the High Castle is an alternative history TV series based on the 1962 novel of the same name by Philip K. Dick. It shows a world where the Axis powers have won the second world war. The United States has been divided between Germany and Japan. Nazi Germany rules the East, Imperial Japan controls the West, and a fragile Neutral Zone lies between. Swastikas hang over Manhattan; and the imperial Japanese military police patrol San Francisco. After his sister and her children are murdered for his girlfriend Juliana's ties to the resistance, Frank Frink – an arms-factory worker – seeks solace from Ed McCarthy, a practising Jew who openly lives his faith despite the mortal risk it carries. Ed: One thing I realize about my people (the Jews). We have a different sense of time. These may be dark years, but we will survive. We always do. You've just got to find something to hold on to. That brief exchange distils three profound truths about surviving life under an authoritarian regime: “We have a different sense of time. These may be dark years, but we will survive. We always do. You've just got to find something to hold on to.” History bears out Ed's insight that real resistance moves on a long clock. Apartheid in South Africa took 46 years to dismantle; India's freedom struggle unfolded over two hundred years; Black Americans waited a full century from emancipation to secure basic voting rights; and Ireland's fight against British rule unfolded over more than a century. Even women's suffrage in Britain took about 50 years of sustained agitation. The hardest thing about resistance is not the oppressor's power; it is often the cynicism of those who have already decided defeat is inevitable. Those who are tempted to become weary with the struggle should remember Martin Luther King's words, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” “Find something to hold on to...faith...art...Beauty is important. It gives us hope.” Colour, art, laughter, and imagination refuse the emotional discipline authoritarianism tries to impose. To remain fully alive in soul-deadening times is an act of resistance in itself. In his Power of the Powerless, Czech dissident and later president, Vaclav Havel argued that living truthfully, creatively, and fully was in itself an act of resistance. “The struggle against the system is not just a political struggle, but a struggle for life itself” Arundhati Roy says something similar: “Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.” It is important for those engaged in resistance to step away from the noise and the struggle regularly, and take time for the things that give them joy and strength so they too may be able to ‘hear the breathing of another world.’ “You've got your own little fascist (in your head) telling you what you can or cannot do. That's how you let them win.” Ed McCarthy's warning about the “inner fascist” highlights the strongest weapon of authoritarianism: the voice inside us that says don't risk it, don't stand out, don't hope. There is a reason fascist regimes plaster their leader's image everywhere, on billboards, walls, newspapers, even vaccination certificates. The purpose is to crowd out thought itself, and to whisper – constantly and subconsciously – this is all there is. It creates the illusion of inevitability. But when we insist on creating, celebrating, and imagining freely, we puncture that illusion and deny authoritarianism its final victory: the occupation of the inner life. Joy, art, music, faith and humour, thus, become some of the most effective ways to disarm the “inner fascist.” In The Man in the High Castle, forbidden newsreel films circulate through the Reich showing an alternate reality in which the Allies won the war. Hitler fears these films so deeply that he orders their destruction. The series turns on this terror: not of weapons or armies, but of imagination itself, and the destabilising power of seeing that history could have turned out differently and that nothing is permanent. The Man in the High Castle ultimately reminds us that authoritarianism is sustained as much by thought as by force—and undone the same way. Long before regimes fall, they begin to crack when we refuse to surrender our inner lives: when we create beauty without permission, hold faith without guarantees, and imagine futures that power insists are impossible.

Maithili Thakur, Feminism and the Politics of Being a Young BJP Leader

For over a decade, we have repeatedly heard the slogan: Narayastu yatra poojayante Ramante tatra Devta – Where women are worshipped, the Gods reside. But despite that, India's most powerful political party has given ample hints that it harbours a deep dislike for feminists. In its aggressive shrillness, their anger toward feminists stands next only to the anger they reserve for the Vaampanthi, Left-wing groups. After the Bihar elections, a young and shy 25-year-old singer, who had had nothing to do with politics thus far, was handpicked and catapulted to fame when she was allocated a ticket from the Alipur constituency. A landslide win for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coalition followed, and Maithili Thakur became the youngest legislator in the newly elected Bihar Assembly. Why aren't the feminists celebrating Maithili Thakur's victory in Bihar? asked one @anullall, with a link to her longer article in News18 on X, in which the writer suggested it was perhaps because Thakur did not fit the cultural template of imported ‘feminism’. “We have been taught” (by whom?) she went on, without providing proof, to say that all feminists distance themselves from patriarchy, love to smash the accepted mould and have adopted a Western persona. “They don't see strength in desi,” she added. “#Feminism has nothing to do with women empowerment... is a tool of radically Islamic terror to..break Hindu families.” (@rajesh271285400) Maithili is undoubtedly a good singer and had won admiration from her listeners for her obvious musical talent even before she was drawn into politics. But a referendum like the one above magnifies the worst insults feminists have been subjected to by the Right. It is no secret that our democracy is already mired in a rising graph of crimes against women and that pro-women laws have not helped the victims much. There have been multiple controversial legal verdicts where rapists and abusers of women were let out on bail, or the charges against them were suddenly dropped as witnesses turned hostile or died and proofs remained ‘unsubstantiated’. Also read: As Crimes Against Women Rise, Delhi's Women's Commission Stays Closed As a first-time and youngest member of Bihar's



Legislative Assembly, Thakur is unarguably a raw recruit. All she could promise her constituents during her campaign was, with a timid smile, that she would give them regular ‘darshan’ and, party permitting, she would rename her constituency of Alinagar after Sita. Since then, when asked how she sees herself in her new political avatar, reports mostly quote the singer saying, “Party will know what they have in mind for me. I'll do whatever the party orders.” In an atmosphere increasingly turning hostile toward deemed enemies of the state, it was unsurprising that a day before the festival of love, peace and goodwill to all, we learnt that a former BJP MLA, Kuldip Singh Sengar, serving time under serious charges of rape and murder, had been granted bail by the Delhi High Court, which had also chosen to suspend his life sentence using bureaucratic hair-splitting over his being or not being a ‘public servant’. When the news came, an Uttar Pradesh minister was widely seen smirking on TV screens, while the astonished victim, whose father died in custody, reacted and said she would challenge the verdict and sit in dharna at India Gate in protest against her tormentor being let out of jail. “India Gate?” the media reported the minister saying, “but her home is in Unnao!” On the same day, a Delhi court acquitted three people charged with an acid attack on a young girl in Panipat, who fought her perpetrators in court for long and had the case transferred from Haryana to Delhi, even though she could barely scrape

together the money required to make trips to the court and get herself treated. The victim, who has lost an eye and has a badly scarred face, says she will approach the high court. This is not only about rapists going unpunished. It is also about communalising crimes such as rape and violence. While in Delhi the Prime Minister visited the Cathedral Church of Redemption and made a speech there, tracing his long relationship with the Church, mobs violated and vandalised a shopping mall over its Christmas displays. On Christmas day, in a widely circulated video, one heard a BJP district vice president, a woman, angrily accusing the staff and Christmas revellers of carrying out conversions. During a scuffle that followed, even a visually impaired school teacher's wife was verbally assaulted and intimidated. The district vice president has since apologised and cited ‘misinformation’ for her entry and hot words – but will matters rest there? There is no protest against such behaviour from the BJP's firebrand women leaders who, when in Opposition, went blue in the face demanding resignations after Nirbhaya was raped and killed. One can assume that the party seniors are crusty politicians who tailor their reactions carefully. But why was there no reaction from the youngest MLA from Bihar, who might be the same age as the girl from Unnao or Panipat? Instead, since December 25 also happened to be the birthday of one of her politically idolised leaders, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, we saw Thakur

soulfully sing a poem of his: Geet naya gata hoon / Haar nahin manoonga / Raar Nayi Thanoonga / Kaal ke kapal per likhta mitata hoon... I sing a song of the new / I shall not be defeated / I shall continue to write and erase words / Inscribed on the forehead of Time. Will the demurely dressed young MLA be guided by empathy as a woman, or will she prefer to remain largely dependent on the image the male leadership seeks to build for her? The choice seems to have already been made. From colleges to official meetings, young Indian women and girls mostly prefer to remain in conservative mode. Even most of our campuses are full of male rebellious leaders – very few are women – who stand up to be counted. Women, as Gloria Steinem said, radicalise late. They have first to personally experience some reality checks: about hierarchies in decision-making bodies, lower average allocation of important portfolios and the expected total compliance with male orders that they may not be entirely happy with. The need for legal changes, equal matrimonial status and an end to sexual harassment at workplaces that liberal feminists have gradually ushered in are essential accompaniments for young women as well. But even our first wave of feminists were greying matronly women, such as Sarojini Naidu, Amrit Kaur, Kamala Debi Chattopadhyaya, Ammu Swaminathan, Begum Aijaz Rasool, Durga Bai Deshmukh, Hansa Ben Mehta and Sucheta Kripalani.

2025: A Reform Year That Put Middle Class, Common Citizens First

The year 2025 stands out as a landmark in India's reforms journey-one that decisively placed the middle class and the common man at the heart of policy-making. Guided by the vision articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this period witnessed a series of interconnected reforms spanning taxation, labour, investment, and ease of living. Together, these measures have reshaped India's economic landscape by strengthening household finances, boosting consumption, and reinforcing confidence in long-term growth. In his Independence Day address, the Prime Minister underscored the central role of the middle class in nation-building, noting that while this segment contributes significantly to the country, it also aspires to a better quality of life. That vision found concrete expression within months through policy actions that directly touched lives. From the new income tax framework to GST 2.0, the reforms of 2025 signal a shift from complexity to clarity, and from burden to empowerment. Among the most impactful steps has been the restructuring of the direct tax system. By



exempting incomes up to Rs 12 lakh and enhancing the standard deduction to Rs 75,000, the government has delivered meaningful relief to a vast majority of taxpayers. As a result, nearly 90 per cent of taxpayers-around seven crore individuals-now fall within the tax-free bracket. The financial gains are tangible: an individual earning Rs 12 lakh saves Rs 1 lakh in taxes, with total savings rising to Rs 1.75 lakh after accounting for the standard deduction. Higher income brackets also benefit, while retirees gain from the doubling of deductions on savings to Rs 1 lakh. This increase in disposable income has significant

macroeconomic implications. With middle-class households typically spending about 80 per cent of additional income, the tax relief alone is projected to inject nearly Rs 5 lakh crore into the economy. Economists estimate that this could lift private consumption growth beyond 10 per cent and push overall GDP growth above 8 per cent in FY26, reinforcing India's position as the world's fastest-growing major economy. Complementing direct tax reform is the introduction of Next-Generation GST, or GST 2.0. Building on the unification achieved since 2017, the new framework focuses on simplification

and affordability. By abolishing the 28 per cent and 12 per cent slabs and consolidating the structure around two principal rates of 5 and 18 per cent, the government has made the tax regime cleaner and more citizen-centric. Everyday essentials such as paneer, milk, rotis, and parathas have been fully exempted, while personal care items like soaps, shampoos, and toothpaste now attract just 5 per cent GST instead of 18 per cent. The benefits extend to key areas of household expenditure. Two-wheelers, small cars, and three-wheelers-once taxed at 28 per cent-are now under the 18 per cent slab, making mobility more

affordable for young professionals and families. Cement has seen a rate cut from 28 to 18 per cent, lowering housing and construction costs. For rural households, tractors, harvesters, and irrigation machinery are now taxed at 5 per cent, reducing input costs and supporting agricultural productivity. Students benefit from exemptions on notebooks, pencils, maps, and erasers, easing education expenses. Healthcare affordability has been another priority. Life-saving cancer drugs and medicines for rare diseases have been placed in the zero-tax category, while medical oxygen, diagnostic kits, and thermometers are taxed at minimal rates. These measures directly reduce out-of-pocket expenses for families and reflect a policy approach that aligns fiscal decisions with social well-being. The reform momentum of 2025 extends beyond taxation. Labour code reforms have simplified compliance while enhancing social security, contributing to formalisation and job creation. FDI liberalisation has strengthened capital inflows and investment, supporting growth across sectors.

What if We Measured Our Morality Like We Do the Aravallis?

Let's imagine a wild, wicked place. Amoral, nasty and lawless. Such a place will probably exist in the darkest corners of the world, far away from the sacred land of the Buddha and Gandhi. Let's visualise what happens there. Crooks and thugs enter politics. They brutalise the weaker sections of society, exploit women and support tycoons who grab and loot national resources. Investigations are blocked or weakened because the custodians of the law dance to the tune of lawbreakers. If things get unmanageable, they flee to safer havens and merrily post videos of revelry with the government's top lawyers. Uglier episodes piercing the nation's conscience keep unfolding every now and then. If a minor rape victim dares to fight for justice, the criminal, an elected representative, unleashes terror on her family. The girl's father is beaten to death, uncle is framed in false cases and many of her relatives are bumped off. Not enough to jolt the law-enforcing agencies out of their slumber as the party bosses and the government remain aloof. The girl, who herself survived numerous lethal attacks, threatens to publicly imLet's imagine another story from that darkest



corner, that wicked, wild locale. A poor girl steps out of her home for her livelihood. She takes up a job at a private hotel. The owner, a ruling party leader, forces her to provide sexual services to fellow politicians; a few so-called VIPs. She resists. The politician's son kills her in a fit of rage. The entire state erupts in protest. The murderer is punished but a deeper investigation to unravel the sinister prostitution racket is thwarted. The VIPs remain unscathed. Months later, an internal squabble ensures skeletons tumble out of the ruling party cupboard. But there is no media questioning, no national outrage. As if TV anchors and editors have been hired to conceal the crime. These dark

places have leaders, judges, police and journalists no better than zombies. Oh! Stop it. Let's discuss decent societies. Let's discuss constitutional democracies where justice and accountability dominate politics and governance. Let's discuss countries where leaders are noble, sensitive and compassionate. Why waste our time on the brutalities of a heartless world? Let's rekindle our hope, thinking of gallant statesmen who lead by example, being the voice of our conscience and shaping the national character with their nobility. Leaders inspired by Lord Ram, post-Kumbh consciousness and the sengol. Let's celebrate our exalted abode. Measuring humanity Mountains don't cry.

Millions Served, Lakhs Empowered: Flipkart’s Festive Supply Chain at the Heart of Bharat

December, 2025: Flipkart, India’s homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced key milestones from its 2025 festive season – highlighting scale, speed, and social impact. The Big Billion Days were powered by its robust logistics network, which fulfilled record volumes, enabled near-instant deliveries, and significantly expanded its regional footprint. With over 4 lakh seasonal job opportunities created, a 44% growth in same-day/next-day deliveries, and heightened demand from Tier 2 / 3 cities, Flipkart’s supply chain put both technology and people at the centre of India’s festive momentum. Powering Festive India, Minute by Minute On peak days, Flipkart moved over 5,000 shipments per minute, enabled by a tech-led, demand-sensitive supply chain infrastructure. The company saw a 44% increase in same-day and next-day deliveries compared to last year, reflecting growing customer expectations and enhanced last-mile capabilities. With over 7.3 million shipments fulfilled in a single day – averaging more than 3 lakh an hour – Flipkart’s network demonstrated precision at scale. In one standout exam-



ple, an appliance was delivered in just 15 minutes at midnight, and a TV installation was completed within 36 minutes of delivery, setting new benchmarks for customer delight. Technology at Scale, Festivities at Doorstep Flipkart’s festive operations were powered by an intelli-

gent supply chain built to move billions of units with speed and consistency. AI-powered forecasting, ML-driven planning and real-time capacity orchestration kept the network agile during surges, while automated inventory placement and AI-led IWIT (Inter Warehouse Inventory

Transfer) boosted in-stock availability. Inside fulfilment centres, AGVs, robotic arms, cross-belt sorters, and sensor-led tracking reduced turnaround times significantly, supported by AI-powered X-ray fraud detection and advanced geocoding that improved accuracy across India’s complex addressing landscape. AI-driven packaging tools further optimise materials and reduce waste. With a diverse, well-trained workforce and a tech-enabled network reaching 21,000+ pincodes, these capabilities enabled Flipkart to manage millions of peak-hour orders seamlessly, delivering a dependable, positive experience to households across Bharat. Bharat at the Centre The festive momentum this year was led strongly by Tier 2 and 3 cities, which accounted for over 60% of all BBD orders. Cities like Hajar and Bahraich recorded exponential order growth, as Flipkart deepened its regional infrastructure to meet this rising demand. Categories such as small furniture and household supplies saw the highest uptick in non-metro markets (90%), driven by growing aspirations and increasing digital confidence among customers. Behind

SAMSUNG INNOVATION CAMPUS CERTIFIES 450 YOUTH IN AI AND CODING AT NSIC HYDERABAD



Hyderabad, December 29, 2025: Samsung, India’s largest consumer electronics brand, certified 450 students in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Coding & Programming under its flagship skilling initiative, Samsung Innovation Campus (SIC), at the NSIC Technical Service Centre, Hyderabad, reinforcing its commitment to building a future-ready digital workforce in India. Samsung Innovation Campus is Samsung’s global skilling programme aimed at equipping youth with advanced, industry-relevant technology skills through structured training, hands-on learning and project-based outcomes, enhancing employability in the digital economy. Hyderabad emerges as a

future-tech skilling hub The certificate felicitation ceremony was graced by Mr. Rajivnath, Centre Head, NSIC Hyderabad, who congratulated the students and highlighted the importance of sustained investments in youth skilling to support India’s digital transformation. Of the 450 students certified at NSIC Hyderabad this year, 100 completed advanced training in Artificial Intelligence, while 350 were trained in Coding & Programming, following a structured curriculum focused on practical application and industry relevance. Strengthening India’s future-ready workforce The Hyderabad programme is part of Samsung’s broader commitment to skill 20,000

youth across India in 2025 under Samsung Innovation Campus. Aligned with the Government of India’s Skill India and Digital India initiatives, SIC aims to bridge critical skill gaps and foster a culture of technology-led innovation across the country. The programme places strong emphasis on inclusivity, with 42% women participation nationally, and active outreach to tier-2, tier-3 and semi-urban regions, ensuring equitable access to high-quality technology education. By expanding access to in-demand digital skills and nurturing job-ready talent, Samsung Innovation Campus continues to strengthen India’s future-tech talent pipeline and support the country’s journey towards a digitally empowered economy.

From baskets to blink: The year 10-minute delivery became a utility

New Delhi: The era of the ‘delivery day’ ended in 2025 as India’s retail landscape underwent a fundamental transformation, with the great convergence of traditional e-commerce and quick commerce erasing the boundaries between planned shopping and instant gratification. What began as an experimental race to deliver groceries in ten minutes has evolved into a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure play that now moves everything from high-end electronics to white goods in minutes. In a single calendar year, the question for the Indian consumer has permanently shifted from “will it arrive?” to “how many minutes until it does?” As the year draws to a close, the data reflect the sector in hyperdrive. According to a year-end report by RedSeer Strategy Consultants, quick commerce has become India’s fastest-growing retail format, reaching 33 million monthly users across 150+ cities. By 2030, it will command 10 per cent of branded retail sales. Rising house-



hold incomes and a growing preference for convenience have made quick commerce the preferred shopping channel for an increasing share of urban consumers. E-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart had to launch their own quick commerce arms to not miss out on the massive treasure trove of quick commerce market. The launch of ‘Amazon Now’ and ‘Flipkart Minutes’—both offering sub-30-minute deliveries — signalled that speed is no longer a premium vertical but the industry’s new baseline. Dark stores transitioned from small neighbourhood hubs to megapods. These larger facilities, typi-

cally around 10,000-12,000 sq ft, are now capable of stocking over 50,000 stock-keeping units (SKUs), enabling platforms to deliver iPhones and air conditioners with the same velocity as milk and bread. The sheer scale of the Q-com expansion was best illustrated during the Dhanteras festival, where platforms sold and delivered gold and silver coins within minutes. The year’s financial narrative reached a crescendo in December with Meesho’s Rs 5,421 crore IPO, validating the immense purchasing power of the Tier-2 and Tier-3 value shopper. Zepto is also set to pre-file its draft red herring prospectus

Hyderabad emerges as a high-conviction wealth hub: Emkay Wealth Management

EXPECTS CAPITAL MARKET TO BECOME MORE BALANCED AND EARNINGS-DRIVEN IN 2026

Hyderabad, December 29th, 2025: According to Emkay Wealth Management, the wealth management arm of Emkay Global Financial Services Ltd., Hyderabad has emerged as a high-growth wealth centre in India, driven by the rapid expansion of Global Capability Centers (GCCs), robust infrastructure development, and a thriving start-up ecosystem. It notes that the city is witnessing strong demand for ultra-luxury real estate, particularly 5,000+ sq ft “Sky Mansions” in micro-markets such as Kokapet and the Financial District, reflecting rising affluence and evolving lifestyle aspirations among high-net-worth individuals. According to Abhishek Vaish, Vice President, Emkay Wealth Management, “These structural trends position Hyderabad as a key market for long-term wealth creation, offering opportunities

■ According to Emkay Wealth Management, the wealth management arm of Emkay Global Financial Services Ltd., Hyderabad has emerged as a high-growth wealth centre in India, driven by the rapid expansion of Global Capability Centers (GCCs), robust infrastructure development, and a thriving start-up ecosystem. It notes that the city is witnessing strong demand for ultra-luxury real estate, particularly 5,000+ sq ft “Sky Mansions” in micro-markets such as Kokapet and the Financial District, reflecting rising affluence and evolving lifestyle aspirations among high-net-worth individuals.

across equities, private markets, real assets, and alternative investments.” Expanding on its assessment, Emkay Wealth Management presented its outlook for calendar year 2026, alongside its recommended asset allocation framework for investors. Looking ahead to 2026, Emkay Wealth expects markets to become more balanced and earnings-driven, with high GDP growth and low inflation. The Nifty 50 is projected to deliver a steady return of 11-14%, while mid and small caps are likely to outperform, due to

improved valuations and balance sheets. It expects precious metals to not replicate their 2025 gains, but continues to maintain a long-term bullish outlook on gold and silver. In the debt market, it believes that a likely pause in rate cuts may limit bond yield gains, prompting investors to focus on medium-duration strategies and select credit-oriented opportunities. Key sectors to watch include BFSI, which is expected to enhance Nifty profitability, along with a recovery in consumer discretionary post GST 2.0, and potential value

opportunities in IT stocks. Abhishek Vaish, Vice President, Emkay Wealth Management added, “In 2025, India’s investment landscape was marked by a significant bull run in precious metals, with silver and gold posting returns of approximately 155% and 75%, respectively. The equity markets experienced muted growth, with the large-cap Nifty index increasing by around 10%, mid-caps by 3%, and small caps declining by roughly 6%.” Emkay Wealth Management notes that for 2026, disciplined asset allocation remains key. Rebalancing may involve shifting gains from precious metals to equities, with a focus on large caps for stability and growth, alongside selectively chosen mid- and small-cap stocks. Debt investments should prioritise low-duration and credit risk funds.

Stock markets gather momentum after muted beginning

Mumbai: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty eked out marginal gains in early trade on Monday but later picked up momentum, tracking a firm trend in Asian peers and sustained buying by domestic institutional investors. The 30-share BSE Sensex went up by 22.24 points to 85,063.69 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty eked out a marginal gain of 16 points to 26,058.30. Later, the BSE benchmark traded 105.17 points higher at 85,140.33, and the Nifty quoted 35 points up at 26,080.45. From the 30-Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Eternal, Bharat Electronics, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Trent and Maruti were among the biggest gainers. However, Adani Ports, Power Grid, Bajaj Finserv and Axis Bank were among the laggards. In Asian markets, South Korea’s Kospi, Shanghai’s SSE Composite index and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng



index traded in positive territory, while Japan’s Nikkei 225 index quoted lower. US markets ended on a flat note on Friday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 317.56 crore on Friday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth Rs 1,772.56

DGCA data shows IndiGo share slide to 63.6pc, Air India climbs



New Delhi: Low-cost airline IndiGo, which faced severe crisis earlier this month, witnessed its domestic market share drop to 63.6 per cent in the month of November, according to latest data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The country’s largest airline recorded 65.6 per cent market share in October. Air India Group’s (Air India and Air India Express) market share in November went up to 26.7 per cent, from 25.7 per cent in October. Akasa Air also saw its domestic market

share drop to 4.7 per cent in November from 5.2 per cent in October. “Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-November 2025 were 1,526.35 lakhs as against 1,464.02 lakhs during the corresponding period of the previous year, thereby registering an annual growth of 4.26 per cent and monthly growth of 6.92 per cent,” as per the DGCA data. The overall cancellation rate of scheduled domestic airlines for the month of November 2025 has been 1.33 per cent. Meanwhile, the

Highlights

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government has granted initial approval to three new airlines to start operations, after the recent chaos in IndiGo operations, which stranded passengers for several days across the country and exposed the abuse of dominance by the largest domestic airline. The civil aviation ministry granted a “no-objection certificate” to regional airlines—Shankh Air, Al Hind Air and FlyExpress. IndiGo was forced to cancel over 4,000 flights earlier this month across major destinations such as Delhi,

Mumbai and Hyderabad and Bengaluru airports, mainly due to crew shortages. The low-cost carrier ran into a severe crew shortage due to the implementation of the second phase of the flight duty time limitations (FDTL) norms, which has stranded planes across airports in the country, with travel schedules of flyers going haywire. The government initiated an inquiry into IndiGo’s mass flight cancellations that stranded thousands of flyers across airports in the country.

Trump says progress made in Ukraine talks but 'thorny issues' remain

Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky said progress had been made to end the Ukraine war during Florida talks but the US leader added "one or two very thorny issues" remained. While both the US and Ukrainian presidents described the talks as "great", Trump reiterated that a key sticking point was the question of territory. Russia has previously demanded that Ukraine hand over more land. Addressing reporters at Mar-a-Lago, Zelensky said they had come to an agreement on "90%" of a 20-point peace plan, while Trump said a security guarantee for Ukraine was "close to 95%" done. Zelensky later said US and Ukrainian teams would meet next week for further talks on issues aimed at ending Russia's nearly four-year war in Ukraine. "We had a substantive conversation on all issues and highly value the progress that the Ukrainian and American teams have made over the past weeks," Zelensky said in



a statement on the Telegram messaging app. Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and Moscow currently controls about 20% of Ukrainian territory. A proposal to turn the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine, which Russia largely controls, into a demilitarised zone remains "unresolved", Trump said. "Some of that land has been taken," he

told reporters after the meeting. "Some of that land is maybe up for grabs, but it may be taken over the next period of a number of months." Moscow currently controls about 75% of the Donetsk region, and some 99% of the neighbouring Luhansk. The regions are collectively known as Donbas. Russia wants Ukraine to pull back from the small part of the ter-

ritory it still controls in Donbas, while Kyiv has insisted the area could become a free economic zone policed by Ukrainian forces. The US president has repeatedly changed his own position on Ukraine's lost territories, and in September stunned observers by suggesting that Ukraine might be able to take it back. He later reversed course. "[That] is a very tough

issue," he said. "One that will get resolved." Security guarantees for Ukraine are "95% done", Trump said, without formally committing to logistical support or troop deployment to help protect Ukraine from future attacks. Trump floated the possibility of trilateral talks between the US, Russia, and Ukraine, saying it could happen "at the right time". While the US president is keen to add the Ukraine-Russia war to the list of conflicts he claims to have ended, he cautioned that stalled or scrapped talks that go "really badly" could mean that the war continues. Earlier Trump had a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin. While the US president did not offer many details of the phone call, he said he believed the Russian leader "wants Ukraine to succeed". At the same time, Trump acknowledged that Moscow had little interest in a ceasefire that would allow Ukraine to hold a referendum. "I understand

that position," he added. Russian foreign policy adviser Yuri Ushakov said the call was initiated by Trump and that he and Putin discussed the latest EU and Ukraine proposals to end the war. Ushakov, Russia's former US ambassador, said Trump listened to the Kremlin's assessment of the proposals and the two presidents left the call united in their belief that a temporary ceasefire proposed by the EU and Ukraine would instead prolong the conflict. Zelensky suggested the Ukrainian officials could meet at the White House in January, potentially alongside European leaders, as the US and Ukrainian delegations finalise plans for further talks. In a post-meeting call with European allies, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed "good progress" in the Florida talks while reinforcing the need for Ukraine to receive "ironclad security guarantees from day one".

AN ORPHAN'S BRUTAL MURDER SHINES A SPOTLIGHT ON CHILD ABUSE IN SOMALIA



A woman is currently awaiting execution in Somalia after being convicted of killing a 14-year-old girl in her care. The murder of orphan Saabirin Saylaan in November, and the horrific details that emerged about the circumstances surrounding her death, sparked protests near her home in Galkayo, along with renewed calls for greater child protection. The case touched a deep nerve in a country where child abuse often goes unreported, especially when it occurs inside extended families. For many, Saabirin's death symbolised a broader failure in child protection and the

slow implementation of legal safeguards meant to prevent such tragedies. The conviction of 34-year-old Hodan Mohamud Diiriye for murder marked one of the rare instances in Somalia where a court imposed the ultimate penalty for child abuse. Diiriye had denied the charges and her lawyer has filed an appeal against the verdict. Her husband, Abdiiaziz Nor, 65, was acquitted of murder but sentenced to one year in prison and fined \$500 (£375) for negligence. Saabirin was orphaned when both her parents died within a short period when she was just one year old.

China holds military drills around Taiwan as warning to 'separatist forces'



China is holding military drills around Taiwan simulating the seizure and blockade of the island's key areas, as a warning against "separatist forces". The army, navy, air force and rocket force have been dispatched for the drills which include live-fire exercises, the Chinese military said. Codenamed "Justice Mission 2025", the drills are taking place days after the US announced the sale of one of its largest weapons packages to Taiwan worth \$11bn (£8.2bn). That move drew sharp protest from Beijing which in turn sanctioned US defence firms. Taiwan's push to ramp up its defence this year has also angered Beijing, which claims the self-ruled island as its territory. Taiwan's presidential office has criticised the upcoming Chinese drills, calling them a challenge to international norms. Taiwan's defence ministry said that they detected Chinese aircraft and ships around Taiwan on Monday morning, and have deployed their own forces and missile systems

to monitor the situation. Its forces are on "high alert" to defend Taiwan and "protect our people", the ministry said. In a post on Weibo, the Chinese military's Eastern Theater Command - in charge of the Taiwan Strait - described the upcoming military exercise as a "shield of justice". "All those plotting independence will be annihilated upon encountering the shield!" the post read. While some initial drills have begun, the military said it would conduct a major exercise from 08:00 to 18:00 local time on Tuesday. Beijing's foreign ministry called the drills a "severe punishment for separatist forces seeking independence through force" and warned "external forces" against "using Taiwan to contain China". "Any sinister schemes to obstruct China's reunification are doomed to fail," the ministry's spokesman Lin Jian said at a regular press briefing on Monday. While China has long called for the "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan.

Living in fear of Lakurawa - the militant group Trump targeted in Nigeria strikes



Deep fear has long pervaded the arid savannah plains and highlands of north-western Nigeria - even before the US air strikes on the Islamist militants who have made this area their base on Christmas night. The heavily armed jihadists, who dress in camouflage and wear vibrant turbans, have lived in

camp in Tangaza, a remote area of Sokoto state near the border with Niger, for several years. They belong to a group called Lakurawa and hail from areas north of Nigeria in the Sahel. Locals in Tangaza, a community made up of mainly moderate Muslims, believe they come from Niger and Mali - and are terrified of them.

'There are many challenges': Syrians in Turkey consider return after fall of Assad

The pull of home can be strong - even when it is a place you can't remember. That is how it is for Ahmed, 18. He emerges from a mosque in the heart of Gaziantep in south-east Turkey - not far from the Syrian border - wearing a black T-shirt with "Syria" written on the front. His family fled his homeland when he was five years old, but he is planning to go back in a year or two at most. "I am impatient to get there," he tells me. "I am trying to save money first, because wages in Syria are low." Still, he insists the future will be better there. "Syria will be rebuilt and it will be like gold," he says. If he goes back, he will be following in the footsteps of more than half a million Syrians who



have left Turkey since the ousting of Syria's long-time dictator, Bashar al-Assad, in December 2024. Many had been here since 2011, when civil war began devouring their country. In the years that followed, Turkey became a safe haven, taking in more Syrians than any other country. The number reached 3.5 million at its

peak, causing political tension and - on occasion - xenophobic attacks. Officially, no Syrian will be forced to go, but some feel they are being pushed - by bureaucratic changes, and by a waning welcome. Civil society organisations "are getting the message from the authorities that it's time to go", says a Syrian woman who did not want to be

named. "I have a lot of good Turkish friends. Even they and my neighbours have asked why I am still here. Of course we will go back, but in an organised way. If we all go back together, it will be chaos." Aya Mustafa, 32, is eager to leave - but not yet. We meet under a winter sun by the stone walls of a castle, which has towered over Gaziantep since the Byzantine era. Her hometown, Aleppo, is less than two hours' drive away. She says going back is a constant topic of conversation in the Syrian community. "Every day, every hour, we speak about this point," says Aya, whose family were lawyers and teachers back home, but had to start again in Turkey, baking and hairdressing to earn a living.

MEXICO TRAIN CRASH KILLS 13 AND INJURES ALMOST 100

At least 13 people died and almost 100 were injured after a train derailed in Mexico's south-eastern Oaxaca region, the Mexican navy said. The train, which was travelling between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean, was carrying 241 passengers and nine crew members. A total of 98 were injured, of whom 36 were being treated in hospital, the navy said. The train derailed as it rounded a bend near the town of Nizanda, officials said. Mexico's Attorney General confirmed an investigation was under way. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said five of those injured were in a seri-



ous condition. She said top level officials, including the Secretary of the Navy, were travelling to the site of the crash. Photos from the site of the crash showed rescue workers helping passengers alight the train, which had fallen off the rail tracks and partly tilted over the side of

a cliff. The Interoceanic train, which connects the Pacific port of Salina Cruz with Coatzacoalcas on the Gulf Coast, had two locomotives and four passenger cars, the navy said. Mexico's navy operates the country's railway network. The Governor of Oaxaca

Salomón Jara Cruz expressed "deep regret" over the accident in a statement and said state authorities were coordinating with federal agencies to assist those affected. The Interoceanic rail link was inaugurated two years ago to boost the region's economy, an initiative spearheaded by former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Designed to modernise the rail link across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the Mexican government has sought to develop the area into a strategic trade corridor, expanding ports, railways and industrial infrastructure.

Kosovo's ruling party wins election after months of political deadlock



The Albanian nationalist Vetevendosje party has won a landslide victory in Kosovo's parliamentary elections, according to preliminary results. With 90% of the votes counted, the party, whose name means "self determination", was on 50.8%, meaning a third term in power for its leader, Albin Kurti. The two main opposition parties, the centre-right Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), were on 20.98% and 13.89%, respectively. Vetevendosje won elections in February, but without a majority, and Kosovo has been without a functioning government since then. The impasse meant there was one big question hanging over this second parliamentary election of the year. Would voters punish Kurti for the long months of deadlock in the country's National Assembly - or the opposition parties who refused

to countenance a coalition with Kurti's left-wing movement? The electorate has given a clear answer. This will not be quite enough to deliver enough seats for Kurti to govern without coalition partners. But he should not find it difficult to find support among the MPs from the ethnic minority parties who are guaranteed 20 of the 120 seats in the National Assembly. It is the fourth successive victory in parliamentary elections for Vetevendosje. The result is vindication after the opposition parties blocked his attempts to form a government following the previous polls on February 9. Kurti claimed it was "the greatest victory in the history of the country" - and said he expected opposition parties to cooperate, rather than frustrate, this time around. Arben Gashi, of the third-placed Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), indicated that could be possible.

Bondi hero says he wanted to stop gunman killing innocent people

The man who disarmed one of the gunmen who killed 15 people at a Jewish event at Bondi Beach has revealed his thoughts in the moments before his heroic actions. In verified footage, Ahmed al Ahmed - a Sydney shop owner born and raised in Syria - tackled one of the two shooters from behind, wrestling a long-arm gun from him. "I hold him with my right hand and start saying a word, you know, like to warn him - 'drop your gun, stop doing what you're doing,'" the father-of-two told the BBC's US partner CBS News in an exclusive interview. Mr Ahmed, who was shot several times by the other alleged gunman, said his actions saved "lots

of people... but I feel sorry still for the lost." In the interview, Mr Ahmed recalled the moment he tackled Sajid Akram, 50, who was shooting attendees at a Hanukkah event at Bondi Beach on Sunday 14 December. "My target was just to take the gun from him, and to stop him from killing a human being's life and not killing innocent people." Fifteen people died during the attack - Australia's deadliest mass shooting since 1996 - and 40 others were injured. Police have declared the attack a terrorist incident targeting the Jewish community. Sajid Akram was shot dead by police while his son Naveed, the other alleged

gunman who was hospitalised after the attack, has since been charged with 59 offences including 15 counts of murder and one of committing a terrorist attack. Mr Ahmed described the inner thoughts running through his head in the lead-up to his actions, which authorities and politicians have said saved countless lives. "Emotionally, I'm doing something, which is I feel something, a power in my body, my brain," Mr Ahmed said. "I don't want to see people killed in front of me, I don't want to see blood, I don't want to hear his gun. I don't want to see people screaming and begging, asking for help. "That's my soul asking me to do that.

Three killed in Sweden as major storm sweeps across Nordic countries

A third person has died in Sweden after a powerful winter storm swept across Nordic countries, causing travel disruption and power outages. Sweden's meteorological agency issued alerts for strong winds for large parts of the northern half of the country as Storm Johannes hit. One man in his 50s died after being struck by a tree at the Kungsberget ski resort in the country's south, local media and police reported. Further north, regional utility company Hemab said one of its employees died in an accident while out working. Police also said a man in his 60s was taken to hospital after being hit by a tree while working in a forest in Hofors, east-central



Sweden, and later died of his injuries. Tens of thousands of homes in Sweden, Norway and Finland have been left without power as a result of the storm. In Sweden, more than 40,000 homes were affected by power outages and numerous rail services were cancelled, Swedish news agency TT reported. Several flights, rail and

ferry services across parts of the Nordic nations have been cancelled. Roads and rail services have also been disrupted due to the storm conditions. In Norway's Nordland region, one of the most northerly counties in the country, the fire department responded to more than 200 weather-related incidents, broadcaster NRK reported.

Affordale Fury wins Savills Chase at Leopardstown

Affordale Fury delivered a first Grade One winner for County Down owner Philip Polly in a thrilling Savills Chase at Leopardstown on Sunday. Trained by Noel Meade, the seven-year-old started and finished the three-mile race in fine form to tear up the script. Much of the pre-race narrative focused on a rematch of March's Cheltenham Gold Cup when Inothewayurthinkin denied Galopin Des Champs a third-straight win, but that duel failed to materialise this time. Instead, it was those in red and black celebrating as Sam Ewing guided Affordale Fury (7-1) to a big win. "I can't believe it - what a week we've had," a delighted Polly told RTE Sport. "We won the Bumper on Boxing Day and now we've rocked up and won the Savills." Champ Kiely was an early faller on the flat as Affordale Fury got out in front of what was a



bunched field. It remained wide open heading into the final two hurdles when favourite Galopin Des Champs made a move. However, the Willie Mullins-trained favourite had to settle for third as Affordale Fury responded brilliantly to surge home from 2024

Grand National winner I Am Maximus in second (50-1). It capped a superb two days for Ewing, who was onboard Favori De Champdou and Solness for Grade One wins on Saturday. "I wanted to be good and positive going into the first and see where we

landed," said Ewing. "He travelled really strong, winged fences for sport and there was no coming back from it. He was gutsy and is a proper horse in the making." The Christmas Hurdle went to second favourite Teahupo (5-2), who produced a strong finish to turn the

tables on Bob Olinger (11-1) from their meeting at Cheltenham in March. It ensured another Grade One win for trainer Gordon Elliott, who had two big wins as part of a four-timer at Leopardstown on Saturday. Rocky's Diamond made the early running, opening a gap on the chasing pack which was led by Ballyburn, and maintained the advantage until the second hurdle from last as Teahupo, ridden by Jack Kennedy, jumped into the lead. There was no looking back despite a challenge from Henry de Bromhead's Bob Olinger, with race favourite Ballyburn (13-8) placing third. "When we jumped the front at the second last and I got him onto the straight, he did fairly well," said Kennedy. "He has been some horse to me and everyone who is involved with him - it's hard to get ones like him."

Gautam Gambhir Told To 'Become Ranji Trophy Coach' In Sensational Verdict By Ex-England Star

Former England spinner Monty Panesar has suggested that Gautam Gambhir should coach a Ranji Trophy team to better understand red-ball cricket. Panesar noted that while Gambhir is a successful white-ball coach, a stint with a Ranji team would allow him to consult with other coaches and learn how to build a squad for the longest format. These comments follow reports that the BCCI approached Indian legend VVS Laxman to potentially take over as the Test head coach. India recently suffered a difficult Test series loss against South Africa-a result that has brought significant criticism toward Gambhir. "Gautam Gambhir is a good coach in white-ball cricket because he has been successful. However, he could benefit from becoming a Ranji Trophy coach; he should talk to those who have coached in the Ranji Trophy about how to build a team in red-ball cricket. Right now, the Indian team is weak in Test



cricket. This is the reality. It will take time. When you retire three big players, it becomes difficult to keep the remaining players ready," Panesar said in an interview with ANI. Panesar also characterized India's Test captain, Shubman Gill, as a "complacent" cricketer, suggesting he may not be ready to lead or play in all formats internationally. While hailing Gill's talent, Panesar noted that he often plays "lazy shots" during matches.

He contrasted this with Virat Kohli, whose intensity and aggression remain evident across all formats-qualities Panesar believes Gill currently lacks. "He is a complacent cricketer. He has a lot of talent, but he starts playing lazy shots. Virat Kohli's intensity and aggression are evident in all formats, but Shubman Gill can't replicate that. It is too much of a burden for him; he can't be the captain across all formats," Panesar added.

Sunil Gavaskar Takes Brutal Dig At Ashes Pitch With "Horrible Groundsmen In India" Remark

The Australia vs England Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) ended in just two days. A total of 36 wickets fell across six sessions in the game that saw the Three Lions end their 18-Test and 15-year winless streak in Australia. The pitch, which had 10 mm of grass left on it, aided the pacers throughout the two days of play. There was enough swing and seam movement for the fast bowlers as batters from both teams haplessly fought for survival. "Another Test match in Australia has finished in less than two days of cricket. The Australian Cricket Board's CEO says it is not good business and most, if



not all, cricket fans in the sub-continent (read India) are screaming blue murder about the quality of the pitch given in Melbourne. They were astonished when the first Test match pitch in Perth was given a very good rating by the match referee Ranjan Madugalle," India great



Sunil Gavaskar wrote in his column for Sportstar. The Perth Test between Australia and England also ended in two days, but the pitch was graded "very good" by ICC match referee Ranjan Madugalle. Taking a sarcastic jibe, Gavaskar said, "Since there is a new match referee, Jeff Crowe,

for the Melbourne and Sydney Test matches, the rating could be different. Since 36 wickets fell in the Melbourne Test instead of 32 in Perth, Crowe might drop the word 'very' from the 'very good' that Madugalle gave for the Perth pitch and rate the MCG pitch as good. Surprises never cease, of course, so we may get another rating." "The curators, or as we found out about the person in charge at the MCG, the Director of Turf, may make a human error and get it slightly wrong, but they are not as devious as those 'horrible groundsmen' in India who do not even prepare a pitch and expect the batters to score runs on them.

Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma Not Playing In Vijay Hazare Trophy 3rd Round - This Is The Reason

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma did not feature for Delhi and Mumbai, respectively, in the third round of the Vijay Hazare Trophy on Monday. Both stalwarts played the first two matches for their teams, but they were rested for the matches taking place today. While Delhi faced Saurashtra at the Karnataka Cricket Association (KSCA) Stadium in Alur, Mumbai took on Chhattisgarh at the Jaipuria Vidyalaya Ground in Jaipur. Virat and Rohit were originally scheduled to play only two matches in the competition and have now fulfilled those commitments. The two star batters will feature in the ODI series against



New Zealand starting January 11 and are expected to join the national camp soon. Virat slammed 131 and 77 in his two matches for Delhi, while Rohit made a brilliant start to the campaign with a massive 155 before scoring a golden duck against Uttarakhand. According to a report by

Cricbuzz, Kohli will play one more match for Delhi, as he is expected to feature in the game against Railways on January 6. However, the report added that Rohit will not play any further part in the competition for Mumbai. Meanwhile, Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik

Pandya are likely to be rested for the upcoming ODI series against New Zealand. The report claimed that this decision was taken with more important assignments in mind, particularly the 2026 T20 World Cup. However, both players are expected to play in the T20I series against the Kiwis. This will be India's last T20I series ahead of the World Cup, and both players are expected to play all five matches to prepare for the competition. Hardik has not played an ODI since the Champions Trophy final in March this year, while Bumrah has not played an ODI since the 2023 World Cup final.

PCB Chief Mohsin Naqvi Gives Blunt Take On India's 'No-Handshake' Policy Against Pakistan



Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief Mohsin Naqvi has opened up regarding India's "no-handshake" policy, stating that Pakistan is fine with not reciprocating gestures if the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) continues its current stance. Since the Asia Cup in September, both the Indian men's and women's teams have refused to shake hands with their Pakistani counterparts during international matches. This gesture is reportedly a show of solidarity with the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. India maintained this stance most recently during the U19 Asia Cup earlier this month. Speaking to reporters in Lahore, Naqvi-who also serves as the Interior Minister of Pakistan-clarified that the PCB has no intention of forcing handshakes or other formal gestures with India. "Our belief remains the same even today, and believe me, the Prime Minister himself has told me twice that we shouldn't let politics come into all of this.

From day one, our stance has been that cricket and politics should remain separate. On that day, Sarfaraz must have told you what kind of attitude was shown, and what it was like," said Naqvi. Naqvi suggested that while Pakistan will respect whichever path India chooses to take, they will compete with their neighbors on an equal basis. "If they don't want to shake hands, then we have no particular desire to do so either. Whatever happens, it will happen on an equal footing with India. And you will see, this approach will continue going forward. It's not possible for them to do one thing and for us to back down - that simply won't happen," he added. Hostilities between the two nations have reached a peak following the Pahalgam terror attack, where 26 Indian tourists were killed by Pakistan-backed terrorists. In response, India launched a military campaign titled 'Operation Sindoor' aimed at dismantling terror infrastructure across the border.

WHAT DID SABALENKA AND KYRGIOS' BATTLE OF THE SEXES ACHIEVE?

In an event billed as tennis's latest "Battle of the Sexes," Aryna Sabalenka, the No 1-ranked women's tennis player in the world, will take on Nick Kyrgios, who's currently ranked No 673 on the men's tour, on December 28, 2025, in Dubai. If Sabalenka wins, critics will likely claim it's because she had every advantage. Evolve has modified the rules to make her side of the court 9 per cent smaller than Kyrgios' in both length and width. The dimensions are based on Evolve's calculation that the top women players move 9 per cent slower than their male counterparts, although there is no published data to support the claim.



When will the Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match be played? The Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match will be played on December 28, Sunday. Where

will the Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match be held? The Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match will be held at the Coca Cola Arena in Dubai. What

time will the Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match start? The Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match will start at 9:30 PM IST. Which TV channels will show the live telecast of the Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match? The Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match will be televised live on the Sony Sports Network. Where to follow the live streaming of the Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match? The Aryna Sabalenka vs Nick Kyrgios Battle Of The Sexes match will be live-streamed on the SonyLiv app and website.

Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma Not Playing In Vijay Hazare Trophy 3rd Round - This Is The Reason

Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya are likely to be rested for the upcoming ODI series against New Zealand, according to a report by Cricbuzz. The report claimed that the decision was taken keeping more important assignments in mind, particularly the 2026 T20 World Cup. However, both players are expected to play in the T20I series against the Kiwis. This will be India's last T20I series ahead of the World Cup, and both players are expected to play all five matches to prepare for the competition. Hardik has not played a single ODI since the Champions Trophy final in March this year, while Bumrah has not played an ODI since the 2023 World Cup final. Meanwhile, Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA)



Secretary Unmesh Khanvilkar said the association will speak to India batter Shreyas Iyer regarding his availability for the later stages of the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. Iyer has been at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) since December 25 for further

assessment of his recovery from a serious spleen injury suffered during the third ODI against Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) in October. "No, we have not spoken to Shreyas yet. But we will speak to him about his availability. As of now, there is no official con-

firmation on this, but it may come from him in the next few days," Khanvilkar told IANS on Sunday. A day before arriving at the CoE in Bengaluru, IANS reported that Iyer had resumed batting after restarting light-weight gym training. He batted for nearly 30-34 minutes at the Cricket Club of India (CCI) nets in Mumbai. A source tracking Iyer's recovery said if all goes well and clearance from the CoE is granted, Iyer could play for Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy matches in Jaipur on January 3 and 6, respectively. It will be interesting to see if the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee picks Iyer for the three ODIs against New Zealand, starting in Vadodara on January 11. The selection panel is set to meet in the first week of January.

Heaven will not switch from England to Ghana



Manchester United defender Ayden Heaven will not switch allegiance from England to Ghana to play in next summer's World Cup. London-born Heaven, 19, qualifies for Ghana through a grandparent and the Ghana FA has been monitoring his development. Ghana have been drawn in the same group as England, Croatia and Panama for the World Cup in the US, Canada and Mexico. Sources have told BBC Sport that Heaven, who joined United from Arsenal in February after making one appearance for the Gunners, wants to represent England at senior level. Heaven has played for England at various age groups. He suffered an ankle injury playing for the Under-20s against Switzerland in October, was replaced at half-time and was not selected for November's match against Japan. Heaven made two substi-

tute appearances for United in the Premier League this season before starting against West Ham on 4 December in the centre of a three-man defence. He was booked after eight minutes and taken off at half-time, but has started all four matches since and improved significantly in each. He was excellent in the 2-1 defeat at Aston Villa on 21 December and was man of the match in the 1-0 victory over Newcastle on Friday, when United kept only their second clean sheet of the season. Manager Ruben Amorim said: "I am really pleased with Ayden. You can feel that he is improving every game. "He is young, but you can feel that he has a good game, slows the thinking and improves during the game. "He trained really well and, if he continues to play like that, it is going to be really hard to take his place."



Producer Suresh Babu Daggubati has been elected as the new President of the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce. Vice president; Surya Devara Nagavamsi

Kareena Kapoor always has food on her mind & her latest post is proof

Mumbai: Actress Kareena Kapoor always has food on her mind, and her latest social media post confirms the same. Bebo took to the Stories section of her Instagram handle and posted a stunning photo of herself with pouted lips and black sunglasses. However, it was the caption that caught everyone's attention. She admitted that just like any true foodie, she already started thinking about dinner while just having finished her lunch. "Finished lunch dreaming of dinner", she penned the caption. However, this is not the first

time that Kareena has opened up about her immense love for food. Recently, filmmaker Karan Johar took to his Instagram and posted a video of Kareena relishing a samosa during her son Taimur's annual day function at school. In the clip, KJo disclosed to all the Bebo fans that while they were under the impression that the actress was on a diet, she had been caught eating a samosa. "This is what Kareena Kapoor is doing at the school play, eating a samosa. For all you people who think that she's on a

diet, this is what she's eating – a big samosa!," he added. Karan also jokingly called Kareena a 'Carby Doll', referring to the amount of carbohydrates a single Samosa contains. "I'm proud of you, Bebo. I'm proud of you. Yosociau're a carby doll. I love it," added Karan Caught off guard, Kareena revealed that she is not on any diet at the moment. Work-wise, Bebo has wrapped up the shoot for her forthcoming investigative crime-thriller "Daayra". Helmed by Meghna Gulzar, the much-awaited project will also

have Prithviraj Sukumaran as the lead. Sharing the update on social media, makers, Junglee Pictures dropped a picture of Kareena, Prithviraj, and Meghna smiling at the camera. "#Daayra! It's a wrap! Months of hard work, creativity, and collaboration have come together to bring this story to life. Immense gratitude to the cast, crew, and everyone who made this journey possible.



Prabhas Stuns in The Raja Saab Trailer 2.0, Expectations Soar

Rebel Star Prabhas's prestigious film "The Raja Saab" has released its Trailer 2.0. With Prabhas's performance and ultimate-making standards, the expectations around The Raja Saab have reached new heights. The Raja Saab is a prestigious movie starring Rebel Star Prabhas. Director Maruthi is making this film in the horror-comedy genre, aiming to turn it into an evergreen entertainer. The movie is being produced on a grand scale with uncompromising production values by producers TG Vishwa Prasad and Krithi Prasad. M a l a v i k a M o h a n a n , N i d d h i A g e r w a l , and R i d d h i K u m a r are playing the female leads. To double the festive excitement of Sankranti, The Raja Saab is all set for a worldwide grand theatrical release on January 9. Today, the makers released Trailer 2.0 of the film. Packed with several surprising elements, the trailer takes audiences into the intriguing world of Raja Saab. Looking at how The Raja Saab Trailer 2.0



unfolds - Gangamma played by Zarina Wahab deeply loves her grandson Raja Saab played by Prabhas. Though she forgets many things, she can never forget her husband played by Sanjay Dutt. The Raja Saab dares to meet his mysterious grandfather and embarks on a risky mission. He steps into the grandfather's massive haveli, which is filled with dangers at every step, resembling a maze. Inside this haveli, the grandfather has meticulously designed traps to hunt anyone who enters. Possessing the power of hypnotism and control over dark forces, how does the grandfather trouble Raja Saab and those who accom-

pany him? How does Raja Saab escape from the dangers created by his grandfather? Does Raja Saab complete the mission he set out on, or not? Why is Gangadevi, the zamindar of Devanagara, living the life of a simple middle-class woman as Gangamma? These intriguing questions make the trailer highly engaging. Prabhas delivers a stunning performance as Raja Saab. His two distinct makeovers are a special highlight of the trailer. Director Maruthi has created a spectacular world of The Raja Saab with grand making, surprising writing, and high-quality visual effects.

“Sahakutumbanam” Set for Grand New Year Release on January 1, 2026

Marking the New Year celebrations, the Telugu film "Sahakutumbanam" is all set to hit theatres worldwide on January 1, 2026. Produced under the banner HNG Cinemas LLP, the film is written and directed by Uday Sharma, with Mahadev Goud and Nagaratna as producers. Sahakutumbanam features Ram Kiran and Megha Akash in the lead roles. The film boasts an impressive ensemble cast including Nata Kiriti Rajendra Prasad, Brahmanandam, Satyam, Subhalekha Sudhakar, Rajasri Nair, Racha Ravi, Giridhar, Tagubothu Ramesh, Bhadram, and others in key roles. Renowned music director Mani Sharma has composed the music for the film, while cinematography is handled by Madhu Dasari. Shashank Mali serves as the editor. The choreography is by Chinni



Prakash, Bhanu, and Vijay Polaki, with lyrics penned by Ananth Sriram. Action

sequences are choreographed by Anji and Karthik, and art direction

is by P. S. Varma. The trailer of Sahakutumbanam, released earlier, has received an encouraging response and positive appreciation across social media platforms. Originally scheduled for an earlier release, the film was postponed due to unavoidable reasons. The makers have now officially announced January 1, 2026, as the final release date, aligning the film's arrival with New Year festivities. On this occasion, the Sahakutumbanam team extended heartfelt New Year wishes to audiences, expressing hope that 2026 brings happiness, positivity, and prosperity to everyone. With a strong cast, experienced technical crew, and positive pre-release buzz, Sahakutumbanam promises to be a wholesome entertainer for family audiences this New Year.

'Psych Siddhartha' movie has been presented in a very different way. The movie is coming to you on January 1st with a ticket price of just Rs.99: Producer D. Suresh Babu at the press meet

Young hero Sri Nandu is coming up with his upcoming movie 'Psyche Siddhartha' with Rana Daggubati's Spirit Media backing. The movie is directed by Varun Reddy. Sri Nandu and Shyam Sundar Reddy Thudi are jointly producing it under the banners of Spirit Media, Nandu's Keep Rolling Pictures. Psyche Siddhartha, which is a youthful entertainer with Mad Max-style madness, is going to be a high-energy entertainment. Yamini Bhaskar is playing the female lead in the movie, while Priyanka Rebecca Srinivas, Sakshi Atri and Mounika are playing key roles. The teaser trailer that has already been released has received a wonderful response. Psyche Siddhartha will be released grandly on January 1. A press meet was held on this occasion. Producer D. Suresh Babu said..



Greetings to everyone. We often talk about the decrease in audience coming to theaters for movies, especially small movies. However, sometimes the audience is very enthusiastic about small movies in theaters. Some movies like Raju Weds Rambai Little Hearts are coming. Also, small movies are doing wonders in other languages. There is hope for small movies. The reason for supporting this movie is that director Varun presented the movie in a very different way. I

told him to watch it immediately after watching the movie. The movie was made very interestingly. If the movie is good, the audience will definitely watch it. We are also keeping in mind the ticket rates. The ticket for this movie is only 99 rupees. All the very best to everyone. Hero Sri Nandu said... Greetings to everyone. Thank you to the media friends. My performance in Dandora was very well appreciated. It gave me a good boost before the release of this film. We have

arranged a Geetha special show in Dallas on 31st night. I want to watch the special with Geetha there. 2026 Telugu film Psyche is going to start with Siddhartha. I am very happy. I am very happy to end this year with a good success. 2025 was a very good year for me, Dandora was a hit. Also, Suresh Babu garu took our film. The film will be released on January 1, 2026. We worked very hard for this film. We did very hard promotions for this film. However, due to unexpected circumstances, the film had to be postponed. I was really scared then. But I remembered my father's words, who said that no matter what happens, we should be brave for our own good. We have been promoting this film with enthusiasm again. Now I am coming in front of everyone. I am 100% saying that this film will be very new. The second half will be very emotionally strong. We

Vaibhav Shettigar and Shrashanth Acharya's YouTube dream turns into theatre triumph with 'Bulipu'

Dr Srinivas Vooradi
Mangaluru, Dec 29 (TSIT): What started as a modest plan to shoot a short film on a mobile phone and upload it to YouTube has now become a landmark moment in Tulu cinema. 'Bulipu- The Cry of a Baby' - produced under Kudlaco Productions, has etched its name in history by becoming the only Tulu short film to achieve three houseful shows in a single day at Bharath Cinemas, Bejai, Mangaluru. The project was conceived by Vaibhav D. Shettigar and Shrashanth Acharya, students of Canara PU College, along with their classmate Milan Amin. Initially envisioned as a low-budget digital release, the film gradually transformed into a full-fledged theatrical experience. Directed by Avinash Acharya and produced by Sharath Acharya, 'Bulipu' features a compelling story penned by Vaibhav Shettigar. The cast includes



Durga Prasad Shetty, Vijayalakshmi Bekal, Deepthi Rao, Shreesha Acharya, Dhanush Bekal, and Sharath Acharya. The turning point came with the entry of a producer and later

Ganesh Acharya as Director of Photography, which significantly elevated the production quality. Despite facing multiple challenges and a budget that ballooned nearly tenfold.

Actors who can keep acting for days are yet to be born!!”

Popular actor Emmanuel said that Bigg Boss has taught him a great deal. Having won the love of millions through Jabardasth, Emmanuel also entertained audiences in his own unique style on Bigg Boss and emerged as a Top 4 finalist. On this occasion, he spoke exclusively to the media. Emmanuel said that he would cherish his Bigg Boss experience forever and spoke fondly about the bond he developed with his fellow participants. He especially mentioned that the special bond he formed with Sanjana would remain with him for a lifetime. Addressing a common perception, Emmanuel said many people believe everyone in Bigg Boss is acting, but there are no great actors in this world who can keep acting for hours, weeks, or days continuously. He expressed heartfelt gratitude to everyone who



supported him throughout his Bigg Boss journey, especially "Visionary Vows." He added that he would try to apply the many valuable lessons he learned from Bigg Boss in both his career and personal life. Congratulating Kalyan, the winner of Bigg Boss, Emmanuel said he had no disappointment whatsoever about not securing the first place!!

Tara Sutaria shares pictures of her ‘hearts’ Veer Pahariya, Orry

Mumbai: Actress Tara Sutaria gave fans a glimpse into a cosy night out as she shared pictures featuring her beau Veer Pahariya and B-Town's bestie Orry. The actress took to Instagram, where she re-shared a candid selfie collage, clicked in an intimate party setting, originally posted by Orry. In the first selfie, Orry is seen posing with Veer. Another image featured the social media sensation posing with the actress. Tara reposted the images on her Instagram Stories and added a sweet note, writing, "Aw my (red heart emoji)s," expressing her affection for the people in the frame. On the film front, Tara was last seen in Apurva. The film also stars Rajpal Yadav, Abhishek Banerjee and Dhairya Karwa. Set in Chambal, the film follows an ordinary woman who faces extraordinary circumstances and will do anything to survive. She will next be seen in 'Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups', which is all set to hit the the-



atres on March 19. The action-drama extravaganza "Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups", is directed by Geetu Mohandas. The film has been shot simultaneously in English and Kannada,

and will also release in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and more. It also stars Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Huma Qureshi, Rukmini Vasanth, Akshay Oberoi and Sudav Nair.