


OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



14-12-2025  
Total pilgrims: 81,348  
Tonsures: 26,150  
Hundi kanukalu: 4.0 CR  
Waiting Compartments: 19

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

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889



NATION | NEWS

Deve Gowda in RS highlights irregularities in voters' list during Nehru, Indira Gandhi tenures



WORLD | NEWS

UKRAINE CEASEFIRE TALKS CONTINUE AS US SAYS 'PROGRESS WAS MADE'

SPORTS | NEWS

Smooth end to Messi India tour after Kolkata chaos



**INBRIF**

**NIA chargesheets LeT, TRF in Pahalgam terror case**

**NEW DELHI:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday filed a chargesheet naming seven accused in connection with the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, which claimed the lives of 26 people, most of them tourists.

The chargesheet includes the banned terror outfits Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and The Resistance Front (TRF), along with a Pakistani handler, detailing Pakistan's role and conspiracy behind the attack.According to the NIA, the 1,597-page chargesheet was filed before the special NIA court in Jammu and lays out the roles of the accused, the larger terror conspiracy, and the evidence collected during the probe.

**Father and three daughters found dead by apparent mass suicide**

**PATNA:** In a deeply distressing incident that has sent shockwaves through the community, a man and his three young daughters were found dead in an apparent mass suicide in Muzaffarpur district, Bihar.

The tragedy unfolded on Sunday night in Ward Number Four of Mishraulia village, located within the Sakra police station jurisdiction. The deceased were identified as the father, Amarnath Ram, and his three daughters: Radha Kumari (11), Radhika (9), and Shivani (7).The father's wife had reportedly passed away approximately a year ago.

**Two PILs filed in Calcutta HC on Messi event chaos in Kolkata**

**KOLKATA (TSIT):** Two public interest litigations (PILs) were filed at a division bench of the Calcutta High Court on Monday regarding the lapses in management at Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata on December 13 during an event featuring football star Lionel Messi.

The first PIL filed by senior advocate Billwadal Bhattacharya demanded a thorough probe into the alleged financial irregularities in the sale of tickets, where different tickets fetched different prices, starting from Rs 3,000 to Rs 12,000.

The second PIL, filed by senior counsel Sabyasachi Chattopadhyay, has demanded a probe by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) into the matter.Chattopadhyay's PIL has challenged the formation of a committee headed by a retired justice of the Calcutta High Court to probe the mismanagement at the Messi show.

## S.P. Balasubrahmanyam's statue unveiled in Hyderabad amid row

**HYDERABAD (TSIT):** Amid a controversy, the statue of legendary singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam was unveiled on Monday at Ravindra Bharathi, a state-run auditorium and cultural centre in the heart of Hyderabad, the state capital of Telangana. Ignoring the protest by some activists of the Telangana statehood movement, authorities went ahead with the unveiling of the statue of SPB, as the late singer was popularly known.

Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Telangana Minister for Information Technology and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu, former Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, BJP's Telangana unit President Ramchander Rao, singer S.P. Shailaja and family members of SPB attended the event.Tight security arrangements were made for the event in view of the protest by a section of Telangana activists. They opposed the installation of SPB's statue on the ground that he had allegedly refused to sing a Telangana song in 2004.

The singer, who was born in the present-day



Andhra Pradesh, had allegedly refused to sing 'Jaya Jayahe Telangana' penned by poet Andesri.

The song was last year declared the state song of Telangana. President of the Telangana Kranti Dal and a Telangana statehood activist, Sangamreddy Prithviraj, and writer and activist Pasham Yadagiri had demanded the

especially prepared in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Speaking at the event, Telangana Minister Sridhar Babu said that SPB left an indelible and enduring imprint on the history of Indian film music.He described SPB as an artiste who transcended linguistic and cultural boundaries. He recalled that SPB had rendered more than 40,000 songs in 14 Indian languages, demonstrating the universal appeal of music.

"With more than 40,000 songs in 14 Indian languages, his voice carried emotion and life, staying ever-fresh across generations and securing a timeless place in people's hearts," he said.

Sridhar Babu said that even as generations change, SPB's songs continue to retain their freshness and emotional resonance, touching the hearts of Telugu audiences and music lovers across the country. The Minister noted that SPB was not only an unparalleled playback singer but also a versatile actor, music composer and dubbing artist.

## AP seeks Centre's support for AI-powered Skill Census

**AMARAVATI (TSIT) :** Andhra Pradesh Minister for Education, IT and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, on Monday sought the Centre's support for rolling out an AI-powered Skill Census across Andhra Pradesh.

He met Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw, at Parliament in New Delhi and explained the pilot project conducted in Mangalagiri.

He highlighted the introduction of an AI-based interview mechanism to address challenges encountered during the pilot phase.Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw responded positively to the request for central assistance, according to an official released here.

Lokesh also sought the Centre's backing for start-up and innovation hubs, AVGC-XR centres and IndiaAI Expansion in Andhra Pradesh.

His meeting with the Union minister followed his recently concluded visit to the United States.

During his visit to the US, Lokesh had high-level engagements with global technology leaders, including Google CEO Sundar Pichai, NVIDIA,



Nara Lokesh sought the Centre's support to roll out an AI-powered Skill Census and expand AI, startup, and advanced technology ecosystems across AP.

Adobe and several other leading American technology companies.Lokesh showcased Andhra Pradesh as a fast-emerging hub for technology, innovation and advanced manufacturing, drawing strong interest for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), R&D facilities

and electronics manufacturing investments in the state.During the meeting with Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister Lokesh briefed the Union Minister on the outcomes of his US outreach and the strong interest shown by American technology majors in expanding their footprint in India.

The discussions focused on opportunities for collaboration in semiconductors, artificial intelligence, electronics manufacturing, digital infrastructure and emerging technologies, with Andhra Pradesh positioned as a key beneficiary.

### Tragedy and tension mark Telangana Panchayat polls



**HYDERABAD (TSIT):** The second phase of Panchayat elections in Telangana on Sunday was overshadowed by tragic deaths and dramatic incidents across several districts.In Khammam district, an independent candidate for the

Sarpanch post died just minutes before polling began at 7 a.m. D. Nagaraju, who was contesting from Anasagar village in Nelkonapalli mandal, reportedly succumbed to stress related to the election campaign. Family members said he fell ill on Saturday night and was admitted to a hospital, where he passed away early Sunday morning. In a separate incident in Ranga Reddy district, a voter collapsed and died shortly after casting his vote.

### CM Stalin slams centre's move to rename MGNREGA



**CHENNAI (TSIT)** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday criticised the Union Government's proposed move to rename MGNREGA, a very successful rural livelihood security scheme.

The central government had proposed to introduce Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Grameen) Bill on Monday in the Lok Sabha as part of a supplementary business. The proposed Bill was construed as a move to replace the rural livelihood

**TN CM MK Stalin criticised the Centre's plan to rename MGNREGA, calling it an insult to Mahatma Gandhi, leading the government to drop the proposal.**

guarantee scheme in the name of father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi by the opposition parties.

Earlier, Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien has also slammed the move to rename MGNREGA by the government by bringing a new Bill. He said that the move is "an insult to Mahatma Gandhi". As opposition against the proposed bill mounted, the government has dropped the plan to introduce the same in this session.

### India very close to sealing interim trade deal with US: Top official

**NEW DELHI (TSIT):** Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday that India is "very close" to concluding an interim trade deal with the US to bring down tariffs, but stopped short of fixing any timeline on the issue.



"We are very close on closing the initial framework deal, but I don't want to put a timeline to it," the Commerce Secretary told journalists here. "We have done six rounds of talks with the US, where we have discussed both the BTA (bilateral trade agreement) as well as an interim deal to lower reciprocal tariffs. There's a fair expectation that both countries will be able to agree to a deal to lower reciprocal tariffs," he said."The visit of Deputy USTR was to take a stock of our trade relations and to see where we are on the BTA as well as the framework deal," Agrawal said.

US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer also said recently that the US has received the "best-ever offers from India" on the proposed trade agreement.Speaking at a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing in Washington, Greer said that there is resistance in India to certain row crops (corn, soybean, wheat, and cotton) being exported to its market from the US.

### Priyanka Gandhi denies objectionable slogans against PM Modi on stage

**NEW DELHI (TSIT):** Reacting to the controversy over objectionable slogans raised against Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a Congress rally, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday clarified that no such remarks were made by anyone present on the stage.

The controversy erupted after the Congress party's "Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod" rally, held at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on Sunday. Several videos showed Congress workers raising provocative slogans such as "Modi teri kabar khudegi" while heading towards the rally venue, drawing sharp criticism from the BJP. Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Priyanka Gandhi dismissed the allegations and questioned the BJP's intent in raising the issue during the parliamentary session.

"We were discussing who actually said this. No one on the stage said anything like that. Later, we came to know that someone from the crowd or a worker may have made such a statement, but it is still not clear who it was," she said. She further questioned why the matter was being



repeatedly raised in Parliament.

"Why is this being discussed in the House? It appears they themselves do not want the session to function. Then why raise such issues during Question Hour? I do not think they want to run the session. We wanted a debate on pollution, but they are not allowing that. If they do not want Parliament to function, they should close it, and at least pollution will be reduced," she added.

Congress MP Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka also reacted, saying that he was present at the programme for its entire duration and did not hear any

### Messi lands in Delhi for final stop of his G.O.A.T Tour

**NEW DELHI (TSIT) :** Argentine football legend Lionel Messi arrived in New Delhi on Monday afternoon for the final stop of his G.O.A.T. Tour, after a weather-related delay postponed his flight.

Messi was scheduled to land in the national capital earlier this morning, but his charter flight was delayed due to foggy conditions here. He immediately proceeded to the Leela Palace Hotel, where



he will have a meet-and-greet session for around an hour with a select group of people.

Messi's schedule in the national capital includes an exhibition match, a stage event, a football clinic for children, and several high-profile private meetings; therefore, Delhi has implemented precautionary measures to manage large crowds and traffic congestion in anticipation of his arrival.

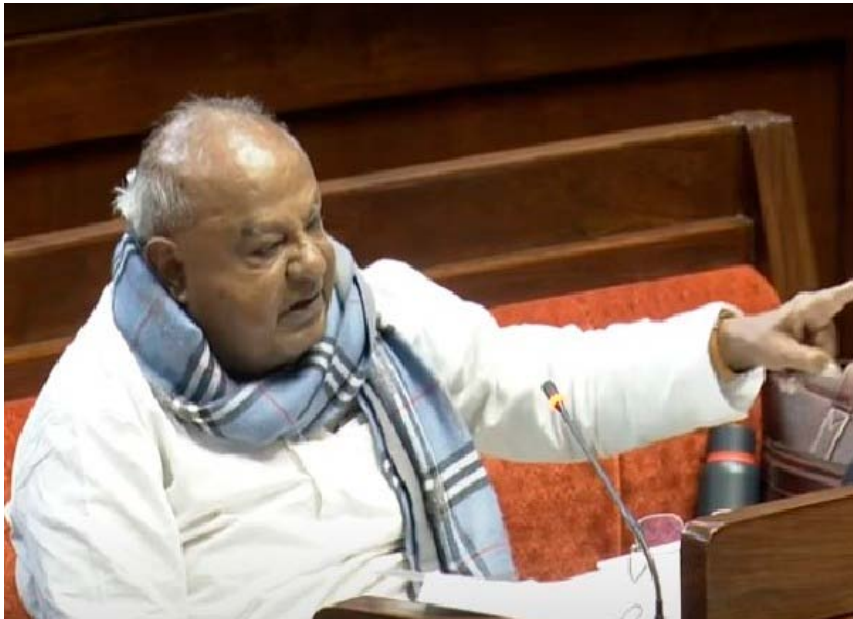


# Deve Gowda in RS highlights irregularities in voters' list during Nehru, Indira Gandhi tenures

New Delhi, Dec 15 : In the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament, the Rajya Sabha continued its discussion on electoral reforms on Monday, with senior JD(S) leader and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda (92) strongly defending Prime Minister Narendra Modi against opposition allegations of irregularities in voters' lists -- which they call "vote chori".

Former PM Gowda pointed out that lapses in the electoral process have occurred historically, including during the eras of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. He referenced a specific case of alleged inclusion of 18,000 votes in Kerala during Indira Gandhi's period.

"Even during Nehru's time, there were certain lapses in the electoral system. Such irregularities are not new," Gowda said, emphasising that issues have arisen under various governments, including Congress-led ones. Referring to recent controversies, including those in Bihar where opposition parties raised concerns



over the Election Commission's review of voter lists, Gowda noted that despite extensive reviews, the electoral outcomes reflected the people's mandate. "What was the outcome of the election? Congress got only six

MLAs," he said.

Turning to the current Prime Minister, Gowda highlighted PM Modi's electoral record. He said, "After serving as Gujarat Chief Minister for 12 years, PM Modi contested his first Lok Sabha election from Varanasi in 2014, winning by a margin of over 3.72 lakh votes -- with no allegations of manipulation raised at the time. In 2014, the BJP secured 282 seats on its own -- sufficient for a majority -- "yet PM Modi chose to form a broader NDA coalition, inviting allies for inclusiveness. Similarly, in 2019, with 303 seats, the party again prioritised coalition-building to provide representation to partners, form a stable and strong government."

"With his personality and strength, the Prime Minister could have governed alone, yet he chose inclusiveness," Gowda said, adding that allegations against the PM on voters' lists lack substance.

He stressed trust in institutions

like the Election Commission and the Supreme Court, which have issued directions for rectifying any issues.

Gowda criticised terms like "vote chori (vote theft)" used by the opposition, calling it denigrating to the Prime Minister's office.

Earlier, when the Rajya Sabha reassembled, AIADMK MP Dr M. Thambidurai resumed his speech, expressing faith in the Election Commission's actions. He emphasised that clean electoral rolls strengthen democracy and called for proper opportunities for campaigning, referencing a Supreme Court directive for Standard Operating Procedures in Tamil Nadu following an incident in Karur. The debate on electoral reforms, which includes discussions on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls, has been marked by sharp exchanges between the ruling NDA and opposition parties in both Houses. The session continues amid broader parliamentary proceedings.

## Odisha: Delhi Police arrests man from Bhadrak in cyber fraud case

**BHADRAK:** The Delhi Police have arrested one person from Odisha's Bhadrak district for his alleged involvement in a cyber fraud case, officials said here on Sunday.

While investigating the case, personnel of the Delhi Police had found that the SIM card used in the alleged fraud was activated in Bhadrak district, they said.

A team from Delhi Police arrived here and conducted investigation in Bhandaripokhari police station area on Saturday and arrested the man.

"They have taken the accused to Delhi on transit remand," said Manoj Rout, SP, Bhadrak.

Further investigation into the case is underway.

## Cong workers fed up with party colluding with BJP in Goa welcome to join AAP: Kejriwal

**PANAJI:** Congress workers who are fed up with their party colluding with the ruling BJP in Goa are welcome to join the Aam Aadmi Party, its chief Arvind Kejriwal said here on Sunday.

While campaigning for Zilla Panchayat polls in Betalbatim in South Goa in the presence of Delhi's Leader of Opposition Atishi Marlena, Goa AAP president Amit Palekar and MLAs Venzy Viegas and Cruz Silva, the AAP national convenor said only his party can defeat the BJP.

"I want to openly welcome all Congress workers and supporters who are fed up with the repeated collusion of Congress with the BJP. If you truly want to defeat the BJP and bring honest governance to Goa, only AAP can do it. This fight is not about parties, it is about saving Goa," Kejriwal said.

"If a common man wants to start a small shop, it becomes impossible. But illegal businesses are allowed freely if bribes are paid," he alleged while slamming the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Goa.

The MLAs of other parties earn crores of rupees once elected, but AAP legislators are "islands of hope", he claimed.

"The people of Benaulum and Velim know their MLAs are honest and non-corrupt," he said referring to Viegas and Silva.

The ZP elections are the first step towards ending corruption and building a people-first, honest Goa, he said while urging voters to support AAP candidates to bring real change.

## TMC MLA backs actor-wife amid trolling post Messi event

**KOLKATA:** TMC MLA and filmmaker Raj Chakraborty on Sunday came out in support of his actor-wife Subhashree Ganguly after she faced a backlash for posting a picture with football legend Lionel Messi at Yuva Bharati Krirangan Stadium on Saturday.

The event, organised to mark Messi's visit, descended into chaos as spectators from the galleries failed to catch a glimpse of the superstar, as their view of the player was blocked by a group of people on the ground.

Subhashree had posted the photograph on social media before the chaos, describing herself as representing the Bengali film industry. This led to trolling from netizens and criticism from political leaders accusing her of insensitivity toward fans.

Defending her, Raj said in a social media post, "Thousands of people who bought tickets at a high price were deprived of seeing their hero. Her 'crime' was posting a photograph with Messi. Does being an actress disqualify her from being a Messi fan?"

He added that Subhashree, as a human being, carries multiple identities -- as a mother, wife, friend, and actress -- and should not be targeted for attending the event.

## Accountability, responsibility key: Vice President tells civil service trainees

**NEW DELHI:** Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Sunday told a group of civil service officer trainees that responsible and accountable actions are crucial in public service, as he called for the timely disposal of files and cases.

He also stressed on effective use of technology to improve efficiency and service delivery.

The vice president reminded the young officers that in the age of social media, where loud voices often gain traction, such popularity is usually temporary.

Radhakrishnan said patience and attentive listening are essential tools of effective and humane governance.

According to an official statement, he told the trainees that listening to public grievances often resolves a large part of the problem.

Responding to queries from the officer trainees, the vice president emphasised the importance of constant learning, adherence to dharma and patience.

He also spoke on the challenge of information overload, misinformation and negative news on social media, advising officers to promote positive and constructive stories.

Radhakrishnan underlined the need for social responsibility before sharing content online and called for appropriate action to encourage responsible digital behaviour.

# Violence reported in several parts of Kerala after civic poll results

**KOZHIKODE:** Violence erupted at various places across Kerala, particularly in the northern districts, following the announcement of local body election results on December 13, police said on Sunday.

In Eramala in Kozhikode district, tension prevailed throughout the Saturday night after the Indira Gandhi Bhavan, a Congress office, was allegedly attacked by CPI(M) workers.

According to an FIR registered at Edachery police station, around 200 people marched towards the Congress office carrying weapons and vandalised the building, causing damage estimated at around Rs five lakh.

A statue of the late Prime



Minister Indira Gandhi was also damaged in the attack, police said. Soon after, UDF activists gathered at the spot, further aggravating the situation.

However, with the deployment of additional police personnel, the situation was brought under control, an officer said.

Police said another violent incident was reported at Marad, where stones were allegedly pelted at a UDF victory procession, leaving several people injured.

In Sultan Bathery in Wayanad district, police registered a case after a car carrying a UDF activist and his family members was allegedly attacked by around 40 CPI(M) workers, an official said.

Sultan Bathery police also booked UDF activists in a separate incident for allegedly attacking a CPI(M) worker who objected to the bursting of crackers near his house, the officer added.

In Panoor in Kannur district, houses of several Muslim League activists were

allegedly attacked by CPI(M) workers, and vehicles parked at the houses were also damaged.

According to Panoor police, the violence broke out after a UDF victory rally was allegedly stopped by CPI(M) workers armed with swords and daggers. Some UDF leaders sustained injuries in the clash.

Clashes were also reported between UDF and LDF workers at Ulikkal in Kannur district, though police intervention brought the situation under control later in the night, an officer at Ulikkal police station said.

In Bedakom in Kasaragod district, an LDF victory march turned violent after CPI(M) activists allegedly intercepted

UDF workers passing through the area. Some policemen who intervened suffered minor injuries, an officer said.

Similar violence was reported from Neyyattinkara in Thiruvananthapuram district following clashes between CPI(M) and BJP workers. Police said workers from both sides sustained minor injuries and were admitted to hospitals.

Cases will be registered after formal complaints are received, police added.

Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, V D Sathesnan, said a CPI(M) activist damaged a Mahatma Gandhi statue near the Ramantali Cultural Centre in Payyannur, Kannur, breaking its nose and spectacles.

## Himachal Pradesh yet to receive Rs 1,500-cr diaster package, says Congress, criticises Nadda

**SHIMLA:** The Congress on Sunday hit out at the Centre over its Rs 1,500 crore relief promise, saying that none of it has reached the disaster-hit state.

Tribal Development Minister Jagat Singh Negi and Panchayati Raj Minister Anirudh Singh, in a statement, said Himachal Pradesh had yet to receive the package of Rs 1,500 crore, even months after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced it.

They also said that the Rs 9,200 crore deposited under the National Pension Scheme (NPS) has been withheld by the Union government.

"The state's borrowing limit was reportedly curtailed by Rs 1,600 crore after the government decided to implement the OPS, causing a total loss of Rs 4,800 crore to the state over the past three years," the two leaders

said.

They also trained their guns at BJP president J P Nadda, who hails from the state.

They said Nadda must intervene, and he has to realise that the debt burden is increasing due to the withholding of the state's share by the Centre.

According to the statement, the state's 2023 monsoon loss was pegged at around Rs 9,000-9,500 crore by an assessment by the Centre.

The Himachal government submitted a claim of Rs 9,042 crore under the PDNA framework for recovery and reconstruction efforts.

However, the state is still awaiting the full amount of nearly Rs 10,000 crore under the PDNA, along with a separate Rs 1,500 crore package announced earlier, they said.

## CM Gupta takes 'vipassana' jibe at Kejriwal; AAP chief says don't 'mock' meditation technique

New Delhi, Dec 14 (PTI) AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal said it was "unbecoming" of Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta to "mock" vipassana meditation to criticise him.

In a post on X, Kejriwal said, "You harbour political enmity towards me. Due to this, it does not behoove you to mock the divine Vipassana meditation method taught by Lord Buddha in this manner."

Attacking Kejriwal over his handling of pollution when he was the chief minister, Gupta said she would not leave Delhi and "run away" to practise vipassana to "cure his cough".

She shared a clip from her speech at an event held last week, in which she is speaking about tackling pollution.

"We are finding solutions to Delhi's pollution problem while living and working in Delhi. We are not like those

who leave Delhi to its fate and run away every six months to do vipassana," the chief minister said.

"My Delhi, my responsibility -- we are working with this spirit. The problem is here, the solution will also be found here in Delhi...", she said.

Both short-term and long-term measures are being implemented to control pollution, she said in a post accompanying the video.

Responding to Gupta's remarks, former chief minister Kejriwal said it was unbecoming of a CM to ridicule a divine meditation practice taught by Lord Buddha. Despite "political enmity", it does not behave a CM to mock vipassana, he said.

He urged her to practice vipassana, saying it brings immense peace, and added that going for vipassana is not "running away" but

something only the fortunate are blessed with.

AAP Delhi unit Saurabh Bharadwaj said while the chief minister may mock Arvind Kejriwal's cough, the entire city of Delhi was now suffering, citing warnings by health experts about the grave pollution situation.

Delhi's AQI was recorded in the 'severe' category at 461, the highest of the season The 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) stood at 431 a day ago, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Expressing grave concern over the deteriorating air quality, Bharadwaj said despite nearly one year of the BJP government being in office, the situation has reached an alarming level.

He said December was already half over and there was no stubble burning anywhere in the country -- not in Punjab, Haryana or

elsewhere -- yet pollution levels were so high that haze and smog were visible even inside closed rooms.

Bharadwaj said the most "unfortunate aspect" was the absence of confidence among Delhi residents about who would take responsibility.

"The people of Delhi do not know whom to look towards with the hope that something will be done. Should they look towards a chief minister who cannot even pronounce AQI properly," he said.

He alleged that Gupta equates AQI with temperature, believes it can be measured by any instrument and thinks sprinkling water is the only way to reduce pollution.

Calling for course correction, Bharadwaj said experts should come forward and Gupta should step back for some time.

## Lokesh meets Pradhan, seeks Rs 4,400 crore under STARS Project

Amaravati, Dec 15 : Andhra Pradesh Minister for Education and IT, Nara Lokesh, on Monday met Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in New Delhi and sought Rs 4,400 crore in financial assistance under the STARS Project as part of Samagra Shiksha reforms and Rs 1,270 crore additional funds for 2025-26.

Minister Lokesh urged the Union Minister to approve the state government's proposal for sanctioning 11 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) and to take steps for the establishment and operationalisation of 12 Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) recently allotted to Andhra Pradesh.

He also sought Rs 4,400 crore in financial assistance under the STARS



Project as part of Samagra Shiksha reforms, and requested approval for Rs 1,270 crore in additional funds proposed by the state for the 2025-26 financial year.


Lokesh further appealed for permission to set up 155 Smart Kitchens on a pilot basis under the PM POSHAN scheme across the state.

During the meeting, Lokesh briefed the Union Minister on the initiatives being undertaken

by the coalition government in Andhra Pradesh to improve learning outcomes at all levels and sought the Centre's support for strengthening education standards across the state.

He highlighted the launch of the Guaranteed Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) programme, aimed at ensuring that primary school students achieve essential reading and numeracy skills, according to an official release here.

Lokesh informed the Union Minister that the state government has introduced a clicker-based Interactive Classroom Response System in government schools to enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes.



Corporate Office: ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ICICI HFC Tower, Andheri- Kurla Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai- 400059, India  
Branch Office: Shop. No 8 & 9, 1st floor, Beside ICICI Bank Ltd, Park Road, Kurnool- 518001  
(See proviso to rule 8(6)) Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immoveable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd., will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Legal Heirs. Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction	One Day Before Auction Date	SARFAESI Stage
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)
1.	R Ravindranath (Borrower) R Prathibha (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LHTRU00001303515	S No.281/3, D No.13-15-399, Assessment No.1004024703, HSC No.23235 & 23277, Ward No.13, Vidya Nagar, Hindhupur Town and Municipality, Hindhupur Mandal, Ananthapur Dist, Pin Code- 515001	Rs. 34,27,409.00/- December 09, 2025	Rs. 24,19,479/- Rs. 2,41,948/-	January 09, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	January 17, 2026 02:00 PM To 03:00 PM	January 16, 2026 Before 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-<https://BidDeal.in>) of our auction agency Value Trust Capital Services Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till January 16, 2026 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address Mentioned on top of the article on or before January 16, 2026 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit signed copy of Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address Mentioned on top of the article on or before January 16, 2026 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd. - Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Home Finance Company Limited on 9920807300.

The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit <https://www.icicifnc.com/>

Date: December 16, 2025  
Place: Ananthapur

Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited",  
CIN Number:- U65922MH1999PLC120106









# EDITORIAL

## A City Without Water Is A Harbinger Of A Thirsty Planet

The history of our cities has been written in water. In Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Indus valley, the first urban settlements were built around irrigated farmland. Flooded terrace fields for rice, corn and quinoa accompanied the spread of civilization in East Asia and the Americas. Without water, the megacities that will define the 21st century would wither and perish. That's looking like a risk factor in an increasing number of locations. Cape Town and Chennai in recent years endured punishing droughts that left them on the brink of crisis. Similar conditions afflicted the upwardly-mobile Indian cities of Bengaluru and Hyderabad last year. Now Tehran (biggest of all, with about 15 million people) is facing the same emergency. Residents of Iran's capital are having their taps turned off for hours at a time to ration usage, amid a five-year drought and rainfall that's been running at 96 per cent below average levels. The city may have to be evacuated altogether if a current dry spell doesn't break soon, President Masoud Pezeshkian said last month. That underlines a grim fact of modern life: Even relatively affluent and sophisticated cities might be just a few dry years away from "day zero" — the point where life-giving water supplies run out. Tehran's desperate situation has its origins in the same mania for food and energy security that's causing many nations to raise trade and regulatory barriers to clean power right now. A commitment to food self-sufficiency following the 1979 Iranian revolution — spurning imports of nutritional energy in favor of home-grown wheat and rice — has drained aquifers and reservoirs to feed thirsty crops. More than 90% of water goes to agriculture, leaving precious little left over for the needs of urbanites. That might be excusable given the widespread sanctions that have crippled Iran's economy for decades, but it's been accompanied by wasteful usage, too. Per-capita water resources are greater than in Germany, India or South Korea, so should be sufficient to supply most of Iran's needs, if they were well managed. That's not what's happened. Flood irrigation, an ancient practice that wastes immense amounts of H2O through evaporation when compared to drip irrigation that uses pipes, is still the predominant method of watering fields. Tariffs and subsidies mean trade with more productive countries is fragile. China and India are the biggest producers of grain, and also major participants in the barter-style oil trade that gets around international sanctions on Tehran. China, however, barely exports food to Iran, while India's basmati farmers have to contend with occasional import bans imposed whenever the Iranian government wants to prop up its local growers. Comments from energy minister Abbas Aliabadi earlier this month supporting the import of "virtual water" — thirsty crops that should be produced in countries with more abundant rainfall — are a rare official admission that the drive to self-sufficiency is failing, and more food is going to need to come in from overseas. This crisis is a sign of a planet whose cycles are increasingly slipping out of balance. While a shortage of water is crippling Iran, on the other side of the Indian Ocean an excess from monsoonal rains has caused \$20 billion of flood damages from Sri Lanka to Vietnam. Both situations would have been unlikely without the effects of climate change. Whereas Iran can now expect a drought like that of 2025 every 10 years, in a pre-warming world it would have happened as rarely as once a century. As the world's sixth-biggest emitter and one of the largest exporters of oil, it bears much of the responsibility for the warming now making Tehran unlivable. It's not alone. Many of the countries hit by the recent Asian floods could find their current conditions flipping to Tehran-style droughts in future. In a 2020 study of 12 megacities in developing countries at risk of water shortages, the city ranks relatively low.

# India's Exclusion From US' Pax Silica Club Isn't A Snub - But It Matters

A new geopolitical contest is underway, and the battlefield is supply chains. The Pax Silica initiative, announced recently, is a US move to turn supply chains into strategy, locking in trusted access across the AI stack, from minerals and chips to security and logistics. It matters for India because this is how the next tech order will be built: small groups first, choke-points next, and market access later. Put simply, the countries that control the hard inputs will shape the rules for everyone else. India should read Pax Silica as a map of where leverage will sit. A new geopolitical contest is underway, and the battlefield is supply chains. The Pax Silica initiative, announced recently, is a US move to turn supply chains into strategy, locking in trusted access across the AI stack, from minerals and chips to security and logistics. It matters for India because this is how the next tech order will be built: small groups first, choke-points next, and market access later. Put simply, the countries that control the hard inputs will shape the rules for everyone else. India should read Pax Silica as a map of where leverage will sit.

**Advertisement - Scroll to continue**  
What Each Member Offers  
Pax Silica brought together eight US partners, each with a choke-point to offer. Japan and South Korea add manufacturing muscle. The Netherlands controls specialised chipmaking machines that are extremely hard to replace. Singapore is a global hub port and a major semiconductor production node. Australia brings critical minerals depth. And the UK, Israel and the UAE add supply-chain security focus, security-tech innovation, and capital-plus-energy ambition for AI infrastructure. It is a carefully chosen group covering the early links of the tech supply chain, from minerals and chipmaking to shipping and financing. When key parts of a supply chain sit inside one club, trade stops being just business. It starts depending on trust and membership. Think of it like this. When a small group holds the keys to the warehouse, everyone else has to follow their entry rules.



At the same time, coalitions like this are not just power plays. They can help partners coordinate standards, reduce single-point dependencies, and build resilience against shocks.

**Missing The Point**  
India is not part of the initial grouping. Some see this as a snub. Others say it does not matter. Both reactions miss the point. The issue is not optics. It is whether India is moving fast enough up the chokepoint ladder to be treated as a partner rather than a customer. But it is equally important to be clear that India is not outside the semiconductor ecosystem. For chip design, India is already a critical node. It is home to nearly 20% of the world's chip design engineers, with numerous firms running global capability centres. That is why global chip firms keep designing in India even when geopolitics shifts. You cannot shift thousands of engineers and years of know-how overnight.

**India's Strengths**  
India is also building traction in areas where it can become relevant sooner than many assume. Ten projects across six states have been approved, spanning everything from OSAT - outsourced assembly and testing - to advanced packaging. These are not glamorous, but they are key chokepoints in modern hardware. If design is the brain, pack-

aging and testing are what make the brain usable in the real world. India can add what this club lacks at scale, design talent and back-end capacity that reduces concentration risk. This progress is no longer hypothetical. India's chain base and back-end push are real. But dismissing Pax Silica as background noise would be a strategic mistake.

**The Inner Circle**  
The real risk is geopolitical. Supply-chain coalitions can become tools of power. Access becomes conditional unless you are in the trusted circle. In a crisis, insiders get protected first and everyone else discovers that markets do not override politics. Rules get written inside smaller groups, while outsiders end up complying with frameworks they did not shape. In the real world, that can mean delays, extra paperwork, higher costs, and uncertainty at the worst possible time. India is particularly exposed because it is both a huge future market and a big capability base. In supply-chain politics, markets get courted, but capability nodes get seats. Pax Silica is a reminder that India must become more of the second and less of the first. Capability is the priority. Membership is the consequence, not the prize. India needs to climb the chokepoint ladder so that entry, when it is sought, is negotiated from strength.

**Latecomer's Advantage**  
The fastest strategic payoff for India over the next two to three years comes from moving up in two upstream areas. First, critical minerals processing and recycling. India has already approved a ?1,500 crore incentive scheme and issued operational guidelines in October 2025. The geopolitical value is simple. Processing and recycling create leverage fast. They also make India useful to any coalition looking to diversify away from single-country dominance. The more India can process at home, the less it has to worry about sudden bottlenecks elsewhere. Second, in a Pax Silica world, packaging is a practical way to become indispensable without pretending that India can leapfrog the most advanced fab ecosystems. Sanand in Gujarat is emerging as an OSAT cluster, and India should accelerate the wider packaging ecosystem that makes such clusters competitive. Diplomatically, India should engage with Pax Silica as a capability contributor, not as a latecomer seeking exceptions. Late entry is not a failure if your leverage is higher. There is a precedent. The Minerals Security Partnership was formed in June 2022, and India joined in June 2023. The point is simple. Build capability now, and India can join later on terms that strengthen autonomy, not shrink it.

## DISCUSSION ON BAN ON DIGITAL MEDIA



PRIYANKA SAURABH

Child safety and technological solutionism: Discussing social media restrictions in the digital age Australia proposes a complete ban on social media for children under sixteen. Privacy threats, practical failures, and neglect of underlying psychosocial factors. Rights-based protections through the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. Parental consent, child monitoring, and restrictions on targeted advertising. Balance the law, digital literacy, family engagement, and platform accountability. In the digital age, the lives of children and adolescents are no longer limited to the physical world. Social media, online platforms, and virtual communities have become a crucial part of their learning, expression, identity, and social connections. At this time, the question of how to ensure the safety of children on these platforms naturally arises. Australia's recent proposal to completely ban social media for children under the age of sixteen stems from this concern. However, this move has also faced criticism as an overly simplistic, technology-based solution to a complex psychosocial problem, a move that has been termed "technological solutionism." Technological solutionism implies the assumption that social, cultural, and psychological problems can be solved solely through technological rules, restrictions, or tools. This

approach appears particularly limited in the context of children, as children's mental health, self-esteem, social comparison, online harassment, loneliness, and behavioral changes are not resolved simply by blocking access to a platform. These problems are deeply intertwined with family, school, peer groups, social environments, and broader cultural trends. Australia's proposal appears focused on outright prohibition rather than addressing these complex causes. According to Australia's proposed law, social media use would be restricted for children under the age of sixteen and mandatory age verification would be implemented. While this measure appears to be drastic and decisive for the safety of children, its practical implications are questionable. Age verification could require the collection of extensive personal information, posing a threat to the privacy of children and their parents. Furthermore, technological measures can be easily circumvented through virtual private networks, fake identities, or new, less regulated platforms. This not only undermines the effectiveness of the law but could also expose children to more risky digital spaces. Another serious aspect of a complete ban is that it could deprive children of the positive opportunities that social media offers. Today, many children access educational content, participate in creative activities, learn about social issues, and connect with mental health support groups through these platforms. For children, especially those in rural, disadvantaged, or socially marginalized communities, digital platforms are often their only means of expression and collaboration. A complete ban could further deepen social inequalities. This approach also suggests that the root of the problem lies with children or technology, when in reality, the problem lies with the social framework within which

children are digitally socialized. India has adopted a different and relatively balanced approach in this regard. The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, proposes a rights-based and data-centric approach to protecting children, rather than outright prohibition. The Act recognizes that isolating children from the digital world is neither possible nor desirable. Instead, it is essential to hold digital platforms accountable and protect children's rights. The law mandates verified parental consent for the processing of children's personal data, strengthening the role of the family. An important aspect of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act is that it explicitly prohibits behavioral tracking, personality-based categorization, and targeted advertising of children. This seeks to protect children from exploitation as consumers. Furthermore, the Act provides children with rights such as access to, correction of, deletion of data, and filing of complaints. This approach is an important step towards viewing children as citizens with rights, rather than merely objects of protection. Additionally, India has established an independent Data Protection Board, which can impose penalties for violations. This ensures accountability for platforms and data processing entities, without requiring children to be excluded from digital platforms. This model also demonstrates that legislation, along with social awareness, digital literacy, online safety education in schools, and the expansion of mental health services, are essential. Ensuring child safety cannot be achieved through legislation alone; it requires a holistic societal effort. Comparing the approaches of Australia and India reveals that while on the one hand there is a policy based on control and prohibition, on the other, there is a framework based on balance, participation, and empowerment.

## Usha Chilukuri Vance: The Hindu Republican America Can't Quite Define

America keeps trying to squeeze Usha Vance into a box that was never made for her. Democrats write long, anguished essays about how a vegetarian Hindu who once clerked for the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court must be dying inside next to MAGA. The extreme-right online crowd crop her out of photographs, call her "the diversity hire", or mutter that a "pagan" now lives in the official residence of the Vice President (that residence, for Indian readers, is the elegant old Naval Observatory mansion in Washington DC - roughly the American equivalent of 7 Lok Kalyan Marg for the number-two leader.) Both camps are wasting their breath. The woman they want to rescue or expel has spent her whole life quietly doing things her own way. She grew up Usha Chilukuri in the orderly San Diego suburb of Rancho Penasquitos, daughter of Telugu academics from Andhra Pradesh. Vegetarian home, Ganesh Chaturthi pujas, parents who treated anything below Stanford as gentle failure. She played clarinet in the marching band, led the school history club, graduated Yale summa cum laude in history, picked up a master's at Cambridge on a Gates scholarship, then returned to Yale Law. Somewhere along the way, she took one of those silly internet quizzes, discovered she was an "Order Muppet", posted the result on Facebook, and accidentally gave the world the most accurate nickname she will ever have. That nickname explains why she and JD Vance made sense. They met in 2010 in Amy Chua's small section at Yale Law. Professor Chua paired the tattooed Marine veteran from the Ohio rust belt with the professor's daughter from San Diego to co-lead a reading group on working-class decline. Chua later laughed that they were opposites in every dimension except raw intelligence and terrifying ambition. "Thank You For Saving Me" JD fell first and hardest. In Hillbilly Elegy, he is almost painfully honest about it. Before Usha, his romantic history had been "a



wreckage of bad decisions and worse breakups". On their first proper date he talked for hours about addiction, screaming matches, and children who had never seen a stable home. She listened without flinching, then emailed him a ten-page memo analysing the sociology of Scots-Irish family breakdown. He proposed within months, convinced she would eventually realise she could do better. He still ends every anniversary card the same way: "Thank you for saving me." He credits her with teaching him which fork to use at New Haven faculty dinners, and how to stop himself leaping out of the car in road-rage fury. Without her, he writes, there is no law degree, no bestseller, no Senate seat, no Vice Presidency. Politics arrived like a storm neither of them invited. She was a registered Democrat until roughly the year they married. Old friends remember her calling January 6, 2021 "deeply disturbing" and Trump's behaviour that day "reprehensible" - language her husband himself had used in 2016 when he labelled Trump "America's Hitler" and voted for Evan McMullin. Yet, when JD performed his now-famous pirouette and embraced Trump, Usha did not stage a public crisis. The day after Trump picked him for VP in July 2024,

she simply resigned from her elite California law firm. No press release. Her name and photograph vanished from the website overnight. Since then, she has spoken only when protocol demands it. Her four-minute convention speech introducing JD was warm, self-deprecating and completely free of ideology. She has worn Kanjeevaram silk to state dinners and Levi's to Ohio county fairs. She prepped JD for the vice-presidential debate against Tim Walz and, by all accounts, outworked the entire team. When a Fox interviewer asked what she hoped to accomplish as Second Lady, she smiled and said, "Honestly, I would just like to be a normal person for my kids." Usha Isn't Performing The noise around her is deafening and revealing. Nick Fuentes spent inauguration week asking why America has a "pagan" in the Vice President's official home. JD fed the fire at Ole Miss in early 2025 when he told a chanting Christian crowd he hoped one day Usha would accept the Gospel. He walked it back within hours, insisting she has no plans to convert, but the clip is immortal. Liberal columnists keep publishing tear-stained think-pieces about the prisoner in the mansion. Everyone is performing. She is not.





# Introducing Galaxy Z TriFold: The Shape of What’s Next in Mobile Innovation

Samsung Electronics today announced the launch of Galaxy Z TriFold, further expanding Samsung’s leadership in new form factors for the mobile AI era. Built on a decade of foldable category innovation, Galaxy Z TriFold showcases engineering mastery with its most advanced foldable technologies optimized for the unique demands of a multi-folding design. Its slim profile ensures the portability of a premium phone that provides ultra performance and, when unfolded twice, it reveals an immersive 10-inch display that elevates productivity and cinematic viewing — offering a best-in-class mobile experience never before seen in any other form factor. “Samsung’s relentless pursuit of new possibilities continues to shape the future of mobile experiences,” said TM Roh, Chief Executive Officer, President and Head of Device eXperience (DX) Division at Samsung Electronics. “Through years of innovation in foldable form factors, Galaxy Z TriFold solves one of the mobile industry’s longest-standing challenges — delivering the perfect balance between portability, premium performance and produc-



tivity all in one device. Galaxy Z TriFold now expands the boundaries of what’s possible for mobile work, creativity and connection.”– Shaping the Future With Decades of Mobile Expertise Samsung has long led the mobile industry, pioneering new categories and experiences such as large screen devices, foldable form factors and the use of AI on a mobile device, with each of these innovations created with the user in mind. Backed by state-of-the-art R&D, end-to-end manufacturing and rigorous quality control, Galaxy Z TriFold showcases how Samsung continues to set new benchmarks for a phone that maximizes output while remaining portable. In Samsung’s research and design process, innovation is driven by

understanding how people use devices. The company’s decade-long experience in foldable category innovation inspired Galaxy Z TriFold’s unique multi-folding form factor, which uses an inward-folding design to protect the main display. The folding mechanism has been precisely engineered for easy opening and closing, with an auto-alarm alerting the user of incorrect folding through a series of on-screen alerts and vibrations. Every detail is crafted with precision and purpose to deliver an intuitive, user-friendly experience. Measuring just 3.9 mm at its thinnest point, Galaxy Z TriFold delivers flagship-level performance powered by the customized Snapdragon® 8 Elite Mobile Platform for Galaxy, a 200 MP camera and the biggest

battery Samsung has ever had in a foldable phone. The 5,600 mAh three-cell battery system has been placed in each of 3 panels of the device for balanced power delivery and all-day endurance. Combined with 45 W super-fast charging, Galaxy Z TriFold lets users stream, create and work without limits. To balance the power of an ultra-quality device in a thin, portable frame, a re-optimization of the core foldable technology had been applied. Every part of the device was crafted with deep attention to structural innovation and product assurance: Samsung’s Most Advanced Hinges Yet: Drawing on its heritage in foldable phone innovation, Samsung refined the Armor FlexHinge to meet the unique demands of Galaxy Z

TriFold. Two differently sized hinges with a dual-rail structure work in harmony, creating a smoother, more stable fold despite varying weight and components across the device. The hinge structure also allows the screen panels to meet securely with a minimal gap, enabling a thinner, more portable device. Restructured Foldable Display: Galaxy Z TriFold introduces new display technology made for the 10-inch screen that folds twice into a pocketable phone. A reinforced overcoat has been added to a shock-absorbing display layer for better resistance across the dual-folding device. Advanced Materials on the Exterior: The titanium hinge housing introduces a thin piece of metal that protects the folding mechanism and resists wear over time. The frame of the device is supported by Advanced Armor Aluminum, a high-strength alloy that adds rigidity without increasing bulk. The frame helps ensure that the screens don’t make contact with each other, and a ceramic-glass fiber-reinforced polymer back panel keeps the design thin yet resistant to cracks.

## Aurobay Technologies expands digital transformation partnership with HCLTech to boost manufacturing



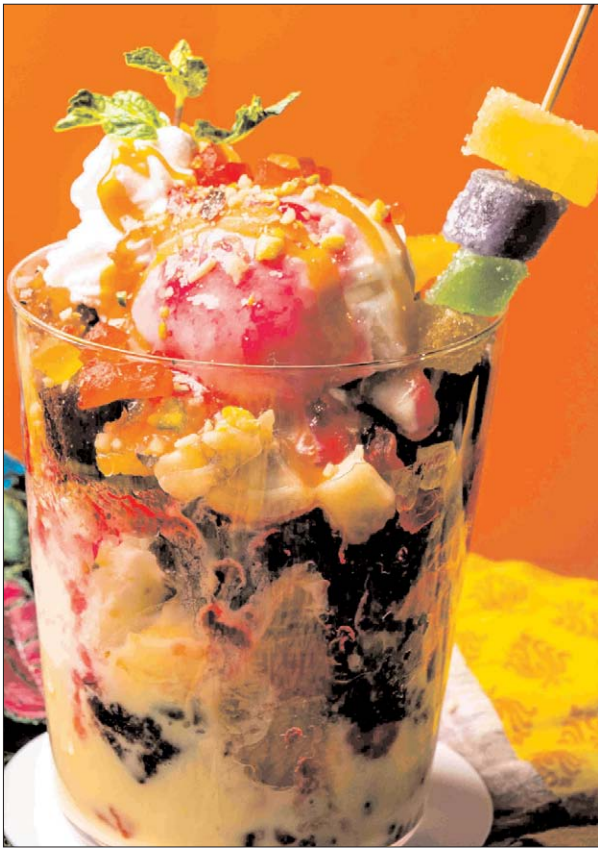
**NOIDA, India, Dec 15, 2025** — HCLTech, a leading global technology company, and Aurobay Technologies, a division of Horse Powertrain and a global leader in hybrid and low-emission powertrain solutions, have expanded their digital transformation partnership to support Aurobay’s global growth strategy. The expanded partnership establishes HCLTech as Aurobay Technologies’ trusted partner for managing and optimizing SAP, Siemens Teamcenter PLM software and integration services in Sweden and China. This will unlock cost efficiency, operational resilience and digital innovation across Aurobay’s manufacturing and engineering functions by leveraging HCLTech’s flagship service transformation platform, AI Force. The engagement spans core

business functions including SAP operations, engineering systems, integration services and mainframe environments, reinforcing Aurobay’s focus on scale, efficiency and seamless operations across global locations. “Horse Powertrain’s division Aurobay Technologies’ digital transformation continues to build momentum as we strengthen our operations and systems to support future growth,” said Henrik Eigert, Head of Digital Sweden, Aurobay Technologies division. “Our extended partnership with HCLTech underscores the trust we have built over the years and reflects our shared commitment to efficiency, innovation and customer value.” “We are pleased to deepen our partnership with Aurobay Technologies

and support their engineering services across key geographies,” said Pankaj Tagra, Global Head Mobility and Chief Growth Officer – Germany at HCLTech. “This engagement highlights our deep capabilities in the automotive domain and our focus on delivering integrated, digital-first solutions that enable our clients to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving industry.” The partnership reflects HCLTech’s growing presence in the European automotive market, particularly in SAP-led initiatives. It reinforces the company’s position as a strategic technology partner helping mobility companies accelerate innovation, enhance operational performance and realize the full potential of digital ecosystems through HCLTech’s proprietary AI Force platform.

## SOCIAL Launches ‘The Szn Menu’, Bringing Garma am Comfort Food this Winter Across India

Hyderabad: December 15, 2025: Winter has arrived, and SOCIAL is turning the heat all the way up. This season, the neighbourhood café-bar launches The Szn Menu, a winter-only food drop available from 18th December to 18th January, celebrating everything garma garam; food that brings instant comfort, plates that feel as cosy as a razaai, and flavours that make you forget how cold it is outside. Built around the idea of garma garam cravings, The Szn Menu feels like sitting too close to a bonfire or stealing someone’s jacket. The Szn Menu: Built for Sardi, Served Garma Garam At the heart of the winter campaign is The Szn Menu, a spread built for serious sardi cravings; comfort, indulgent, and unmistakably SOCIAL. The menu opens with the Winter Munch Platter, a quartet of seasonal favourites featuring Kaanji Vada, Aloo Chaat, Kamrak Shakarkandi Chaat and crunchy peanuts with an optional vodka add-on for those who like their winter warm with a little kick. Soft,



fluffy Pepper Pop Buns came loaded with juicy pepper mushroom or pepper chicken, delivering instant comfort in every bite, while the indulgent Changa

Chimichanga brings deep-fried drama with a cheesy, spicy baingan bharta filling. Soul food takes center stage with Makke Di Roti, Sarson Ka Swag, while bold, coastal

warmth comes through in the Paneer and Chicken Gassi, fiery Mangalorean gravies best enjoyed with Parotta. The menu leans fully into winter indulgence with Misal Paaya, where spicy sprouts meet rich mutton trotter broth, and the decadent Jhinga Thermidor, featuring tiger prawns tossed in Malwani masala, loaded with cheddar, and served alongside turmeric rice and peanut kachumber. Dessert on the menu brings festive chaos with the Plum Cake GadBad, a boozy, sweet mess designed for indulgence and best enjoyed fresh at the table. Alongside it, SOCIAL introduces a selection of winter bakes created exclusively for takeaway and delivery, perfect for gifting, sharing, or saving for later. From the deeply soaked Boozy Plum Cake and classic Dundee Cake to playful Pista-La-Vista Choco Cookies and Keto-friendly Peanut Butter Cookies, these retail bakes are built to travel, ensuring winter comfort doesn’t stop when the meal does. LLIIC Gets a Festive Makeover For the festive season.

## Super Celebration Pack Rs 500 FAQs

**Mumbai, December 15:** 1. What are the benefits offered under Rs 500 Super Celebration Pack? Rs 500 Super Celebration Pack is a special Jio recharge packs that give you access to premium OTT apps worth approximately Rs 500 value, along with telecom benefits included in the Rs 349 plan such as unlimited 5G data, unlimited calls, and 2 GB/day high-speed data for 28 days. OTT subscription: YouTube Premium, JioHotstar, Amazon PVME, Sony LIV, ZEE5, Lionsgate Play, Discovery+, Sun NXT, Kancha Lannka, Planet Marathi, Chaupal, FanCode and Hoichoi 2. How do I access OTT apps included in my Super Celebration Packs? Most premium content can be watched directly using JioTV. Some OTT apps require login in their own apps. You can watch Zee5, Sony LIV, Lionsgate, Discovery+, FanCode, SunNXT, Hoichoi, KanchhaLannka, Planet Marathi and Chaupal directly inside the JioTV app without separate login.



You must activate YouTube Premium and Amazon Prime Video Mobile Edition (PVME) subscription through MyJio app. After activation, open their respective apps and log in to access premium content. To access JioHotstar, just log in to the JioHotstar app using your Jio number. 3. Do I need to pay anything extra to access the included OTT apps? No. All OTT apps included in your Super Celebration Pack are free to use during your plan’s validity. 4. What benefits do I get under YouTube Premium? YouTube Premium gives

ad-free videos, background play, offline downloads and access to YouTube Music Premium. You also get Smart Downloads, uninterrupted playback and a smoother overall viewing experience. 5. What benefits do I get from the Amazon Prime Video Mobile Edition (PVME)? Prime Video Mobile Edition gives you access to latest movies, shows and Amazon Originals on a single mobile device. No shopping or Prime Music benefits included. 6. What if I already have my own subscription to some OTT apps? Your personal OTT subscriptions will continue

separately. Super Celebration Pack benefits will still get activated even if you already have another subscription. You will not be able to claim subscription for Amazon Prime Video Mobile Edition and YouTube Premium, in case you already have an existing subscription. Alternatively, you can claim these with an alternate ID on which there is no current valid subscription. 7. Can I watch the content on a large TV screen? You can watch content on large screen using your YouTube Premium and JioHotstar subscription. For rest of the OTTs, viewing is limited to mobile screen only. 8. I can’t play premium content on JioTV app, even after buying the Plan. What should I do? 1. Update the JioTV app 2. Check plan status in MyJio ? My Plans For help, call 198 or 1800 889 9999. 9. I cannot see the plan in My Plans. What should I do? Check MyJio ? My Plans again after restarting the MyJio App. If it’s still not visible, contact Jio Customer Care.

## Gold surges Rs 4,000 to fresh lifetime high of Rs 1.37 lakh/10g in Delhi

**New Delhi:** Gold prices surged by Rs 4,000 to touch an all-time high of Rs 1,37,600 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, tracking firm global cues, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,33,600 per 10 grams on Friday. “Gold prices scaled even higher as international spot gold surged towards the USD 4,350 zone, triggering a strong rally in the domestic market,” Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said. He added that the yellow metal reflected the global strength with a sharp gain, touching a fresh lifetime high. Gold prices had earlier appreciated by Rs 3,200 to touch an all-time high of Rs 1,34,800 per 10 grams on October 17. “The move was driven by renewed safe-haven demand and expectations around upcoming US economic data, including non-farm payrolls and the Core PCE Price Index scheduled this



week, focus has firmly shifted to US macro cues, which are expected to keep volatility elevated,” Trivedi added. During the current calendar year, gold prices have surged Rs 58,650, or 74.3 per cent, from Rs 78,950 per 10 grams on December 31, 2024. On the other hand, silver prices remained flat at Rs 1,99,500 (inclusive of all taxes), as per the association. So far in this year, silver prices have skyrocketed by Rs 1,09,800, or 122.41 per cent, compared with Rs 89,700 per kilogram on December 31, 2024. In the international markets, spot gold rallied for the fifth consecutive session,

rising USD 49.83, or 1.16 per cent, to USD 4,350.06 per ounce. Over the past five sessions, the yellow metal has added USD 159.32, or 3.80 per cent, from USD 4,190.74 per ounce recorded on December 8. “Spot gold trading with a positive bias as the Federal Reserve not only cut the rate into elevated inflation, it is also adding liquidity to the system by buying Treasury bills,” Praveen Singh, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said. Meanwhile, spot silver advanced by USD 2, or 3.24 per cent, to USD 63.96 per ounce in the overseas markets.

## BEYOND SCREENS AND SCROLLING: TALKING HEALTH THE HUMAN WAY

**Hyderabad:** In an age dominated by constant screen time, endless scrolling, and an overload of health-related information from digital platforms and social media influencers, finding clear, reliable medical guidance has become increasingly difficult. Addressing this growing concern, STAR Hospitals has launched a unique community-focused healthcare education initiative, “STAR Chai Pe Charcha,” at its Nanakramguda unit, designed to bring people back to meaningful, value-based conversations around health. “STAR Chai Pe Charcha” offers residents an opportunity to step away from digital screens and engage in calm, face-to-face discussions with senior medical specialists in a relaxed, semi-formal setting. The initiative encourages human connection, thoughtful dialogue, and trust, elements often missing in today’s fast-paced digital consumption of health information. Built on a simple yet powerful idea, the program creates a friendly environment where community members



can interact directly with doctors, ask questions freely, clarify myths and facts, and better understand recent medical advancements. STAR Hospitals developed the initiative after listening closely to community feedback, which revealed a strong desire for credible, in-person conversations rather than fragmented online advice. Emphasising the importance of community-level healthcare education, Dr Bharat Kumar Nara said, “Healthcare education at the

community level is no longer optional, it is essential. With so much information available online, people are often overwhelmed and confused. Programs like ‘Chai Pe Charcha’ help communities pause, disconnect from screens, and reconnect through meaningful conversations that build awareness, trust, and confidence in making informed health decisions.” As part of the initiative, representatives from selected residential societies form a dis-

cussion panel and interact with an expert panel from STAR Hospitals Nanakramguda. Senior consultants lead these sessions, answering queries and offering practical, lifestyle-oriented guidance that residents can easily relate to and adopt. During the inaugural session, representatives from Prestige Tranquil, Ms. Harshitha Sankati, Ms. Kavya Maniyam Chandrasekar, Mr. Sanjesh Gupta Vankadaru, and Mr. Narayana Swamy, shared real-

life perspectives, community concerns, and everyday experiences. Their insights made the discussion more relatable, interactive, and impactful for all participants.

### Expert Panel Led by Dr. Bharat Kumar Nara

The panel featured senior doctors from STAR Hospitals, Nanakramguda. Dr. Bharat Kumar Nara, Senior Consultant & Head, Surgical Gastroenterology (Advanced Lap GI Onco Surgery, HPB Surgery & Liver Transplantation) Dr. Abhiram Koganti, Senior Consultant, Gastroenterology & Hepatology, STAR Hospitals, Nanakramguda. Dr. Sarath Chandra Gorantla, Senior Consultant, Medical Gastroenterology. A key highlight of the session was an engaging discussion on the indiscriminate use of antibiotics and the rising challenge of antibiotic resistance, explaining how it can negatively impact gut health and increase vulnerability to infections.



# UKRAINE CEASEFIRE TALKS CONTINUE AS US SAYS 'PROGRESS WAS MADE'

Talks between Ukraine and the US aimed at reaching a peace deal with Russia are continuing in Berlin for a second day. Zelensky and his chief negotiator Rustem Umerov met US envoy Steve Witkoff and Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner for five hours on Sunday, joined by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz. "A lot of progress was made," a US readout said. The same team resumed talks on Monday morning. Ahead of the start of the meeting, Volodymyr Zelensky signalled he would give up ambitions to join Nato in exchange for security guarantees. Recognising that "some partners from the US and Europe" did not support Ukraine's bid for Nato membership, Zelensky said he was instead seeking strong security guarantees modelled on Nato's Article 5 clause of mutual protection. "And this is already a compromise on our part," he said



on Sunday. Witkoff has travelled to Moscow to hold talks with Vladimir Putin on several occasions, but Sunday's meeting at the chancellery in Berlin was the first time he met Zelensky. Nato Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Alexus Grynkeiwich was also present at the talks. Several European leaders as well as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen are

expected to join further talks with the Ukrainian and US delegations on Monday evening. At the core of the discussions in Berlin is the 20-point peace plan proposal presented to the US by Ukraine last week to counter an initial American plan which was seen as heavily favouring Russia. Details haven't been shared, but last week Zelensky said the points should be seen as a

"foundation" on which to build provisions for the reconstruction of Ukraine and security guarantees. For Russia, Kyiv's membership of Nato is a red line, and Moscow has repeatedly demanded that any ambitions for Ukraine to join the alliance are shelved forever. "This issue is one of the cornerstones and requires special discussion," said the Kremlin on Monday. The US

too has repeatedly stated it does not want Ukraine to be part of Nato. But Kyiv fears that a peace deal without watertight security guarantees would fail to detract Russia from attacking again. Before the talks began, Zelensky also addressed the thorny issue of sovereignty over the eastern region of the Donbas, which Russia mostly occupies and which it wants Kyiv to hand over in their entirety. The Ukrainian president said that while he was open to freezing the conflict along the current front line he was not prepared to have his troops withdraw from the percentage of the Donbas they still hold - unless Russian forces did the same in the areas they control. For it to be a fair arrangement Russia would have to withdraw the same distance, Zelensky said. This matter was "extremely sensitive and heated," he added. Any proposal hashed out by the

Ukrainian, American and European side will still have to be presented to Moscow - although Zelensky said that the US delegation "so to speak present the Russian side's perspective, because they relay Russia's signals, demands, steps, and indications of readiness or lack thereof." The Kremlin said it expected the US to provide us with the "concept" discussed on Monday. The talks in Berlin come at a crucial time for Ukraine, which is enduring its fourth winter of war amid sustained power cuts caused by Russia's attacks on its energy facilities. Over the weekend more than a million households in Ukraine were left without electricity following a barrage of strikes. Later this week, EU countries will be voting on a plan to send 90bn (£78.6bn) worth of frozen Russian assets held in a Belgium-based financial institution to prop up Ukraine's economy.

## 'I've grown up in fear': Jewish Australians say rising anti-semitism made attack predictable



Bondi Beach is almost unrecognisable. The sun is out but the surf is empty. The usually heaving main street is hushed. Helicopters track overhead. Forensic investigators - bright blue figures in the distance - comb over the crime scene from Sunday afternoon when two gunmen opened fire at an event marking the Jewish festival of Hannukah, killing at least 15 people and injuring more than 40 others. Beach chairs, crumpled towels, wads of clothing, a pair of children's sandals lie in a neat pile at the edge of the sand - all the things people left behind as they fled what police are calling

Australia's deadliest terror attack. Nearby, a wall of floral tributes has begun to grow over the footpath. Milling around are shocked locals. Hands cover trembling lips. Sunglasses do their best to hide puffy eyes. "I've grown up in fear my whole life," 22-year-old Jess tells the BBC. As a Jew, this felt inevitable, she adds. That is the overriding sentiment here today - this is shocking for such a "safe" country and yet predictable for one that has been grappling with rising anti-semitism. "Our innocence is over, you know?" says Yvonne Harber who was at Bondi on Monday to mourn the previous day's horror.

## Manhunt resumes for Brown University gunman after 'person of interest' released



A manhunt has resumed in connection with a deadly shooting at Brown University in the US, after officials said a "person of interest" would be released from detention. In a press conference on Sunday evening, Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha explained that there was "no basis" to still consider the detained person to be of interest, and that the evidence "now points in a different direction". The investigation is ongoing and authorities are searching for additional video evidence that could help them track down the suspect. Two people were killed and nine others injured after a gunman opened fire on Saturday at the Ivy League university in the city of Providence, the state capital. Also speaking at Sunday evening's press conference, Providence Police Chief Col Oscar Perez said investigators did not think the person detained was the individual shown in CCTV footage of the suspect that was released on the day of the attack. In that footage,

the suspect can be seen walking away from the scene wearing all black clothing. A later post on X from Providence Police confirmed that "the person of interest is being released". The BBC has chosen to stop naming that person. Authorities did not say what had prompted them to detain them in the first place. In his remarks, Col Perez said: "Whether something needs to be ruled out is not a mistake. It's just how investigations work." Earlier on Sunday, FBI director Kash Patel said the person of interest had been detained at a hotel in the town of Coventry in the early hours - based on a lead from Providence Police. At that point, Col Perez had confirmed that officers were not looking for anyone else and were working with prosecutors to collect evidence. Also on Sunday, Providence Mayor Brett Smiley said one of those injured in the incident was in a critical condition, while seven others remained stable and another had been discharged from hospital.

## Balloons from Belarus are causing chaos in Lithuania. Is it smugglers or a hybrid attack?



Whenever the wind blows northwest from Belarus, Lithuania braces for problems. That's when giant white balloons are launched across the border, crates of cheap cigarettes dangling beneath. Over the past 10 weeks, the illicit balloon traffic has already forced Lithuania's main airport into shutdown 15 times, stranding or delaying thousands of travellers. On one occasion the airspace was

closed completely for 11 hours. But the government here is sure it is dealing with something far more hostile than smugglers. It says the balloons have been "weaponised" in an act of hybrid warfare by Belarus, Russia's closest ally. It is happening just as Moscow's own shadow war on Europe is escalating again with a wave of arson and sabotage attacks that officials link to Russian intelligence.

## Bondi hero 'did not hesitate', family tells, as Australian PM says gunmen motivated by extremism

Downing Street says Jewish people in the UK are living in fear. Speaking to reporters on Monday, Keir Starmer's official spokesman says the prime minister has "resolved to stand with Jews in Britain". He adds there will be a "more visible security presence" at Hanukkah events. Meanwhile, Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch tells broadcasters she is "absolutely horrified" by the shooting, adding that "antisemitism is on the rise" and there should be a "robust response". "We need to make sure that we stop this targeting of Jewish people... we've said 'never again' so many times. Let's actually prove it," she adds. I've spoken to Chavi, 27, who was attending the Hanukkah celebration on Bondi Beach on Sunday when the shooting hap-



pened. The high school teacher tells me she dropped to the ground to protect her baby as "bullets were flying above us". "I was very close to a gunman," she says, and remembers hearing "loud, pounding shooting all over the place". "People got murdered around me, just metres away from me. I used my body as a human shield and I was trying to not suffocate the baby, he was screaming

and his face was red. "I kept thinking, if the bullet will come, at least it will come onto me. I was wondering if this was my last day." She tells me that "it went on for so long, we said prayers while lying on the ground. I was totally focused on trying to protect my baby". Chavi says three of her close friends were killed. After the shooting, injured people were lying on the ground around

her. She grabbed two of her friend's children to take them away to safety as they were separated from their parents in the attack. Australia's New South Wales Police confirmed that one of the gunmen at Bondi Beach - the 50-year-old Sajid Akram - owned six registered firearms and held a recreation category A/B gun licence. This is not unusual for the state. Getting a licence in New South Wales simply requires that the person is over 18, is fit, has completed a training and safety course and has provided a "genuine reason" for needing one. The "genuine reasons", external for category A/B licences, which are for recreational shooters, cover a variety of activities like sport shooting, hunting and pest control.

## Hollywood director Rob Reiner and wife Michele found dead in LA home

Legendary Hollywood filmmaker and actor Rob Reiner and his wife Michele have been found dead in their Los Angeles home. Authorities are investigating the incident as an apparent homicide after police and firefighters were called to the couple's house on Sunday afternoon in an upmarket neighbourhood of L.A. Reiner is known for directing classic films in a variety of genres, including When Harry Met Sally, This is Spinal Tap, Stand By Me, Misery and A Few Good Men. A family spokesperson confirmed the couple's death in a statement to US media. Tributes have arrived from major



figures in both Hollywood and politics, as Reiner was also a champion for liberal causes and Democratic politics. "It is with profound sorrow that we announce the tragic passing of Michele and Rob Reiner," the family statement said. "We are heartbroken by this sudden loss, and we ask

for privacy during this unbelievably difficult time." Police said a 78-year-old man and 68-year-old woman were pronounced dead at the home, but officers did not immediately identify the couple or the circumstances surrounding their deaths. Police also said no-one had been arrest-

ed, but that no suspect or person of interest was currently being sought. A spokesperson for the Los Angeles Fire Department told the BBC they received a call at about 15:38 local time (23:38 GMT) for medical aid to a home in Brentwood, a neighbourhood that is home to many celebrities. Robbery homicide detectives from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) also responded to the home and have opened a homicide investigation. In a news conference on Sunday night, the LAPD did not offer any details about the deaths or what they found when they responded.

## PRO-DEMOCRACY HONG KONG TYCOON JIMMY LAI CONVICTED IN HIGH-PROFILE NATIONAL SECURITY TRIAL



Hong Kong pro-democracy campaigner and media tycoon Jimmy Lai has been found guilty of colluding with foreign forces under the city's controversial national security law (NSL). The 78-year-old UK citizen, who has been in jail since December 2020, pleaded not guilty. He faces life in prison and is expected to be sentenced early next year. Lai used his now-defunct Apple Daily newspaper as part of a wider effort to lobby foreign governments to impose sanctions on Hong Kong and China, the court found. Hong Kong chief executive John Lee welcomed the verdict, noting that Lai's actions "damaged the country's interests and the welfare of Hong Kongers". Rights groups called it "a cruel judicial farce". They say the NSL, which Beijing defends as essential for the city's stability, has been used to crush dissent. Delivering the verdict on Monday, Judge Esther Toh said there is "no doubt" that Jimmy Lai "harboured hatred" for the

People's Republic of China (PRC), citing his "constant invitation to the US to help bring down the government of the PRC with the excuse of helping the people of Hong Kong". When Lai testified in November, he denied all the charges against him, saying he had "never" used his foreign contacts to influence foreign policy on Hong Kong. Asked about his meeting with then US Vice President Mike Pence, Lai said he did not ask anything of him: "I would just relay to him what happened in Hong Kong when he asked me." He was also asked about his meeting with then-secretary of state Mike Pompeo, to which he said he had asked Pompeo, "not to do something but to say something, to voice support for Hong Kong". Lai, one of the fiercest critics of the Chinese state, was a key figure in the pro-democracy protests that engulfed Hong Kong in 2019. Beijing responded to the months-long demonstrations, which sometimes erupted into violent clashes with police.

## Chile elects far-right José Antonio Kast as next president

Chile has elected the far-right wing José Antonio Kast to be its next president, after an election campaign that was dominated by themes of security, immigration and crime. Kast beat the governing left-wing coalition candidate Jeanette Jara decisively with more than 58% of the vote in his third attempt at running for president. It marks the biggest shift to the right since the end of Chile's military dictatorship in 1990. Kast has openly praised Chile's former right-wing dictator, Augusto Pinochet. In his first speech to supporters as president-elect, Kast said: "Chile will once again be free from crime, free from anguish, free from fear." "Criminals, delinquents - their lives are going to change. We're going to look for them, find them,

judge them and then we're going to lock them up," he added. At a gathering of his backers in the capital Santiago, many draped in Chilean flags, chanting and taking selfies, there was jubilation as the results came through. "I'm happy we can recover the country's security and patriotism," said Augustina Trancoso, donning a red "Make Chile Great Again" cap. "We've been trying to win an election for years," said Belem Valdivieso. "In Chile, you used to be able to walk the streets peacefully, lately we've experienced problems with insecurity. I'm hoping his promises will be kept and he'll focus on security." Throughout the campaign, Kast portrayed Chile as a country that was descending into chaos and insecurity. He pledged to restore



order and crack down on irregular immigration, as well as implementing sharp spending cuts. Kast is an admirer of Donald Trump, who is likely to become a close ally, and his policies echo those of the US president. He has pledged a border wall on Chile's porous frontier with Peru and Bolivia, maximum-security prisons, and mass deportations of irregular migrants,

many of whom are from Venezuela. Chile is one of the safest and more stable countries in South America, but a rise in immigration and organised crime in recent years has concerned many voters. Kast regularly drew links between the two. His critics, though, say the problem is being exaggerated. One voter in Santiago, Javiera Carrasco, liked some of Kast's policies but

ended up voting for Communist Party member Jara. She said she felt "like a false sense of insecurity is becoming widespread." "In other countries, there are much worse things happening than here. It just doesn't add up for me." Chile's murder rate is now falling, and some studies suggest those born abroad commit fewer crimes on average. But the perception of growing insecurity was the motivation for many of Kast's voters. "We are transforming into Colombia, a lot of terrorism, thieves, robbery, society is very unsafe," one voter Max Struber said. "It may sound harsh to say it, but we need the government to continue Pinochet's work. Human rights abuses existed, that's true. But as a government it was good, we used to have peace and tranquility."

Kast's brother was a minister during Pinochet's dictatorship, and his father was a member of the Nazi party. Pinochet was an army general who led a US-backed military coup in 1973 and established a 17-year-long military dictatorship that was marked by brutal human rights abuses, forced disappearances and free-market economic policies. Chile's current left-wing President Gabriel Boric, who could not run again, had suffered from low approval ratings. Kast's rival Jeanette Jara may have suffered by being seen as a "continuity vote". A supporter at his victory party, Francisco Otero, said neither candidate represented everybody perfectly, but that a continuation of the government was seen as "much worse".



# Smooth end to Messi India tour after Kolkata chaos

Football superstar Lionel Messi has wrapped up his three-day India tour in pollution-choked Delhi, after a chaotic opening in Kolkata. On Monday, thousands of fans gathered in a Delhi stadium to get a glimpse of the Argentina and Inter Miami forward. As Messi, accompanied by Inter Miami teammates Luis Suárez and Rodrigo De Paul, strolled on the pitch - kicking balls into the stands, passing with a group of children and signing autographs - the crowd chanted his name. His flight from Mumbai had been delayed due to fog, local media reported, and his itinerary had to be trimmed. On Saturday angry fans vandalised a Kolkata stadium because they didn't get to see him during his appearance there. Messi had a packed schedule in India, attending a string of promotional events in Kolkata, Hyderabad and Mumbai since arriving in the early hours of Saturday. Before heading to Kolkata's Salt Lake

Stadium later that day, he virtually unveiled a 70ft (21m) statue of himself, assembled over 27 days by a 45-strong crew in the eastern city. The tour, however, got off to a disastrous start after angry fans ripped up seats and threw items towards the pitch at the stadium. Football is hugely popular in West Bengal state - of which Kolkata is the capital - and thousands of adoring supporters had paid up to 12,000 rupees (£100; \$133) to attend the event. However, most of them didn't even get to see him as he was surrounded by officials and celebrities on his brief walk around the stadium and then quickly whisked away as the situation turned hostile. Kolkata's The Telegraph newspaper said in an editorial that "poor management of a hyped-up event, lack of co-ordination" and security lapses turned the stadium into a "battlefield", as fans - denied even a glimpse of Messi - "vented their anger by indulging in violence". The ruckus, which made interna-

tional headlines, cast a shadow over Messi's first visit to India since 2011 for what has been called a 'GOAT [greatest of all time] tour'. The event organiser in Kolkata has been arrested, police said, and a city court has remanded Satadru Dutta to 14 days in police custody. Messi's visits to

Hyderabad and Mumbai passed off smoothly, with fans sharing their delight at seeing the global icon online and in media interviews. Messi also met several politicians and celebrities - Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan in Kolkata (at his hotel before the stadium fiasco).



# Barking out orders: Stokes wants England to 'show a bit of dog'

Ben Stokes has asked his England team to "show a bit of dog" in the crucial third Ashes Test against Australia in Adelaide. England are 2-0 down and must end a 17-match winless run in this country at the Adelaide Oval in order to keep their hopes of regaining the urn alive. Following the defeat in the second Test at the Gabba, Stokes said his dressing room was "no place for weak men".



And the captain admitted his team have had "raw" conversations in the eight days since the loss in Brisbane. Wednesday's Test at the Adelaide Oval (23:30 GMT Tuesday) is a return for Stokes to the ground where he made his Test debut 12 years ago. On that occasion, as a 22-year-old he introduced himself to Ashes cricket by clashing with Australia wicketkeeper Brad Haddin. Asked if on-field fight is an instinct that comes more naturally to him than his team-mates, Stokes responded: "It's a word that I think people

don't really understand what it means. What it means to me could be completely different to someone else. "It's just trying to fight in every situation that you find yourself in and understanding the situation and what you feel is required for your team. Just look at your opposition every single time and show a bit of dog. That's fight to me. "As long as you go out there and everyone is in that mindset around the situation and what is needed, you're giving yourself the best possible chance if you've got a bit of dog in you."

# Shaheen Afridi Punished By Umpires For 'Dangerous Bowling', Pakistan Star's BBL Debut Turns Sour

Nothing seemed to go right for Shaheen Afridi on the day he began his Big Bash League career. He was taken out of the attack for dangerous bowling during Brisbane Heat's clash with the Melbourne Renegades at Simonds Stadium on Tuesday. In the 18th over of the first innings, the Pakistani fast bowler's night fell apart when he bowled two waist-high full tosses - one to Tim Seifert and another to Ollie Peake. The umpires deemed the deliveries dangerous, forcing Afridi to stop bowling and leaving Heat captain Nathan McCusweeney to complete the final two balls of the over. Afridi could only smile wryly as he



walked off, and his debut spell ended prematurely with figures of 0 for 43 from 2.4 overs. The over proved costly, yielding 15 runs and including three no-balls, adding to an already difficult outing that also featured two wides. The left-arm bowler had arrived in the BBL amid great antici-

pation, with fellow Pakistan international Mohammad Rizwan also making his tournament debut for the Renegades. Afridi showed early promise, starting with three consecutive dot balls in his second over, but struggled to regain control thereafter. After being held

back, he was reintroduced in the 13th over during the Renegades' Power Surge, only to concede 19 runs. His final over compounded the damage, sealing a challenging start to his league debut, as he finished with a poor economy rate of 16.10. The Melbourne Renegades capitalised on the Heat's bowling troubles to post an imposing 212 for 5. Tim Seifert anchored the innings with a commanding 102 from 56 balls, while Ollie Peake provided late impetus with a rapid 57 off 29 balls. Rizwan, however, failed to make an impact, scoring just four runs from ten balls before being dismissed by left-arm spinner Paddy Dooley.

# "We Are Clear About Our Targets:" Delhi Capitals CEO Ahead Of IPL 2026 Auction

As the JSW and GMR co-owned Delhi Capitals gear up for the IPL 2026 Auction, CEO Sunil Gupta shared insights into the franchise's approach for the upcoming auction, key retentions, and the recent trade that brings Nitish Rana into the Capitals' fold. Speaking about the core of the squad, Gupta said, "We have retained a solid group of players from last season. While we narrowly missed out on qualifying for the playoffs, it was a campaign filled with important learnings. We take those lessons forward and go again with a strong set of players, fully focused on achieving our objectives." Ahead of the auction, Delhi Capitals completed a trade with Rajasthan Royals, bringing



in Nitish Rana in exchange for Donovan Ferreira. The experienced left-hander will don the Delhi Capitals jersey in the upcoming season. Elaborating on the move, Gupta added, "Nitish is a seasoned IPL campaigner and a valuable addition to

our squad. His familiarity with home conditions, being a local boy, along with the crucial roles he has played for his previous franchises, makes him a natural fit for our setup. We are absolutely delighted to welcome him to the Delhi Capitals family.

Our boy is truly home." Delhi Capitals head into the auction with a remaining purse of ₹21.80 crore and eight slots to fill, including five overseas positions. Speaking on the eve of the auction, Gupta said, "We have arrived in Abu Dhabi, and our preparations for the auction have been underway for quite some time. Our scouting team has done an excellent job, and we are clear about our targets as we look to complete the remaining requirements of the squad." "While we will be aggressive where needed, auctions are dynamic, and flexibility is key. We're looking forward to the auctions in Abu Dhabi," he concluded. About DELHI CAPITALS The Delhi Capitals team participates in both.

# ENGLAND OVERLOOK BASHIR FOR CRUCIAL ASHES TEST



England have overlooked spinner Shoaib Bashir for the crucial third Ashes Test against Australia in Adelaide. The tourists, who need to win to keep alive hopes of regaining the urn, have made one change from the team beaten in the second Test in Brisbane. As expected, Josh Tongue replaces fellow pace bowler Gus Atkinson. It is the omission of 22-year-old Bashir that is most striking for a Test where spin is likely to play an important role. England have instead retained all-rounder Will Jacks after he played his first Test in three years in Brisbane. It is a huge decision by England captain Ben Stokes and head coach Brendon McCullum for a Test where jobs and reputations could be on the line. It calls into question the entire experiment involving Bashir, whom England have asked to learn on the job in Test cricket over the past two years. Bashir's absence from the first two Tests in

Australia has been explained by the conditions. Australia off-spinner Nathan Lyon bowled only two overs in the first Test and then was left out of the second. But Lyon will return on Wednesday (23:30 GMT Tuesday) on a ground where no other bowler has taken more than his 63 Test wickets, with legendary Australia leg-spinner Shane Warne just behind on 56. The importance of spin will likely be accentuated by the extreme temperatures forecast in Adelaide - as high as 39C for Thursday's second day. England have previously backed Bashir as their frontline spinner, despite him not being the first-choice slow bowler for his county Somerset. Bashir's deal at Taunton expired at the end of the season and he is yet to sign a new one. Stokes and McCullum felt Bashir had the attributes to succeed in Australia, mainly a high release point and the ability to extract bounce from the surface.

# Vaibhav Suryavanshi Issued Bold Warning Ahead Of U-19 Asia Cup Clash By Malaysia Captain: "Trap Him"

India's U-19 cricket sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi is once again in the spotlight as India prepare to face Malaysia in their final group-stage match of the ACC U-19 Asia Cup 2025 in the UAE. The 14-year-old left-hander, who exploded with a massive 171 off 95 balls against the UAE earlier in the tournament and has been a key figure for India, now faces an open challenge from the Malaysian side. Malaysia's captain has confidently declared that his bowlers will try to "trap" Suryavanshi rather than let him dominate on the pitch, adding a fresh twist to this intriguing junior international encounter. Suryavanshi's remarkable form has been one of the standout stories of the tournament. In India's emphatic 234-run win over the UAE,



the teen batter torched the opposition with 14 sixes and nine fours, anchoring a commanding total for the side. His destructive innings not only put India in control but also underlined his huge potential in youth cricket. However, after that heroic performance, Suryavanshi had a quiet outing in India's high-voltage match against

Pakistan, departing cheaply for just five runs, a rare low moment in an otherwise sparkling campaign. Following these contrasting displays, Malaysia's captain Deez Patro made it clear that his team has a specific plan to counter India's young star. "Vaibhav Suryavanshi is a rising star, but we have planned strategies to trap

him using our best bowlers. We're really excited to play against India, and our bowlers will have to perform at their best while setting fields to contain him," Malaysia captain Patro told TimesofIndia.com India, led by skipper Ayush Mhatre, have been dominant so far in the tournament, brushing aside key opponents and securing their spot in the semifinals with confident performances. "This year, I captained Malaysia Under-16 and now lead the Under-19 team. I couldn't have done this without my parents. My mom has been taking me to training every day for the past 10 years," Deez said. But Malaysia, buoyed by Patro's statement, insists it won't be intimidated and seeks to exploit any weaknesses in the Indian batting lineup.

# Shaheen Afridi, Mohammad Rizwan Engage In Hilarious War Of Words: "Will Not Allow Him"

Pakistan cricketers Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi got into a hilarious war of words ahead of the Big Bash League (BBL) match between Melbourne Renegades and Brisbane Heat. The teammates were on opposing teams, as Rizwan represented the Renegades while Shaheen was a part of Brisbane Heat. Ahead of the match, the host told Afridi that Rizwan warned him that he would hit him out of the park. Shaheen was quick to come up with his response, as he responded: "I will not allow him to do that." It has to be pointed out that both cricketers share a good



bond with each other. Earlier, Pakistan's ODI captain Shaheen Shah

Afridi claimed that he only accepted the captaincy after his predecessor

Mohammad Rizwan said he would step down.

"I took this responsibility from the Pakistan Cricket Board after discussing the matter with Rizwan," Shaheen told the media on Monday.

"Rizwan was the only person I had a discussion with, and I asked him how he felt about me accepting the captaincy.

"Rizwan decided himself he would make way for me and that is how things worked out," said Shaheen, who was also appointed national T20 skipper in 2023 but was dismissed

# Axar Patel Ruled Out Of Last Two T20Is Against South Africa Due To Illness: BCCI



Team India allrounder, Axar Patel has been ruled out of the remaining two T20Is against South Africa due to illness. However, he is with the team in Lucknow where he will be further medically assessed. The Men's Selection Committee has named Shabbaz Ahmed as his replacement for the T20Is in Lucknow and Ahmedabad.

India's updated squad for last two T20Is: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Shubman Gill (VC), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Jitesh Sharma (WK), Sanju Samson (WK), Jasprit Bumrah, Varun Chakravarthy, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Washington Sundar, Shabbaz Ahmed



## “Dekhlenge Saala” song from ‘Ustaad Bhagat Singh’ Creates History

Breaking records with over 29.6 million views in just 24 hours! The Dekhlenge Saala song from Ustaad Bhagat Singh has created history, breaking records with over 29.6 million views in just 24 hours! The song has become an instant hit, going viral on social media and captivating audiences worldwide. DSP's catchy composition and the team's hard work have paid off, earning widespread acclaim. Dinesh Master's choreography, tailored perfectly for Pawan Kalyan, has received huge applause. Bhaskarabhatla's motivational and commercial blend of lyrics has proved to be a massive success. The efforts of Cult Captain Harish Shankar have resulted in a visual treat for fans, convincing Pawan Kalyan to dance and delivering a massive feast. The song's success is also attributed to the tireless efforts of Art Director Anand Sai, Costume Designer Neeta Lulla, and Cinematographer Ravi Varman, who have collectively created a vibrant and visually stunning



experience. The team behind Dekhlenge Saala has truly delivered an unforgettable experience, and we congratulate them on this phenomenal suc-

cess! Sung by Vishal Dadlani, Haripriya Lyrics Baskarabhatla Music by Rockstar Devi Sri Prasad Choreography by Dinesh Master

## GRAND LAUNCH OF “AMMA..... NAAKU AA ABBAYI KAAVALI!!”



Another woman producer is making her debut in the Telugu film industry. G. Shailaja Reddy, a well-known woman entrepreneur, is producing the prestigious film “Ammamma... Naaku Aa Abbayi Kaavali!!”, directed by senior filmmaker Sivala Prabhakar. The film is being made under the banner GSR Movie Makers with a grand star cast. Sreelakshmi Sailaja is Presenting this movie!! Young talent Pawan Mahaveer is being introduced as the hero through this film, while Suhana and Meghashree play the female leads. Senior actors Suman and Rao Ramesh will be seen in crucial roles. The film's launch ceremony was held in a grand man-

ner at Saradhi Studios, Hyderabad. Renowned writer V. Vijayendra Prasad gave the clap for the muhurat shot filmed on the lead pair. K. L. Damodar Prasad, President of the Producers Council, and Veera Shankar, President of the Directors Association, formally directed the shot. Senior IPS officer Ghattamaneni Srinivas switched on the camera. Prominent director Relangi Narasimha Rao, noted producers Thummala Rama Satyanarayana and Shobharani, famous writer J.K. Bharavi, along with several other film personalities, attended the event and congratulated the team.

## "Mysterious" Movie, a Brand New Suspense Thriller, is Captivating the Audience - Producer Jay Vallamdas

The film "Mysterious" stars Rohit as the hero and Abid Bhushan in the role of a police officer. With Riya Kapoor and Meghana Rajputh in the cast, the movie is directed by Mahi Komati Reddy and produced by Jay Vallamdas under the banner Ashli Creations. The film is all set for a grand worldwide theatrical release on the 19th of this month. On this occasion, producer Jay Vallandas shared the highlights of the movie in an interview held today.

**PRODUCER JAY VALLAMDAS SPEAKS:**  
We are happy to see the response to the promotional content of our movie, "Missterious." I live in the US and came to Tollywood with an interest in the film industry. I produced "Missterious" with the resolve to make my friend, Mahi Komati Reddy, a director. I immediately liked the story Mahi narrated. I am satisfied with the first attempt of producing a good suspense thriller with a strong storyline. We are receiving a good response for the film's title. Our film

was originally scheduled for release on the 12th of this month. However, due to the release of Akhanda 2, we are bringing it to the audience a week later, on the 19th of this month. We are releasing it grandly in over 150 theatres.

With an innovative screenplay and suspense elements, the film runs its course, giving the audience a new experience from start to finish. Our movie also received appreciation from the Censor Board. They commented that we made a different film and issued a U/A certificate. We did not compromise anywhere in the making of the film. Every character in the

appears suspicious. Our director, Mahi Komati Reddy, concluded this suspense mystery in a captivating way at the end.



## Patang Trailer Launched: Deva Katta Praises Its Blockbuster Potential

The vibrant sports comedy is all set to release in theatres on December 25th, 2025. Successful producer Suresh Babu is presenting the film under the Suresh Productions banner after being impressed with the way the film has shaped up. After impressing everyone with the teaser, chartbuster songs and solid promotional content, Starring Preethi Pagadala, Vamshi Pujit, and Pranav Kaushik in lead roles, alongside Anu Hassan, S.P. Charan, Vadlamani Srinivas, Vishnu Oi, and Sivanarayana, the film also teases a few exciting cameo appearances from Gautham Vasudev Menon, SS Kanchi and Naveen. Directed by Praneeth Prattipati under the banners of Cinematic Elements, Rishaan Cinemas and Monsoon Tales, jointly produced by Vijay Shekhar, Sampath Maka, Suresh

Kothinti, and Naani Bandreddi in association with Ramya Vemulapati. The trailer of Patang was launched at a major event held in Hyderabad by acclaimed director Deva Katta. Speaking on the occasion, Deva Katta said, "The trailer feels very energetic and entertaining. I'm happy that Ramya is one of the producers of this film. I know the film's hero Pranav from Sa Re Ga Ma Pa. This is a unique film, made with a lot of effort. I felt super thrilled just watching the trailer. It has all the elements needed for a superhit and a blockbuster. Patang features all the ingredients that appeal to the youth — friendship, love, and great musical energy. All the artists appear with immense energy. I believe this film will definitely entertain audiences in theatres." He further added, "I share a



unique connection with producer Nani Bandreddy. During the making of Autonagar Surya, when the hero was still unknown, I released a voice teaser which received a great response. Nani had edited that teaser with a voiceover by Pawan Kalyan. When Pawan Kalyan saw it, he called me and asked if I had written that story for him. Without my knowledge, I had this bond with Nani.

Today, I am happy to be a guest at the launch of a film produced by him. The film shows signs of being a hit. I hope this movie brings a good name to everyone involved." Co-producer Ramya Vemulapati said, "Everyone has nostalgic memories of kite flying competitions since childhood. This film will definitely provide a new experience for audiences. It offers a realistic cinematic feel." Actor

Vamshi Poojith stated, "I just watched the trailer. It felt mind-blowing. The kite competition scenes are done wonderfully in VFX. The final 30-minute kite competition episode will be excellent. Our team's talent will be evident on December 25. My character in the film is named 'Whisky'. I'm a true Hyderabad and play a great mass role. Everyone will love my character. Whisky is very special. We believe this is the best film being delivered this year. This is a film that will make Telugu cinema feel proud. It's special that the film is releasing on my birthday." Actor Pranav Kaushik said, "This is my first film, and almost all of our cast are debutants. Making such a film requires a lot of guts and courage, which our producers have. The film has been made at par with big-budget films. In terms of content, it is a

large-scale film. I'm happy that they believed in me and gave me this opportunity. The VFX kite competition shots have been crafted with great effort. On December 25, I hope to deliver a hit to my parents who have supported me in every way." Actor Vadlamani Srinivas said, "This is my 100th film. I worked with this youthful team and experienced a new kind of energy. Nani Bandreddy gave his everything for this film. He is unstoppable. Just like a tiny drop grows into a stream, and that stream into a river, I wish this film, which began as a small drop, becomes a grand ocean of success. I hope it earns hundreds of crores as it releases at the end of this year." The event was also attended by Rahul Mopidevi, CEO Adinarayana, Nani Bandreddy, producer Sampath Mak, and others.

## Dhandoraa Will Leave Audiences with a Powerful, Uplifting Experience” – Director MuraliKanth

After backing distinctive films such as Colour Photo and the blockbuster Bedurulanka 2012, Loukya Entertainments head Ravindra Banerjee Muppaneni returns with his latest production Dhandoraa. Directed by MuraliKanth, the film features Shivaji in a central role, alongside Navdeep, Nandu, Ravi Krishna, Manika Chikkala, Mounika Reddy, Bindu Madhavi, Radhya, and Aditi Bhavaraju, among others. Slated for a grand theatrical release on December 25, Dhandoraa is a rooted rural drama set in a Telangana village, exploring the social, emotional, and political tensions that surface around a death, not after but before cremation. Drawing from lived experiences, real incidents, and strong literary influences, the film reflects on caste, dignity, and power structures that continue to exist even in death. As part of the film's promotions, director Murali Kanth interacted with the media and spoke at length about the journey, intent, and ideas that shaped Dhandoraa.

**Q. What is the motivation behind this idea? What moti-**



**vated you to tell this story?**

A. I am from Medak, and cinema has always been something I wanted to pursue seriously. I was working with TCS in the US, but that life never truly excited me. Professionally it was stable, but personally I felt empty. Even while I was there, cinema kept pulling at me constantly. It was always at the back of my mind, nudging me. That's when I decided to take things seriously. I attended several filmmaking workshops, spent time understanding the craft, and once I gained confidence, I took the risk. I resigned from my job and came back to India. After returning, I began developing this story properly. I already had a core idea in mind. I find love stories particularly

difficult to narrate. Capturing those emotions honestly on screen is not easy for me. Instead of choosing something high-octane or purely thrilling, I decided to go with rooted, lived-in concepts. The literature I read had a huge influence on me. Writers like Kesava Reddy garu, Yandamoori Veerendranath, and K. Bala Gopal introduced me to worlds I would never have known if not through their writing. That exposure made me think why not return to my Telangana roots and tell a story about a world that many people don't even realise exists. That thought became the high point for me. From there, I decided to focus on the cremation process in rural areas, and the drama, politics, and conflicts that surround it.

**Q. Since you are from the US, what research did you do about this rooted culture apart from reading books?**  
A. The incidents shown in this film are not historical or imaginary. They are things that still happen in villages today. I have personally encountered them. In our village, we have a cricket ground where we also used to dry paddy.

## PRODUCER RAJ KANDUKURI WISHES SUCCESS TO ‘JINN’, RELEASING ON DECEMBER 19

Produced by Nikhil M. Gowda under the banners of Sadalamma Film Productions and Bilva Studios, 'Jinn' is directed by Chinmay Ram. The film features Amit Rao, Parvez Simba, Prakash Tuminad, Ravi Bhat, and Sangeetha in key roles. The movie is set for a grand release on December 19. Ahead of its release, a trailer launch event was held on Monday, which was attended by chief guests Raj Kandukuri, Veerabhadra Chowdary, and Sohel.

The trailer raises intriguing questions such as: What is the mystery behind the haunted lake? What is the secret hidden inside the college? It depicts four youngsters trapped by spirits, unable to escape from a college building, with the entry of a Jinn adding to the suspense. The makers managed to scare the audience right from the trailer itself. The visuals and background score are highly engaging and captivating.

**AFTER THE TRAILER LAUNCHED, THE SPEAKERS SHARED THEIR THOUGHTS:**

**Raj Kandukuri said:**  
"Jinn" is a very interesting



title. There are two kinds of Jinn — good Jinn and bad Jinn. I feel horror films carry comparatively less risk. If fear is presented effectively, audiences always support horror films. Cinema has no language barriers — there are only good films and bad films. I wish 'Jinn' becomes a big success. Everyone should watch this film releasing on December 19."

**Veerabhadram Chowdary said:**  
"I really liked the trailer of 'Jinn'. Horror films are tasting success these days.

Director Chinmay Ram has made this film very well. 'Jinn' will surely achieve good success. Don't miss it on December 19."

**Sohel said:**  
"Telugu audiences encourage films from all languages and technicians from all regions. I really liked the trailer of 'Jinn'. The tagline 'Spooky World' is impressive. There is a good Jinn and a bad Jinn — and the trailer seems to focus on the bad Jinn. I wish the director and producer great success. Everyone should watch the film on December 19."

The excitement is officially in the air! Following the fantastic and unanimous response to the released teaser, Team FUNKY is thrilled to announce that the film will hit theatres on February 13th, perfectly timed to light up the Valentine's weekend with unlimited fun and laughter. The makers have officially prepped the release from its earlier planned April 2026 date, bringing the celebration to audiences much sooner. FUNKY brings together a power-packed combination known for laughs, chaos, and pure entertainment. Director KV Anudeep returns to his trademark comic universe, ready to unleash a bigger, louder, and crazier ride. After creating waves with Jathi Ratnalu, he is once again set to thrill audiences with his quirky storytelling and infectious humour. Vishwak Sen appears in a refreshingly unique avatar as a director within the film, sporting a striking new look and attitude. From the teaser itself, his charm and madness promise a performance packed with high-energy fun and flair.

Making a striking Telugu entry, Kayadu Lohar brings vibrance and freshness to the screen. Her pairing with Vishwak feels youthful, energetic, and instantly engaging a chemistry that stands out. Elevating the film's vibe is music director Bheems Ceciroleo, whose foot-tapping songs and powerful background score already hint at a lively and catchy album, adding rhythm and colour to every frame. Editing is handled by the national award winning, Navin Nooli. Produced by S Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya, FUNKY is backed by the prestigious banners Sithara Entertainments, Fortune Four Cinemas, and Srikara Studios. Known for their rich, stylish, and high-quality production values, these banners assure a grand and wholesome theatrical experience. Whenever these powerhouses come together, expectations naturally soar, and FUNKY already stands tall as a testament to their blockbuster vision. This February 13th, celebrate Valentine's weekend with a full-on FUNKY blast in theatres.