

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

09-01-2026

Total pilgrims: 67,678

Tonsures: 18,173

Hundi kanakalu: 3.82 CR

Waiting Compartments... 07

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens).. 08 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889



NATION | NEWS

PM Modi expresses excitement over address at Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue on Jan 12



WORLD | NEWS

Will US ever order Putin's capture like Maduro? Trump's 'very disappointed' reply

SPORTS | NEWS

Whatever is written in my destiny, no one can take that from me: Shubman Gill



INBRIF

India, EU reaffirm strong political resolve to address pending issues towards free trade pact

New Delhi: India and the European Union (EU) have reaffirmed the strong political resolve on either side to address pending issues through constructive engagement towards a mutually-beneficial free trade agreement (FTA), an official statement said on Saturday. During the latest ministerial-level discussions, both sides emphasised the strategic importance of concluding a fair, balanced, and ambitious agreement that aligns with their shared values, economic priorities, and commitment to a rules-based trading framework, said Ministry of Commerce and Industry in a statement. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal concluded a significant two-day visit to Brussels, marking a decisive step forward in the India-EU FTA negotiations.

Rapido driver held for sexually harassing woman software professional

Bengaluru, Jan 10 : A Rapido bike taxi rider was arrested on Saturday on the charges of harassing a woman software professional in Bengaluru. The 29-year-old woman, who works with a software company as manager, had booked a Rapido bike taxi to commute from her residence to Manayata Tech Park on Wednesday. During the journey, the rider, identified as Vivek, allegedly misbehaved with her. When the woman objected to his behaviour, the accused touched her inappropriately. When the woman questioned his actions, the accused allegedly abused her verbally and shouted at her. The woman raised an alarm and immediately alerted the local traffic police, who in turn informed Hoysala patrolling squad. The victim later lodged a written complaint with the police. The police have arrested the accused at his residence and launched an investigation. The police stated that the accused confessed to the crime and told investigators that he had touched her inappropriately.

CM Calls for Preventive Cardiac Care at Fellows India Conference in Hyderabad

Hyderabad (TSIT) The Chief Minister expressed happiness over the Fellows India Conference being held in Hyderabad and said the city is rapidly emerging as a major hub for life sciences, pharmaceuticals and healthcare innovation. Addressing the conference, which saw participation of over 500 cardiologists from across India and neighbouring South-East Asian countries, the Chief Minister welcomed the delegates and lauded their commitment to continuous learning even after achieving professional success. Stating that constant learning is the key to sustained success, the Chief Minister said doctors hold a special place in society as people entrust their lives to their care. He urged cardiologists to always remember their responsibility towards humanity. Chief Minister reiterated that healthcare is a top



priority for the Telangana government and said the government is open to working closely with medical professionals to improve healthcare poli-

cies in the larger public interest. He invited doctors to share suggestions and feedback. Highlighting rapid advancements in technol-

ogy, artificial intelligence and quantum computing, he called upon doctors to stay updated with new technologies while maintaining a strong human touch in patient care. Expressing concern over rising deaths due to heart diseases, the Chief Minister called for a collective mission to prevent cardiac ailments and save lives. He suggested that initiatives such as doctors volunteering to teach CPR techniques to school students could significantly improve survival outcomes. Emphasising the importance of preventive medicine and public awareness, the Chief Minister urged doctors to work towards improving the overall quality of healthcare and strive to make India's healthcare system among the best in the world. Concluding his address, the Chief Minister said, "Keep learning, keep serving, keep rising."

SIR used to exclude voters, not correct rolls: Mamata



Kolkata (TSIT) West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday wrote to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, alleging that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been turned into an exercise to exclude voters rather than correct records. In her letter, Banerjee accused the Election Commission of political

bias and high-handedness during the exercise. "The hearing process has become largely mechanical, driven purely by technical data and completely devoid of the application of mind, sensitivity and human touch," she said in the three-page letter. She said the exercise's aim seemed "neither of correction nor of inclusion... but solely of deletion and of exclusion".

Banerjee accuses the Election Commission of political bias & high-handedness during the exercise

Banerjee claimed minor spelling or age discrepancies were leading to coercive hearings, harassment and loss of wages for ordinary people. She also highlighted the plight of women who changed surnames after marriage, stating that they were being summoned to prove their identity, which she called a grave insult. She also raised concerns over the selective targeting of "logical discrepancies" in certain constituencies, the use of a different portal in West Bengal, and backend changes causing confusion among officials.

BENGAL SIR ECI reviews claims over I-PAC staff roles

Kolkata, Jan 10 : Amid the controversies of the Enforcement Directorate (ED)'s raid and search operations at the office of the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) and the residence of the entity's co-founder Pratik Jain on Thursday, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has decided to conduct a review of the complaints received about I-PAC staff allegedly being appointed as data-entry operators in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in West Bengal after being shown as contractual state government employees. Insiders from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), West Bengal, said that the commission had decided to conduct a random re-checking of the backgrounds of the contractual state government employees being appointed as data-entry operators in the current revision exercise. The Commission, CEO's



office insiders said, is especially stressing the re-checking of the police verification reports that needed to be done mandatorily for these contractual state government employees before appointing them as the data-entry operators in the revision exercise as per the ECI guidelines. The Commission had taken the complaints of the I-PAC staff being appointed as data-entry operators seriously, considering the crucial nature of the clerical work done by them in the revision exercise. The main task of the data-entry operators is to make manual entry of the details of the enumeration forms of the voters collected by the Booth-

Level Officers (BLOs) and submitted to the Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and the Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) concerned. Hence, erroneous entries, inadvertent or willful, made at this stage could impact the final decision on the fate of voters in retaining their names in the final voters' list. Already after the enumeration stage, which was the first stage of the three-stage SIR exercise, there had been instances of wrong entries causing inconvenience for a certain section of voters. Hence, the CEO's office insiders said, the Commission is taking the demand of re-checking the backgrounds of the contractual state government employees appointed as data-entry operators quite seriously. The draft voters' list in West Bengal was published on December 16 last year.

Beaten and humiliated, another Hindu youth dies in Bangladesh

As violence against minorities continues to mount across Bangladesh, another Hindu man died after consuming poison over a debt of 500 Bangladeshi Taka in Dirai upazila of Sunamganj district, local media reported.

Dhaka, Jan 10 : As violence against minorities continues to mount across Bangladesh, another Hindu man died after consuming poison over a debt of 500 Bangladeshi Taka in Dirai upazila of Sunamganj district, local media reported. The victim, identified as 19-year-old Joy Mohapatra, died on Friday morning while undergoing treatment at M A G Osmani Medical College Hospital in Sylhet. Citing the deceased's cousin, Ayan Das, Bangladeshi Bengali media outlet Sylhet View 24 reported that Joy had purchased a mobile phone for 5,500 Taka from grocery shopkeeper Amirul Islam. He paid 2,000 Taka in cash and agreed to pay the balance in weekly installments of 500 Taka. Although he made the payments regularly, the final installment was delayed. It is alleged that Joy went to Amirul Islam's shop Thursday to pay the installment but was beaten up, humiliated and had his



mobile phone seized. Ayan said that Joy admitted to consuming poison on Thursday evening. He was rushed to the Dirai Upazila Health Complex, and when his condition deteriorated, the on-duty doctor referred him to Sylhet. Moni Rani Talukder, resident Medical Officer of Dirai Upazila Health Complex, said, "I was on duty at the time. As the patient's condition was critical, he was immediately referred to Sylhet." Recalling the tragic incident, Joy's mother, Shelly Mohapatra, was quoted as saying by Sylhet View 24, "When they asked for money from him in the morning and did not get it, they took my son's mobile phone away. Later, when he

asked for the SIM, they asked him to come in the evening. When he went in the evening, they slapped my son. My son consumed poison at that shop." Confirming the incident, Enamul Haque Chowdhury, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Dirai Police Station, was quoted as saying by Sylhet View 24: "We have received information and inspected the scene. Legal action will be taken if we receive a complaint." This marks the eighth incident in 22 days and the fourth incident this week, highlighting a disturbing surge in violence targeting Hindu communities throughout Bangladesh. Earlier on Tuesday, another Hindu man, 25-year-old Mithun Sarkar, died after jumping into a canal in a bid to save his life from a mob that accused him of robbery in Mohadevpur upazila of Naogaon district, Bangladesh's Bengali newspaper Daily Manobkantha reported.

Telangana issues 'stop use' notice for Almont-Kid Syrup after CDSCO alert

HYDERABAD (TSIT): The Telangana Drugs Control Administration on Saturday issued an urgent advisory to immediately stop the use of Almont-Kid Syrup, commonly



prescribed to treat allergies, hay fever, and asthma in children, as it was allegedly found adulterated with Ethylene Glycol (EG), a highly toxic substance. A notification of the DCA said it received an alert from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), East Zone, Kolkata, regarding a laboratory report that has declared the syrup (Levocetirizine Dihydrochloride and Montelukast Sodium Syrup) as adulterated. "In light of the above, the public is hereby strongly advised to immediately stop the use of the above syrup, if in possession, and report the same to the nearest Drugs Control Authority without delay," the DCA said.

CM Stalin eyes 200+ seats, lauds cadre's poll work

CHENNAI: Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin, on Saturday, expressed confidence of winning more than 200 seats in the Assembly polls, underscoring the impact of fieldwork carried out by party cadres ahead of the crucial election. "We will return to the House with 200-plus MLAs," Stalin said, participating in Pongal celebrations at Perambur in Chennai. He added that the achievements of



Dravidian model schemes, implemented since 2021, are self-explanatory. It is you, the people, who should explain these schemes to others. Appreciating the DMK cadres for their election-related work, Stalin said

nearly 50 per cent of the preparatory work has already been completed, while the remaining work is in progress. "All political parties, including our ideological opponent, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) envies our preparatory work. Earlier, based on the cadres' work, I had predicted that the DMK could win around 200 seats. Now, after evaluating their efforts, I am confident that the party will win more than 200 seats," he said.

Incredible opportunities ahead for India & US: Sergio Gor

NEW DELHI: US ambassador-designate Sergio Gor, known to be a key member of President Donald Trump's inner circle, has arrived in New Delhi amid an unprecedented estrangement in ties between the two countries. Gor, 38, was sworn in as the US envoy to India in mid-November. "Great to be back in India! Incredible opportunities ahead for our two nations!" he said on social media after landing in the national capital on Friday night. His arrival in India came as a fresh row erupted between the two sides following US Commerce



Secretary Howard Lutnick's claim that the proposed trade deal between the two countries couldn't be sealed last year as Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not make a telephone call to President Donald Trump. New Delhi on Friday

rejected the claim and described Lutnick's remarks as "inaccurate". Gor was serving as the White House personnel director when President Trump named him in August to be the next US envoy to New Delhi. The India-US ties have been

reeling under severe stress after Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a whopping 50 per cent, including a 25 per cent additional duty for India's purchase of Russian crude oil. Apart from tariff, the relations witnessed a downturn on a number of other issues, including Trump's claim of ending the India-Pakistan conflict in May last year and Washington's new immigration policy. The US Senate confirmed Gor in October to serve as the US' next ambassador to India. "I'm trusting Sergio to help strengthen one of our

country's most important international relationships and that's the strategic partnership with India," Trump had said after Gor's oath ceremony. Gor had described his new role as "an honour of a lifetime" and said he looks forward to "enhancing" the relationship between the US and India. He played a major role in the political action committee (PAC) of Trump's campaign in the run-up to the 2024 presidential election, and his influence increased manifold after he was tasked with vetting political appointees in the new administration.

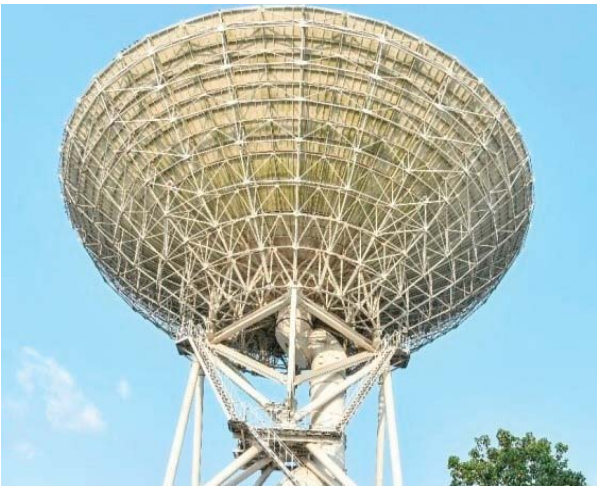
800 students from Northeast visit ISRO to boost space science awareness

Shillong, Jan 10 : To promote awareness of space science and technology among students from India's Northeastern region, around 800 meritorious science students from all eight states visited the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), with 100 students representing each state, officials said on Friday.

An official of the North Eastern Council (NEC) said that the initiative of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), the North East Students Programme for Awareness, Reach, and Knowledge on Space (NE-SPARKS) is a flagship initiative designed to promote space science and technology awareness among students in the Northeastern region.

This transformative programme provides selected students with direct exposure to India's space research achievements through guided visits to ISRO centres in Bengaluru, effectively bridging geographical and informational gaps that have historically limited access to such opportunities.

Union Home Minister and President of the Shillong-based North



Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) Society, Amit Shah, during the 12th meeting of the NESAC Society held on December 21, 2024, advised to organise a visit for 800 talented science students from the all eight states of the North Eastern Region to ISRO covering 100 students from each state. This directive underscored the Union government's commitment to inclusive development and educational empowerment in the region. The initiative represents a collaborative effort involving the Ministry of DoNER, the NEC, the ISRO, the NESAC, and the state governments of the

Northeastern states.

The programme is jointly coordinated by NESAC and ISRO's Capacity Building Programme Office (CBPO), with active support and participation from respective state governments ensuring effective implementation at the grassroots level.

The official said that with a total sanctioned cost of Rs 3.33 crore, the programme follows a 60:40 funding ratio, where the NEC contributes Rs 2.3 crore and the state governments collectively contribute Rs 1.53 crore. This financial arrangement reflects the shared responsibility and commitment of both Central and state authorities toward nurtur-

ing scientific talent in the region. The NE-SPARKS is executed in eight batches between April 2025 and December 2025, with a minimum interval of one month between consecutive batches.

According to the official, each batch comprises 90-100 students representing the eight NER states, accompanied by 10 coordinators who facilitated and guided the educational journey. Through meaningful interactions with ISRO scientists and engineers and direct exposure to advanced space technologies, NE-SPARKS inspires young minds and promotes STEM education among Northeastern students, he added.

The programme empowers participants to envision and pursue careers in space science and technology, thereby contributing to India's broader vision of achieving global leadership in the space sector.

By investing in the region's youth and providing them with world-class exposure to cutting-edge space research, NE-SPARKS serves as a catalyst for scientific aspiration and technological advancement in India's Northeastern region, the official said.



Six injured as small plane crash lands in Odisha

Bhubaneswar : At least six people, including four passengers and two crew members, sustained injuries on Saturday after a nine-seater aircraft made an emergency crash landing in a field approximately 10 km from the Rourkela airstrip in Odisha, officials confirmed.

The IndiaOne Air aircraft, a Cessna 208 Grand Caravan EX (Registration VT-KSS), was operating a regular regional connectivity flight from Rourkela

to Bhubaneswar when it encountered a critical technical malfunction moments before landing.

Local authorities confirmed that the occupants comprised four passengers and two crew members after the plane made a soft landing.

The pilot sustained serious injuries in the incident, and he has been rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. "The aircraft reported a technical malfunction moments

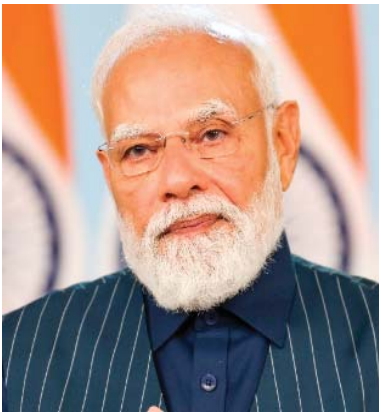
before its scheduled landing. Emergency protocols were activated immediately after the pilot alerted the air traffic control," a senior district official stated.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed concern over the incident and directed the administration to provide the best medical care to the victims. Nearby villagers were the first to reach the site and assisted in pulling the trapped passengers from the wreckage.

Police teams and medical units from Rourkela reached the spot shortly after to shift the victims to a local government hospital. While the four passengers are reported to be stable with minor fractures and bruises, the condition of the pilot was said to be critical. Reports suggested that the engine stalled mid-air, forcing the pilot to attempt a landing on the outskirts of the city to avoid a residential area.

PM Modi expresses excitement over address at Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue on Jan 12

New Delhi, Jan 10 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday expressed his excitement about addressing young leaders at the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue scheduled for January 12. Taking to social media platform X, the Prime Minister highlighted the enthusiasm and commitment of India's youth. "Our youth, filled with incredible enthusiasm and unmatched passion, are committed to building a strong and prosperous nation," he said. "I am very excited to interact with my young friends from across



the country at the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue. I will meet all of you at this event on January 12," PM Modi added.

The Prime Minister emphasised that India's youth, with their unparalleled energy, innovation, and dedication, are the driving force behind the nation's progress. He said the dialogue will provide a meaningful platform for young leaders from different parts of the country to exchange ideas, share aspirations, and actively contribute to the vision of a Viksit Bharat. PM Modi also shared a post by

Union Minister of Labour and Employment, Mansukh Mandaviya, who welcomed thousands of young participants arriving in the national Capital for the event. "Sashakt Yuva, Viksit Bharat! Three thousand energetic youth from across the country have reached Delhi for the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue," Mandaviya wrote. Mansukh Mandaviya further said that this vibrant youth power, inspired by India's rich cultural heritage, is prepared to present its vision for a developed India before Prime Minister Modi.

Delhi's air quality remains in 'very poor' category, cold wave conditions persist

New Delhi, Jan 10 : Delhi's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category on Saturday, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded at 358 at 6:05 a.m., according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) Sameer app. The national Capital continued to experience harsh cold wave conditions, with the minimum temperature dropping to 5.4 degrees Celsius. On Friday morning, the AQI stood at 318, which was also classified as 'very poor'. Delhi has been reeling under deteriorating air quality over the past several days, with many areas reporting AQI levels ranging from 'very poor' to 'severe', as per CPCB data. Areas that recorded 'severe' air quality included Nehru Nagar with an

AQI of 426, Anand Vihar at 422, Vivek Vihar at 408, and Sirifort at 404. Several other locations were placed in the 'very poor' category, including Patparganj (400), Dwarka Sector-8 (399), Okhla Phase-2 (388), JLN Stadium (394), RK Puram and Chandni Chowk (390), Rohini (372), Punjabi Bagh and Mundka (368), Ashok Vihar (359), Bawana (346), Aya Nagar (344), IGI Airport Terminal-3 (325), and Alipur (302). Meanwhile, Burari Crossing recorded an AQI of 300 and Pusa IMD registered 290, both falling under the 'poor' category. As per CPCB standards, an AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 to 100 'satisfactory', 101 to 200 'moderate', 201 to 300 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor', and 401 to 500 'severe'.

Legal aid for the poor? Or poor legal aid?



-Dr. P. Madhava Rao, Former Senior Advisor to United Nations

Seeking justice when a person comes in conflict with the law or one's rights is a human right, and non-condemnation of one without hearing him or her is violative of principles of natural justice. As stated in Article 14 of the Indian Constitution, "Within the territory of India, the State shall not deny equality before the law and equal protection of the laws to any person." The notion and mechanisms for establishing Access to Justice or delivering legal aid to the impoverished originate from this article of the Indian Constitution.

Article 39A of the Constitution of India mandates the State to ensure that the legal system advances justice on an equal opportunity basis. The State is thus obligated to offer free legal aid to all citizens, irrespective of their economic or other disabilities, through the implementation of appropriate legislation, schemes, or other means. Established under the Legal Services Authority Act of 1987, the National Legal Aid Service Authority (NALSA) endeavours to ensure that the letter

and spirit of the Constitution are upheld and that the poor, disadvantaged, and weaker members of society have access to justice. NALSA operates at both the national and sub-national levels by means of institutional arrangements that are explicitly designated, with the aim of ensuring that justice is accessible and affordable for those in need. NALSA obtains its jurisdiction not solely from the Legal Services Authority Act of 1987, but also from Articles 14 and 22(1), which mandate the State to guarantee equal treatment under the law and a legal system that advances justice by providing equal opportunities to all.

What is there at present? At present, NALSA is engaged in various legal aid-related initiatives, including educating the public about their rights and promoting legal aid through institutional arrangements, organizing legal literacy camps, appointing paralegal volunteers, conducting Lok Adalats, training and rostering mediators, and facilitating pre-litigation dispute resolution via alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods. Since its establishment, NALSA has reportedly organized over five lakh awareness-raising programs throughout the nation, according to the available data. The provision of legal services by national, state, and district authorities is complimentary for the impoverished. The India Justice Report 2025 states, that "States' expenditure Both central and state governments contribute to the judiciary's budget, with states providing the



majority of the funding. In 2022-23, no state spent more than 1% of its budget on the judiciary; the average was 0.59%, with Punjab spending the most at 0.88% and Arunachal Pradesh the least at 0.17%. Between fiscal years 2019-20 and 2022-23, judicial expenditure in 19 states and Union Territories kept pace with overall state expenditure, while in 12 states, it lagged behind. Per capita, the national average spend was 182 in 2022-23, an increase of 63 since 2017-18. Sikkim had the highest per capita spend at 966, nearly eight times what Uttar Pradesh spent and more than nine times what Bihar spent. Delhi was a close second at 780. In contrast, Tripura and Bihar had the lowest increases in per capita spending, and Nagaland was the only state to show a decline. More needs to be done. As depicted previously, the government endeavoured to establish a conducive atmo-

sphere that would enable the provision of complimentary legal assistance to impoverished citizens, in compliance with constitutional obligations. Nevertheless, the reporters of India Justice Report were unable to obscure the brutal realities surrounding legal aid in the nation.

Prison overcrowding experienced a notable increase, surging from 120% to 130%. An unprecedented 77 percent of the inmate population consists of pre-trial offenders, who spend an average of more time incarcerated than at any other time in history. Despite exerting considerable effort, legal aid systems could only reach a fraction of their prospective clientele. The alarming number of pending cases—nearly 5 crore (50 million)—below the staggering figure—is the distressing record of the escalating duration required to achieve a resolution.

The only courts that operate with an entire complement of justices, according to the report, are the High Court of Sikkim and the district courts in Chandigarh. Kerala was the only state among the eighteen large and medium-sized states to attain case clearance rates of one hundred percent at both the High Court and subordinate court levels. No state or territory could meet all its Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes quotas at the district court level. Information regarding SC/ST/OBC justices is not accessible for High Courts. Legal aid is in a truly alarming situation. The quantity of legal services clinics experienced a decline, from 14,161 clinics serving an average of 42 villages each in 2017-18, the number has plummeted to just 3,659 by March 2024, indicating that each clinic now serves a staggering 163 villages.

The report additionally provides evidence that the police are an integral component of the criminal justice system in India. State statutes mandate employment quotas for SC, ST, and OBC individuals. Regarding the police force, only the state of Karnataka has met these requirements. Every state and territory fail to achieve its designated quota for female police officers. Other institution at the state level to deliver justice is the State Human Rights Commission. As of 15 September 2025, the combined count of pending cases among the 22 State Human Rights Commissions stands at 35,120, even

though they have disposed of 88,471 cases on an average per annum for a period of past five years. State Human Rights suffer a shortage of 44% of their sanctioned staff strength.

An additional malady of the nation's legal aid system is situation obtaining at police station level in granting bails in petty cases. Even though compounding of offenses without court permission is permitted under Section 320(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, our police personnel are trained to register cases that do not fall under this provision, thereby preventing the station-level compounding of offenses. This aspect was also disregarded by the recently enacted Mediation Act 2023, which could have allowed for the easy compounding of offenses falling under Section 320(1) via mediation. Furthermore, the National Judicial Data Grid indicates that, of about five crore cases pending cases in various courts across the

nation that have been unresolved for one to thirty years, more than seventy-five percent are criminal in nature. It is possible that legal aid did not reach the incarcerated individuals in multiple jurisdictions in a timely manner.

Developing additional legal aid clinics might help deal the situation. Implementing legal aid at the village level and fortifying the gram Nyayalaya framework, promoting awareness among all stakeholders, including law enforcement, advocates, and the general public could be solution. Educating magistrates and judges about the importance of exercising their discretion in the administration of justice and preventing unwarranted delays in case dispensation will help the under trails and the other needy. Developing a core team of advocates to work on a monthly salary basis in legal aid centres and bolstering institutional arbitration and mediation with pro bono service quotas will give legal aid in the country genuine significance.

Whether it is the judiciary struggling under the burden of five crore pending cases, police departments operating with large vacancies, or prisons designed more for containment than rehabilitation, the reality is bleak. Budget allocations have increased over the years, yet their utilisation remains suboptimal. Without addressing structural inefficiencies, increased spending alone cannot translate into better outcomes. As well, curing capacity deficits is indeed one necessary step to success—but not a sufficient one.

EDITORIAL

Why You Should Let Your Child Fail, And Falter, And Learn

Growing up, many of us had the basics: roti, kapda aur makaan. Sometimes, that came with conditions. There were promises we held on to like prizes at the finish line - a new media player if we topped the class, branded sneakers or a festive outfit if we "earned" it. We learned to wait. To work toward something. To defer gratification. Patience was a life skill, not a luxury. It stretched us, sometimes uncomfortably, but it shaped us. Today, that word feels almost alien to many young children. Patience has been replaced by immediacy. Waiting replaced by wanting. Earning replaced by expecting.

From Grit to Gentle Parenting
Cut to now: we listen differently. We respond differently. We show up differently. We sit for hours listening to our children's emotional outbursts - decoding feelings, soothing anxieties, untangling invisible fears. We pause life to help them make sense of their world in a way no one ever did for us. And we find ourselves wondering: would our parents have done this, or simply asked us to "go play in the park" and figure it out? Something has shifted. Dramatically. Our parents built our strength through exposure: "The world is tough, become tougher." We try to build resilience through conversation: "The world is tough, talk to me about it." Neither is fully right nor fully wrong - but the swing between them is enormous. Those of us raised before the 2000s lived through an unspoken curriculum of resilience. Emotions were private. Fear was swallowed. Pain was not a topic; it was an experience. Childhood wasn't bubble-wrapped; it was rough-edged and unedited. Today, we parent with heightened emotional fluency. We negotiate with tantrums, reason with tears, and offer choices for everything - from food to feelings. We aren't just raising children; we are trying to give them the childhood we wish we had. In doing so, we may be healing ourselves. But are we helping them?

The Survival Gap
Our struggles built internal muscle: discomfort tolerance, resourcefulness, resilience. We fell, and no one rushed to edit the world to be softer. We failed, and no one restructured systems to make success easier. It wasn't perfect, but it built something essential: inner scaffolding. Today, in protecting our children from struggle, we risk protecting them from strength. We clear the path instead of preparing them to walk it. We soften consequences. We step in before discomfort can harden into resilience. Are we preparing them for the world, or preparing the world for them? Because the world will not always bend.

The Guilt We Parent With
Another layer sits quietly beneath our overprotection: guilt. We are a generation working longer hours, living under constant performance pressure, juggling homes, inboxes, commutes, deadlines, and the emotional labour of being "present" even when we are depleted. We rush through evenings, negotiate with time, and parent from the margins of professional ambition-after meetings, between calls, in the car, on borrowed energy. So we compensate. We offer softness where we cannot offer time. We say yes where a boundary should stand. We protect because we cannot always participate. And somewhere, without meaning to, we begin to soothe our guilt more than their needs. Are we comforting our children, or are we comforting ourselves?

The Safety Anxiety Generation
A significant shift in parenting today comes from the weight of safety - not just physical, but emotional and digital. The threats have multiplied and digitised: online predators and manipulated identities, bullying, body shaming, comparison culture, social media filters rewriting self-worth, a world that enters our homes long before our children enter the world outside.

Edit

The insulted dignity of university, power and literature



The public mistreatment of senior Hindi fiction writer Manoj Roopda during a literary event held at Guru Ghasidas University, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, is not just an unfortunate incident but a clear indication of the deepening crisis in academic and cultural life in our times. Humiliating an invited writer on stage and asking him to leave the event is completely contrary to the tradition in which universities have been seen as centers of free exchange of ideas, respect for dissent, and constructive dialogue. This incident is not limited to an individual; it is a direct attack on literature, freedom of expression, and intellectual dignity. The historical role of universities has not been to be subservient to power. From ancient learning traditions like Nalanda and Takshashila to modern universities, these institutions have always fostered a culture of questioning, reasoning, and challenging established notions. Universities are not merely degree-granting machines; they are centers that guide the consciousness of society. Here, diversity of thought, dissent, and debate are not considered weaknesses but intellectual strengths. Therefore, when scenes of power-mongering, arrogance, and intolerance emerge within a university, it becomes evidence not just of a program's failure but of the erosion of institutional values. Manoj Roopda is a powerful and respected name in contemporary Hindi fiction. His stories and novels boldly expose the complex rela-

tionships between power, society, and the individual. He is among those writers who have considered literature not merely a subject of beauty but a medium of social intervention. Inviting such a writer should have been a symbol of the university's intellectual commitment and openness. However, his treatment demonstrates that discomfort with critical thinking and independent thought has somehow triumphed over prudence. It is natural to ask: will universities now be limited to formal events, eulogies, and power-friendly speeches? A position like that of Vice-Chancellor requires not only administrative competence but also ethical leadership and academic sensitivity. This position should symbolize restraint, dialogue, and inclusion. If the head of a university begins to perceive criticism or dissent as a personal challenge, its impact is not limited to a single program. An atmosphere of fear gradually spreads throughout the campus. Teachers become reluctant to speak openly, students fear asking questions, and creativity succumbs to self-censorship. In such a situation, the university deviates from its original purpose and, instead of being a center of knowledge, becomes an instrument of discipline and control. Another worrying aspect of this incident is that the institutional level lacked the sensitivity and firmness required to protect the honor of the invited writer. The success of literary events is not measured solely by stage decorations, posters, and formal speeches, but by how open, respectful, and meaningful the dialogue is. When a writer is insulted and an institution remains silent, that silence becomes a form of acquiescence. This silence encourages further oppressive behavior in the future and undermines the institution's moral credibility. It's important to remind ourselves that universities are not the private fiefdom of any individual or official. They are governed by public resources, taxpayer funds, and the trust of society. The decisions made and the behavior displayed here serve as a message to society. If power, personal ego, and intolerance dominate universities, a culture of confrontation and fear begins to flourish in society, replacing dialogue. This trend is detrimental not only to literature and education, but also to democratic values, for the very foundation of democracy is the respect for plurality of opinions and dissent. Literature and intellectual discourse have played a vital role in the soul of Indian democracy. From the freedom struggle to social reform movements, writers and thinkers have questioned power and inspired society to introspect. If writers and thinkers are humiliated in universities today, it would be a grave insult to the tradition that has made us a vibrant democratic society. It is ironic that if the institutions expected to provide ideological leadership begin to set examples of intolerance, where will society be headed? It is certainly noteworthy that some university faculty members attempted to manage the situation and find a respectful solution. This demonstrates that discretion and sensitivity have not yet completely vanished within the institution. However, it is also true that when the intoxication of power overrides discretion, individual efforts often prove ineffective. Institutional culture can only change when the leadership itself is willing to engage in dialogue and self-criticism. This incident also forces us to reconsider the role of writers and intellectuals. When injustice is done to a writer and the entire literary community remains silent, this silence itself becomes a political and moral statement. History bears witness that silence has always strengthened power and weakened resistance. If there is no clear and col-

lective response to this incident today, tomorrow it will be repeated by another writer, another idea, and another platform. The fundamental nature of literature is one of questioning and resistance. It was born not to bow down to power, but to hold it up to the mirror. If writers themselves do not stand up to defend their dignity and freedom, literature will gradually be reduced to mere careers and awards. Then it will become a decorative tool of the system, not the soul of society. Today, it is essential that university administrations, faculty, students, and literary societies learn a lesson from this incident. Universities must introspect about the kind of academic environment they are fostering. Are they encouraging dialogue and debate, or fear and obedience? Literary events must be viewed not as mere formalities, but as vibrant ideological platforms where even dissent can be expressed with respect. This incident is shameful and warrants strong condemnation, but beyond condemnation, we need to engage in substantial introspection and reform. Universities must ensure that no invited author or speaker is treated this way in the future. Academic freedom and dignity are protected not by mere paper policies, but by behavior and culture. Ultimately, the question isn't just about Manoj Roopda or any one program. The question is what kind of university and what kind of society we want to build. If we fear thought, are afraid of questions, and try to suppress dissent with insults, we will move from a vibrant democracy to a society of fear. Universities must remember that they exist not by the grace of power, but by knowledge, dialogue, and independent consciousness. If this consciousness is crushed, universities will become mere buildings—monuments not of knowledge, but of silence.

Stalin And Vijay : Tactical Support vs Tactical Silence

Streetsmart, thinking, three steps ahead, reading the mind of the opponent, speaking your mind. Almost every reel adult character played by Thalapathy Vijay in the last 33 years in Tamil cinema has embodied these attributes. In his political avatar, however, Vijay has been conspicuous by his silence. Even when the Censor Board went out of its way to ensure his farewell movie Jana Nayagan did not get the Pongal release it wanted, there was not a word from Vijay. Intriguing to say the least, more so when assembly elections are three months away, the movie is his campaign vehicle and he claims his party, the TVK, would win the election. It is a political opportunity missed. On the other hand, the developments over the past 48 hours have been a win-win for the DMK. With Jana Nayagan out of the way till January 21, unless the Supreme Court grants a reprieve next week, Parasakthi, the period drama based on the anti-Hindi agitation of the mid-1960s, will have a free run at 1000-odd screens across Tamil Nadu. Pongal 2026 was touted as the Jana Nayagan vs Parasakthi clash. But now the latter has emerged as the solo big release this festival season. The DMK has literally 'owned' Parasakthi. The title has a clear Karunanidhi connection as the former



chief minister wrote the screenplay and dialogues for the original Parasakthi in 1952, the subject is part of the DMK ideology and it has backed the film financially, with the DMK's first family-run Red Giant movies as distributor. Unlike Vijay, who embraced silence, Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin struck when the iron was hot. Proving he is the 'Thalapathy' of realpolitik. He condemned the moves by the Censor Board calling it a "political tool" of the Union government, thereby wielding the tactical stick to beat the BJP with. Ideally it should have been Vijay who should have gone to town, screaming subterfuge and pressure tactics used by the BJP to weaponise the Censor Board. But by staying silent, he has allowed the Congress

films loaded with political messaging are campaign dynamite. That's why there are wheels within wheels regarding the way the politics around the movies is playing out in Chennai. First, the Congress is a house divided. The likes of MPs Manickam Tagore and Jothimani have come out in the open supporting Jana Nayagan. This has also been interpreted as an open call to look at Vijay as an alternative to the alliance with the DMK in the Tamil Nadu assembly elections. Even if the Congress does not switch partners, this support to Vijay, the group within the Congress hopes, will put pressure on the DMK to grant more seats in seat-sharing and also share in power if the alliance returns to power in May 2026. On the other hand, the pro-DMK group within the Congress is firmly of the view that status quo should not be disturbed and the DMK-Congress alliance should continue. The irony is that the Congress has reportedly been villainised in Parasakthi. To be fair to the makers, they have stayed true to history because the anti-Hindi agitation was mounted against the Congress party's central government at that time. So while in the present context, an anti-Hindi stance is interpreted as anti-BJP, in the world of the 1960s Parasakthi, it is the Congress that is on target.

Manumukt 'Manav' Trust organized World Hindi Day celebrations

Narnaul. The Manumukt 'Manav' Memorial Trust organized a grand virtual celebration to mark World Hindi Day, in which one and a half dozen literary figures and scholars from six continents and ten countries, including India, Nepal, Australia, Singapore, Qatar, Ghana, Bulgaria, Sweden, Trinidad, and the United States, participated. Narayan Kumar, Honorary Director of the International Hindi Centre at Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), was the chief guest. Dr. Shweta Deepti, Professor and Chairperson of the Hindi Department at Central Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu (Nepal), was the special guest, and Dr. S. Anukriti, Senior Economist at the World Bank, Washington, DC (USA), was the welcome speaker. Following a prayer song presented by Industry Extension Officer Dr. Sunil Bhardwaj, the ceremony, which was held under the inspiring guidance of Trustee Dr. Kanta Bharti and the able stewardship of Dr. Pankaj Gaur, commenced with Chief Trustee Dr. Ramniwas 'Manav' introducing the topic and highlighting the global expansion of Hindi through a couplet: "China, Russia, Britain to all, across the seven seas. Hindi has expanded throughout the world." In his inaugural



address, Chief Guest Narayan Kumar described Hindi as a language of communication and harmony, stating that due to Indians spread across the globe, Hindi has now become a global language. Special Guest Dr. Shweta Deepti advocated linking Hindi with employment, while Dr. Jawahar Karnavat, in his presidential address, highlighted the crucial role of Indian diaspora in the development of Hindi. Dr. Nutan Pandey and Dr. Deepak Pandey, Assistant Directors of the Central Hindi Directorate, New Delhi, described Indian diaspora as India's cultural ambassadors, emphasizing their unique contribution to the promotion of Hindi language and Indian culture abroad. It is noteworthy that in this important programme which lasted for about two and a half hours, poets like Prageet Kunwar and Dr. Bhavana Kunwar from Sydney (Australia), Aradhana Jha Srivastava from Singapore City (Singapore), Dr. Bajinath Sharma from Doha (Qatar), Meenakshi Saurabh from Accra (Ghana), Dr. Mona Kaushik from Sofia (Bulgaria), Suresh Pandey from Stockholm (Sweden), Asha Mor from Port of Spain (Trinidad) and from India, Vijay Kumar Mirche (Mahasamund), Dr. Satyawani Saurabh (Hisar), Dr. Mukut Agarwal (Rewari) and Dr. Ramniwas 'Manav', Dr. Jitendra Bhardwaj and Dr. Pankaj Gaur (Narnaul) etc. gave a new height to the programme by reciting poetry, which was highly appreciated by the audience from India and abroad.

Trump seeks \$100bn for Venezuela oil, but Exxon boss says country 'uninvestable'

US President Donald Trump has asked for at least \$100bn (£75bn) in oil industry spending for Venezuela, but received a lukewarm response at the White House as one executive warned the South American country was currently "uninvestable". Bosses of the biggest US oil firms who attended the meeting acknowledged that Venezuela, sitting on vast energy reserves, represented an enticing opportunity. But they said significant changes would be needed to make the region an attractive investment. No major financial commitments were immediately forthcoming. Trump has said he will unleash the South American nation's oil after US forces seized its leader Nicolas Maduro in a 3 January raid on its capital. "One of the things the United States gets out of this will be even lower energy prices," Trump said in Friday's meeting at the White House. But the oil bosses present expressed caution. Exxon's chief executive Darren Woods said: "We have had our assets seized there twice and so you can imagine to re-enter a third time would require some pretty significant changes from what we've



historically seen and what is currently the state." "Today it's uninvestable." Venezuela has had a complicated relationship with international oil firms since oil was discovered in its territory more than 100 years ago. Chevron is the last remaining major American oil firm still operating in the country. A handful of companies from other countries, including Spain's Repsol and Italy's Eni, both of which were represented

at the White House meeting, are also active. Trump said his administration would decide which firms would be allowed to operate. "You're dealing with us directly. You're not dealing with Venezuela at all. We don't want you to deal with Venezuela," he said. The White House has said it is working to "selectively" roll back US sanctions that have restricted sales of Venezuelan oil. Officials say they have been coordinat-

ing with interim authorities in the country, which is currently led by Maduro's former second-in-command, Vice-President Delcy Rodriguez. But they have also made clear they intend to exert control over the sales, as a way to maintain leverage over Rodriguez's government. The US this week has seized several oil tankers carrying sanctioned crude. American officials have said they are working to set up a sales process, which would deposit money raised into US-controlled accounts. "We are open for business," Trump said. Venezuela's oil production has been hit in recent decades by disinvestment and mismanagement - as well as US sanctions. At roughly one million barrels per day, the country accounts for less than 1% of global supply. Chevron, which accounts for about a fifth of the country's output, said it expected to bolster its production, building on its current presence, while Exxon said it was working to send in a technical team to assess the situation in the coming weeks. Repsol, which currently boasts output of about 45,000 barrels per day, said it saw a path to triple its production in Venezuela over the next few

years under the right conditions. Executives at other firms also said Trump's promises of change would encourage investment and they were hoping to seize the moment. "We are ready to go to Venezuela," said Bill Armstrong, who leads an independent oil and gas driller. "In real estate terms, it is prime real estate." But analysts say meaningfully increasing production would take significant effort. "They are being as polite as humanly possible, and being as supportive as they can, without committing actual dollars," said David Goldwyn, president of the energy consultancy Goldwyn Global Strategies and former US state department special envoy for international energy affairs. Exxon and Shell are "not going to invest single-digit billions of dollars, much less tens of billions of dollars", without physical security, legal certainty and a competitive fiscal framework, Goldwyn said. "It's not really welcome from an industry point of view," he said. "The conditions are just not right." While smaller companies might be more eager to jump in and help boost Venezuela's oil production over the next year.

EU reaches South America trade deal after 25 years of talks



The EU has reached a free trade agreement with South American countries, 25 years after talks began and despite opposition from farmers in several European countries. The deal with the Mercosur trading bloc - which includes Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay - will require the approval of the European parliament within the next few months. Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva hailed it as a "historic day for multilateralism" after the four South American countries put the final touches to the deal in Brussels. It comes against the backdrop of US President Donald Trump's

tariffs on countries around the world and his recent military intervention in Venezuela. The EU heralded what will be its largest free trade accord to date as a "win-win", although critics have argued that cheap imports may undercut European farmers in products including beef, poultry and sugar. "In an international scenario of growing protectionism and unilateralism, the agreement is a signal in favour of international trade as a driver of economic growth, with benefits for both blocs," President Lula posted on X. EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the deal will "bring mean-

ingful benefits to consumers and businesses, on both sides". Farmers in several countries in Europe held last-ditch protests against the deal, with marches and demonstrations using tractors in France and Belgium. "There is a lot of pain," Judy Peeters, a representative for a Belgian young farmers' group, told AFP at a protest on a motorway south of Brussels. "There is a lot of anger." Von der Leyen said the Commission had listened to the concerns of farmers, and had acted on them including through introducing "robust safeguards" to protect their livelihoods in the agreement.

Shifting away from Russian oil imports currently won't hurt India fiscally

The prevailing low global oil prices mean that, if India chooses to shift away from importing Russian oil and switches to more oil from the U.S., the financial impact of this would be limited, according to experts as well an analysis of India's import data. An analysis byThe Hindu of the volume and value of India's oil imports show that in November 2025, the latest month for which there is data, India imported oil from Russia at the rate of \$482.7 per tonne. That month, oil imports from the U.S. cost \$523.3 per tonne. On average, India paid \$498.8 per tonne for its oil imports in November 2025. Declining discount Data shows that, while the premium paid on oil from the U.S. has remained largely the same as three years ago, the discount received from Russia has shrunk considerably. Three years earlier, in November 2022, India received a discount of \$40.3 a tonne on its oil imports from Russia. The premium paid on



American oil stood at \$21.2 per tonne. "India was very keen to keep importing from Russia at a discounted rate while a discount existed," Vibhuti Garg, Director for South Asia at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, said. "But that discount has now gone and global oil prices have fallen significantly. They are at about \$60 a barrel and could fall further. So, if India does cut down on its Russian oil imports significantly, this won't currently be damaging fiscally. However, she added that, if in the future prices go back up to \$80-90 a barrel, then the lack of this Russian dis-

count could start pinching the Indian government. A previous report by The Hindu shows how India's oil imports from Russia touched a six-month high in November 2025. However, since then, Reliance Industries, one of the biggest oil importers in India, said that it had not received any oil shipments from Russia in the last three weeks of December 2025 and did not expect any in January 2026. Limited import According to Ajay Srivastava, founder of think-tank Global Trade Research Initiative and former Director General of Foreign Trade in the Government of India.

'Out of stock': What went wrong at luxury retailer Saks?

On a recent January morning, tourists admired the rows of Balenciaga and Burberry handbags on display at Saks Fifth Avenue's flagship midtown Manhattan location. But a conversation on the second floor hinted at financial troubles at one of America's most iconic luxury department stores. Penelope Nam-Stephen, a longtime customer, approached the Diptyque counter in search of a home fragrance that she had typically bought at Saks. Nam-Stephen, who splits her time between New York City and Boston, had been surprised to find the product unavailable at the Boston store just after Christmas. She hoped the New York location would have better inventory. "Do you have anything in the Berries fragrance?" she asked an employee. His response: "Everything is out of stock - candles, diffusers." Saks Global, which owns Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus, is expected to file for bankruptcy protection



imminently as it struggles to shore up its finances, leaving big questions among shoppers, vendors and investors about the retailer's future. Saks has been plagued by worsening financial woes since Saks Fifth Avenue's parent company acquired Neiman Marcus in 2024 to create the luxury retail giant. Executives had argued the \$2.7bn deal would cut costs and bolster the brands. The department stores had already been under strain amid growing debt burdens and shifting shopping habits that benefited e-commerce rivals. Saks Fifth Avenue began

reporting double-digit quarterly sales declines in early 2023. But the touted benefits of the acquisition did not materialise. Saks failed to make a \$100m interest payment to creditors due in late December, tied to roughly \$2.2bn of debt that it took on to fund the merger. The missed deadline comes as Saks continues to draw frustration from its vendors, who have bemoaned months-long payment delays and many of whom have halted shipments of their products. Saks did not respond to requests for comment on inventory shortages and its plan to pay vendors.

Avenue Supermarts Q3 result: Profit rises 18.28% to Rs. 855.78 crore



Avenue Supermarts Ltd on Saturday reported an 18.28 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 855.78 crore in the third quarter ended December 2025, on the back of higher revenue. The company, which runs a supermarket chain under the brand DMart, registered a consolidated net profit of Rs 723.54 crore in the same quarter last fiscal, Avenue Supermarts Ltd said in a regulatory filing. Consolidated revenue from operations in the latest third quarter stood at Rs 18,100.88 crore as against Rs 15,972.55 crore in the year-ago period, it added. Total expenses in

the third quarter were higher at Rs 16,942.62 crore as compared to Rs 15,001.64 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal. The company said its board has approved the appointment of Anshul Asawa, presently the CEO Designate, as Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, for a term of three years with effect from April 1, 2026, subject to the approval of shareholders. He will succeed Ignatius Navil Noronha, who will cease to hold office as Managing Director & CEO from January 31, 2026, on completion of his tenure, it added.

Sebi set to clear way for NSE to launch its initial public offering



Highlights
■ India's markets regulator will this month issue an approval needed for the country's biggest bourse, the National Stock Exchange, to launch its stock market offering, it said on Saturday. NSE, also the world's most active derivatives exchange, has been in litigation with the Indian market regulator Sebi since 2019 when it was fined 11 billion rupees (\$122.04 million) for failing to provide equitable access to all its trading members.

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Makar Sankranti 2026: Adding Nourishment to Harvest Celebrations with California Almonds

January 2026: Makar Sankranti marks the arrival of longer days, fresh harvests, and renewed energy across India. Celebrated in different forms such as Pongal, Lohri, Uttarayan, and Magh Bihu, the festival symbolises abundance, gratitude, and new beginnings. As families come together to prepare traditional dishes and sweets, the season offers an opportunity to balance celebration with mindful nutrition by incorporating California Almonds. With their unique combination of protein, healthy fats, and antioxidants, almonds help build strength, support immunity, and provide sustained energy. Their nutrient-dense profile makes them a natural addition to festive meals, helping balance indulgence while supporting overall wellness during the celebrations. Ritika Samadhar, Regional Head - Dietetics, Max Healthcare, New Delhi,



said, "Festive foods are central to Makar Sankranti celebrations, but making small, thoughtful ingredient choices can go a long way in supporting health. Almonds are nutrient-dense, naturally satiating, and help manage blood sugar levels when paired with carbohydrate-rich foods. Whether added to laddoos, savoury dishes, or eaten whole, a handful of California Almonds daily helps families celebrate

without compromising on nutrition." From an Ayurvedic perspective, almonds are considered balya, meaning strength-enhancing, and are known to build ojas, which supports vitality and immunity. Particularly beneficial during winter and early spring, their warming nature helps balance Vata, supports digestion, and builds resilience. Dr. Madhumitha Krishnan, Ayurveda Expert, shared,

"Almonds are one of the most versatile ingredients you can add to festive cooking. They offer a unique mix of balancing the Doshas, improving the nourishment of the body, warming in nature, and very satiating. Whether blended into chutneys, ground into festive sweets, or enjoyed on their own, almonds enhance both nutrition and flavour." Highlighting the role of balanced nutrition in everyday wellness, Sheela Krishnaswamy, Nutrition & Wellness Consultant, added, "Makar Sankranti dishes are traditionally rich and celebratory, but the choice of ingredients makes all the difference. Almonds work well in festive cooking because they add natural texture and beneficial nutrients without relying on excess sugar or refined fats. Incorporating almonds into traditional preparations allows families to preserve the spirit of the festi-

val while making meals more balanced and nourishing." Sharing her personal connection with festive traditions, Bollywood actress Soha Ali Khan said, "Makar Sankranti has always been about warmth, family, and wholesome food for me. I believe celebrations feel more meaningful when they also support well-being. California Almonds have been a part of my family's kitchen for years, making it easier to strike a balance between indulgence and nutrition." As families celebrate the harvest and welcome longer days ahead, California Almonds offer a simple yet powerful way to add nourishment to festive traditions. Blending modern nutrition science with ancient wisdom, almonds support heart health, immunity, sustained energy, and overall vitality, making them a natural companion for a healthier, happier Makar Sankranti.

Trump says US needs to 'own' Greenland to prevent Russia and China from taking it

President Donald Trump says the US needs to "own" Greenland to prevent Russia and China from doing so. "Countries have to have ownership and you defend ownership, you don't defend leases. And we'll have to defend Greenland," Trump told reporters on Friday, in response to a question from the BBC. We will do it "the easy way" or "the hard way", he added. The White House said recently the administration is considering buying the semi-autonomous territory of fellow Nato member Denmark, but it would not rule out the option of annexing it by force. Denmark and Greenland say the territory is not for sale. Denmark has said military action would spell the end of the trans-Atlantic defence alliance. In a joint statement on Friday night, Greenland's party leaders, including



the opposition, reiterated their call for the "US's disregard for our country to end". "We do not want to be Americans, we do not want to be Danes, we want to be Greenlanders," they said. "The future of Greenland must be decided by the Greenlandic people." Despite being the most sparsely populated territory, Greenland's location

between North America and the Arctic makes it well placed for early warning systems in the event of missile attacks, and for monitoring vessels in the region. The US president has repeatedly said that Greenland is vital to US national security, claiming without evidence that it was "covered with Russian and Chinese ships

all over the place". The US already has more than 100 military personnel permanently stationed at its Pituffik base in Greenland's north-western tip - a facility that has been operated by the US since World War Two. Under existing agreements with Denmark, the US has the power to bring as many troops as it wants to

Greenland. But speaking to reporters in Washington, Trump said a lease agreement was not good enough. "Countries can't make nine-year deals or even 100-year deals," he said, adding that they had to have ownership. "I love the people of China. I love the people of Russia," Trump said. "But I don't want them as a neighbour in Greenland, not going to happen." "And by the way Nato's got to understand that," the US president added. Denmark's Nato allies - major European countries as well as Canada - have rallied to its support this week with statements reaffirming that "only Denmark and Greenland can decide on matters concerning their relations". Stressing they were as keen as the US on Arctic security, they have said this must be achieved by allies, including the US, "collectively". They also

called for "upholding the principles of the UN Charter, including sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders". Concerns over the future of the territory resurfaced after Trump's use of military force against Venezuela on Saturday to seize its president, Nicolás Maduro. Trump previously made an offer to buy the island in 2019, during his first presidential term, only to be told it was not for sale. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is to hold talks with Denmark next week. In recent years, there has also been increased interest in Greenland's natural resources - including rare earth minerals, uranium and iron - which are becoming easier to access as its ice melts due to climate change. Scientists think it could also have significant oil and gas reserves.

US film stars Meagan Good and Jonathan Majors become Guinea citizens after DNA tests



Husband and wife movie stars Meagan Good and Jonathan Majors have travelled to Guinea, where they have been granted citizenship after tracing their ancestry to the West African nation through DNA testing. Majors, a star of Creed and Ant-Man, said becoming citizens would allow the couple to "bridge the gap" and bring together their stories as entertainers and members of the African diaspora. "We just want to say thank you so much," added Good, best known for the film Think Like a Man, who said it was her first visit to Guinea. Their citizenship ceremony was similar to

other initiatives in the region to encourage people of African descent to reclaim their heritage and invest in the continent. The event - a private cultural ceremony organised by the ministry of culture - took place at a tourist and cultural centre, Gbassi Kolo, on Friday. Djiba Diakité, minister and chief of staff of the presidency, presented the passports to the two actors on behalf of President Mamadi Doumbouya, saying: "We both believe that you are among the worthy sons and daughters of Guinea to represent our country and the red and green flag throughout the world."

Rescuers race to find dozens missing after deadly landfill collapse in Philippines



Rescue workers are racing to find dozens of people still missing following a landslide at a landfill site in the central Philippines earlier this week, an official has said. Mayor Nestor Archival said on Saturday that signs of life had been detected at the site in Cebu City, two days after the incident. Four people have been confirmed dead so far, Archival said, while 12 others have been taken to hospital. Conditions for emergency services working at the site are challenging, the mayor added, with hazards such as unstable debris and crew waiting for better equipment to arrive. The privately-owned Binaliw landfill collapsed on Thursday while 110 workers were on site, officials said. In a Facebook post on Saturday morning local time, Archival said: "Authorities confirmed the presence of detected signs of life in specific areas, requiring continued careful excavation and the deployment of a

more advanced 50-ton crane." Conditions for rescue workers at the site are difficult, with the wreckage still unstable. Relatives of those missing have been waiting anxiously for any news of their whereabouts. More than 30 people, all workers at the landfill, are thought to be missing. "We are just hoping that we can get someone alive... We are racing against time, that's why our deployment is 24/7," Cebu City councillor Dave Tumalak, chairman of the city's disaster council, told AFP news agency. Jerahmey Espinoza, whose husband is missing, told Reuters news agency at the site on Saturday: "They haven't seen him or located him ever since the disaster happened. We're still hopeful that he's alive." The cause of the collapse is still unclear, but Cebu City councillor Joel Garganera previously said it was likely the result of poor waste management practices.

Romance and parenthood feel remote in Ukraine: 'I haven't had a date since before the war'



Sitting in a wine bar in Kyiv on a Saturday night, Daria, 34, opens a dating app, scrolls, then puts her phone away. After spending more than a decade in committed relationships she's been single for a long time. "I haven't had a proper date since before the war," she says. Four years of war have forced Ukrainians to rethink

nearly every aspect of daily life. Increasingly that includes decisions about relationships and parenthood - and these choices are, in turn, shaping the future of a country in which both marriage and birth rates are falling. Millions of Ukrainian women who left at the start of the 2022 full-scale invasion have now built lives and relationships abroad. Hundreds of thousands of men are absent too, either deployed in the army or living outside the country. For those women who stayed, the prospect of meeting somebody to start a family feels increasingly remote. Khrystyna, 28, says it's noticeable that there are fewer men around.

Iran medics describe overwhelmed hospitals as protests continue

As protests in Iran continue and Iranian authorities issued coordinated warnings to protesters, a doctor and medic at two hospitals told the BBC their facilities were overwhelmed with injuries. One doctor said a Tehran eye hospital had gone into crisis mode, while the BBC also obtained a message from a medic in another hospital saying it did not have enough surgeons to cope with the influx of patients. On Friday, US President Donald Trump said Iran was in "big trouble" and warned "you better not start shooting because we'll start shooting too". Iran in a letter to the UN Security Council blamed



the US for turning the protests into what it called "violent subversive acts and widespread vandalism". Anti-government protests, which continued on Friday, have taken place in dozens of locations, with two human rights groups reporting at least 50 protesters have been killed. The BBC and

most other international news organisations are barred from reporting inside Iran, and the country has been under a near-total internet blackout since Thursday evening, making obtaining and verifying information difficult. A doctor from Iran, who contacted the BBC via Starlink satellite inter-

net on Friday night, said Farabi Hospital, Tehran's main eye specialist centre, had gone into crisis mode, with emergency services overwhelmed. Non-urgent admissions and surgeries were said to have been suspended, and staff called in to deal with emergency cases. The BBC also obtained a video and audio message from a medic in a hospital in the south-west city of Shiraz on Thursday. The medic said large numbers of injured people were being brought in, and the hospital did not have enough surgeons to cope with the influx. He claimed many of the wounded had gunshot injuries to the head and eyes.

Video emerges of Minneapolis shooting filmed by ICE agent who opened fire

A video filmed by the US immigration agent who fatally shot a woman in Minneapolis on Wednesday has emerged, showing the moments before gunfire rang out. The 47-second footage, obtained by conservative news outlet Alpha News, which is based in Minnesota, shows Renee Nicole Good sitting behind the wheel of her car and speaking to the officer. US Vice-President JD Vance shared the clip on social media, commenting that the agent had acted in self-defence. Local officials have insisted the woman posed no danger. Good's wife has paid tribute to the 37-year-old, saying the pair were trying



to support their neighbours when she was shot. Her death has sparked protests across the US. President Donald Trump's administration says Good tried to run over the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer in an act of "domestic terrorism" after

blocking the road and impeding the agency's work. Democratic Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey has described that account as "garbage" based on the video footage. The BBC has asked the homeland security department and the White House for comment on the

new video that emerged on Friday. The footage starts with the officer getting out of his car and filming Good's vehicle and registration plate while he walks around the Honda SUV. A dog is in the backseat. Good says: "That's fine dude. I'm not mad at you." Her wife, Becca Good, is standing on the street filming the interaction with her mobile phone. She tells the ICE agent: "That's OK, we don't change our plates every morning just so you know. It will be the same plate when you come talk to us later." She adds: "You want to come at us? You want to come at us? I say go and get yourself some lunch, big boy."

Swiss search souls and question government after ski resort fire



In the wake of the devastating fire at a bar in Crans-Montana, many Swiss citizens are asking themselves if their political system is fit for purpose. Switzerland, often praised for its efficiency, has a very devolved system of government, in which villages and towns are run by local officials elected from and by the community. It is a system the Swiss cherish, because they believe it ensures accountability. But there are inherent weaknesses: hypothetically, the official approving a bar licence or passing a fire-safety check is the friend, neighbour, or maybe even cousin of the bar owner. When the news of the fire emerged on New Year's Eve, first there was shock. Such devastating fires are not, people thought, supposed to happen in Switzerland. Then there was grief - 40 young people lost their lives, 116 were injured, many of them very seriously. Questions followed - what caused such a catastrophe? And finally, this

week - fury when Crans-Montana's Mayor, Nicolas Feraud, revealed that Le Constellation bar had not been inspected since 2019. Crans-Montana is in the Swiss canton of Valais, where fire-safety inspections are the responsibility of Mayor Feraud and his colleagues, and they are supposed to happen every 12 months. Not only had the checks not taken place, the mayor said, he had only become aware of this after the fire. And, he revealed, of 128 bars and restaurants in Crans-Montana, only 40 had been inspected in 2025. Asked why, Feraud had no answer, though he did suggest Crans-Montana had too few inspectors for the number of properties that needed checking. This was echoed by Romy Biner, the mayor of neighbouring upmarket resort Zermatt, who told local media that many communities in the canton of Valais did not have the required resources to inspect so many premises.

GREENLANDERS FEAR FOR FUTURE AS ISLAND EMBROILED IN GEOPOLITICAL STORM

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will meet Danish and Greenlandic officials next week to discuss the fate of Greenland - a semi-autonomous territory of Denmark that President Donald Trump says he needs for national security. The vast island finds itself in the eye of a geopolitical storm with Trump's name on it and people here are clearly unnerved. Yet when you fly in, it looks so peaceful. Ice and snow-capped mountains stretch as far as the eye can see, interrupted here and there by glittering fjords - all between the Arctic and the Atlantic Oceans. It is said to sit on top of the world; much of it

above the Arctic Circle. Greenland is nine times the size of the UK but it only has 57,000 inhabitants, most of them indigenous Inuit. You find the biggest cluster of Greenlanders on the south-western coast in the capital, Nuuk. We arrived there as a frozen twilight was creeping across snow-covered pedestrian streets. Parents dragged their children home from school on sledges, and students mooched their way in and out of brightly-lit malls. Few wanted to talk to us about the Trump-related angst here. Those who did sounded very gloomy. One pensioner banged his walking stick on the ground in



emphasis as he told me the US must never plant its flag in Greenland's capital. A lady who said she was mistrustful of everyone these days, and didn't give her name, admitted she was "scared to death" about the prospect of Trump taking the island by force after she watched his military inter-

vention in Venezuela. Meanwhile, 20-something pottery-maker Pilu Chemnitz said: "I think we are all very tired of the US president. We have always lived a quiet and peaceful life here. Of course, the colonisation by Denmark caused a lot of trauma for many people but we just

want to be left alone." Never mind opposing a takeover by the US, which 85% of Greenlanders say they do, most also say they favour independence from Denmark - although many tell me they appreciate the Danish subsidies that help prop up their welfare state. While rich in untapped natural resources, poverty is a real issue here in Inuit communities. Overall, Greenlanders want a bigger, louder say, not only in their domestic policies, but in foreign affairs too. I went to the island's modest-looking parliament, the body of it built in a Scandinavian style with wooden slats and painted the same burnished red as the

Greenlandic flags fluttering by the entrance. No security checks. All pretty relaxed. Except for the roaring polar bear emblem - a symbol of Greenland, etched onto every sliding glass doors we pass. I was there to meet Pipaluk Lyng-Rasmussen, co-chair of the foreign affairs committee in parliament. She is an MP with the pro-independence Inuit Ataqatigiit party that is part of the coalition government here. "I think it's very important for us to speak out about what we want as a people," she told me. "We have always worked towards independence when we got home rule in 1979 and more independence in 2009.

Sunil Gavaskar Fulfils Promise To Jemimah Rodrigues. Their Musical Duet Wins Internet

Legendary Indian cricket team skipper Sunil Gavaskar shared a stunning moment with women's cricket team star Jemimah Rodrigues as he gifted her a bat-shaped guitar. Gavaskar also fulfilled his promise of singing a song with her in a heartwarming moment for fans. The legendary cricketer had previously promised that he would jam with Jemimah if she wins the Women's ODI World Cup and he kept his promise. In a video going viral on social media, Gavaskar was seen greeting Jemimah and gifting her a customised guitar that was shaped like a cricket bat. Gavaskar even joked that he was not the "opening bat" on the day. The highlight of the meeting came when the duo sang Yeh Dosti - the famous song from the film "Sholay" sung by Kishore Kumar and Manna Dey. "Sunil sir kept his promise and we ended up jamming with the coolest Bat-ar ever. This was a special



one," Jemimah posted on Instagram. Earlier, ormer India captain Anjum Chopra believes Jemimah Rodrigues will discover 'another side of herself' when she leads Delhi Capitals (DC) in the upcoming Women's Premier League (WPL) season, starting in Navi Mumbai on Friday. Jemimah was the vice-captain to Australia's multiple-time World Cup

winning captain Meg Lanning when DC finished as runners-up in three successive WPL seasons - 2023, 2024, and 2025. But with Meg becoming the skipper of UP Warriorz (UPW), Jemimah steps into the leadership role for DC for the first time. "See, expectations will be there with the franchise also. But for me, it's about when you entrust a player with a role,

they start understanding themselves in a different light altogether. So, she's captained Mumbai and been there at the helm. But now leading a franchise team is a different ballgame altogether. Now she will also explore another side of herself, not only as a batter or a fielder, but also as a captain," Anjum told IANS in an exclusive conversation on the eve of

the competition's commencement. "Captaincy does not happen only on the ground; it happens off the ground as well. So, you learn more about yourself, like how you're handling yourself in a situation, what you could do, and what you've done better in various manners in which you think as a batter, and a fielder, trying to be ahead of the competition, and sometimes winning a battle or not winning a battle. "So, I feel it's going to be a nice growth for Jemimah Rodrigues as a cricketer because now she will be handling players like Marizanne Kapp in the lineup, who are already established cricketers, and also players who share the dressing room with her, like Shafali Verma, and Niki Prasad, who is coming through the ranks very quickly. So, it's always a nice responsibility, but what a player makes of it, and how they travel that part of the journey, is what matters," she added.

"Couple Of Beers Now And Again": Brendon McCullum's Stunning Defence Of England Team After Ashes Drinking Row

England's Test team is under intense scrutiny following a 4-1 Ashes humiliation at the hands of Australia. Things went from bad to worse as multiple reports emerged of England players potentially going on a drinking spree during their four-day break to the Noosa resort between the second and third Tests. However, amidst pressure on his aggressive brand of cricket, England head coach Brendon McCullum defended the England team's Noosa vacation, even stating that many of the players aren't regular drinkers. "Half our guys don't have a drink, to be honest. They'll have a couple of beers every now and again. I think people do that in most walks of life," McCullum said, following England's defeat in the fifth Test. Controversy erupted following the third Test when it emerged that certain England players may have spent up to six days drinking during the nine-day gap between the second and third Tests of the series. A viral video of England opener Ben



Duckett seemingly drunk and unable to find his way back home made matters worse, with managing director Rob Key stating that an investigation on the drinking reports would take place within the team. England's only victory of the series coincidentally came in the fourth Test in Melbourne, in the immediate aftermath of the reported drinking scandal. Meanwhile, former England cricketer Kevin Pietersen called for changes in the national coaching setup and backed former

head coach Andy Flower as a potential successor to Brendon McCullum. The 41-year-old England star made a post on X to support his ex-coach. Pietersen said that his wild thought was bringing Flower back into the fold, adding that the Zimbabwe legend has evolved, understands the modern-day player, and gets Test cricket. "This is a WILD thought. I reckon one of my wildest. Can England bring back Andy Flower now that he's changed and in line with the modern-day player?"

Shubman Gill Asked About Indian Dressing Room Atmosphere Chatter Over Seniors' Relationship With Coaches

Shubman Gill makes a comeback in international cricket after a gap with the India vs New Zealand ODI series. This is India's last ODI series before the focus shifts to T20Is. Shubman Gill is not currently part of the T20I team but is the captain of the ODI and Test teams. Under his leadership in the ODIs, the focus has been on senior players like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. They are still going strong in the 50-over format, but there has been chatter about their relationship with the coaching staff, led by Gautam Gambhir. Gill was directly asked about this in the pre-match press conference. "A lot of things are being said and written about the relationship between senior players and the coaching staff. How are things on that



front?" a reporter asked Shubman Gill. "I think the team atmosphere is amazing. The players that you named have been in this atmosphere for decades, and they are the people who always try to push Indian cricket forward. And I think even in the last series, you saw how well they performed. So I think the atmosphere in the team is

great right now," Shubman Gill replied. Replying to a separate question, Gill added that having Rohit and Kohli in the side makes a captain's life much easier, because whenever there is a challenging situation, you can go to them for decision-making, which is valuable for any captain. "Among the two players you

have named, one is one of the greatest openers (Rohit) of all time in ODIs, and Virat bhai is one of the greatest ODI batsmen ever. So definitely, having these two people in your team makes your life a lot easier, and whenever you are in a challenging situation, you can go to them for input. Because they have often been in those situations, you can go to them to see how they think or what they would do. That piece of information is very valuable for any captain," Gill said. Gill also stressed the importance of finding the best combination and playing at full strength, irrespective of the opposition. "We don't look at any opposition, since they aren't at their full strength. We want to play at full strength and find the best combinations."

SA20: DSG And Sunrisers Share Points After Match Is Abandoned Without A Toss

The Durban's Super Giants vs Sunrisers Eastern Cape fixture at Kingsmead on Friday was abandoned without a toss due to inclement weather. A healthy and expectant crowd arrived at Kingsmead, hopeful of an exciting game of cricket but unfortunately consistent rain throughout the afternoon and evening saw the umpires call the match off at 20:00 local time. The two points each team receives consolidates Sunrisers Eastern Cape's position at the top of the table (17 points after 6 matches) and takes Durban's Super Giants to within one point of play-offs berth (11 points after 7



matches) but Pretoria Capitals have a match in hand over the star-studded DSG. Aiden Markram's side will bemoan the stop-start nature of their 2024 season with three no results from their seven matches,

notwithstanding their three losses putting them on the back foot for the second half of the group stage. Sunrisers meanwhile, who hold a nine point advantage over DSG, now only need one more win

from their remaining four group matches to seal their place in the Playoffs. The two teams will be hoping for better luck on Sunday when they're set to meet in the at St George's Park in the reverse fixture.

'Unacceptable to the badge' - Dyche fumes at FA Cup exit



Sean Dyche has called for some of his Nottingham Forest players to "have a look in the mirror" after an "unacceptable" first-half performance in their FA Cup loss at Wrexham. Forest were the first Premier League side in third-round action and the first casualty at the hands of lower league opposition. Having made eight changes from Tuesday's Premier League win at West Ham, Dyche watched in fury as his side trailed their Championship opponents 2-0 at the break. They fought back to make it 3-3 and force extra-time at Stok Cae Ras, but were beaten 4-3 in the penalty shootout after Igor Jesus and Omari Hutchinson had their spot-kicks saved by home keeper Arthur Okonkwo. "The first half was completely unacceptable," Dyche told TNT Sports. "I let the players know and there are cer-

tain individuals that certainly know and they have to look in the mirror. "But the strangeness of football, some players that came on in the second half were a credit and we went on and looked like a Premier League side. "You can't do that in the first half, it's completely unacceptable. It's unacceptable to me, but I said you have to look in the mirror because that's unacceptable to the badge as well. "They all knock on the door and say, 'why aren't I playing?'. Well the evidence is quite honestly there for some, not for all." While Dyche praised those who came off the bench - including two-goal Callum Hudson-Odoi - for acting as a "catalyst" for their second-half comeback, he continued to berate his side's efforts in a poor first 45 minutes. "I could have taken all of them off [at half-time]," he added.

7 6s, 9 4s, 192 Strike-Rate: Vaibhav Suryavanshi Sends Blunt Message To U-19 World Cup Rivals With 27-Ball Half-century

If India are to do well in the U-19 World Cup starting in Zimbabwe, a lot depends on Vaibhav Suryavanshi. The opener is still not 15, yet he is being considered the next superstar in the making in Indian cricket. In youth ODIs, he already has three centuries-the first player to do so before turning 15. He extended his jaw-dropping run with a sizzling hundred in the third ODI against South Africa recently. Sent in to bat, Suryavanshi, who smashed a 24-ball 68 in the previous game, once again went on a six-hitting spree, hammering 10 maximums and nine boundaries in a fluent 74-ball 127. He carried his form into a warm-up game against Scotland in Bulawayo on Saturday.



Suryavanshi slammed a 50-ball 96 at a strike rate of 192. His innings included nine fours and seven sixes. He reached the half-century mark in just 27 balls. The recent performance of the Rajasthan Royals star has left former India all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin utterly impressed, and he took to X (formerly Twitter) to congratulate

Suryavanshi. "171(95), 50(26), 190(84), 68(24), 108*(61), 46(25) & 127(74) today. These are just some of Vaibhav Suryavanshi's scores in the last 30 days across domestic & U-19 cricket. Enna thambi, indha adi podhuma, illa innum konjam venuma? Translation (What's all this, brother? Is this sample enough or are you

going to raise the bar further?)," wrote Ashwin after Suryavanshi's ton against South Africa. Ashwin further stated that with the upcoming U-19 World Cup and IPL 2026 in March, Suryavanshi's performance as an opener will be a great spectacle for all the fans. "You can't explain in words what this kid is doing at 14. With the U-19 WC around the corner, where he's expected to be the showstopper, followed immediately by the leap to the IPL for his first full season as an opener stepping into the big shoes of Sanju, the next four months of #VaibhavWatch are going to be exciting, telling us everything about his temperament, hunger & character," Ashwin added.

Scottish Premiership: O'Neill makes Celtic return in one of four matches

An early booking for Livingston defender Brooklyn Kabongolo after he takes out Kilmarnock forward Bruce Anderson near halfway. That's going to make it a long 90 minutes for Kabongolo. There's an early stoppage at Parkhead as Julian Araujo's chip smacks right off Will Ferry's face. Nine points separates St Mirren from the top six and it's Falkirk holding that position ahead of them. Notably, Stephen Robinson's side have two games in hand over several teams but will want to close that gap with a big opportunity today. Falkirk have strengthened with young striker Ben Parkinson signed from

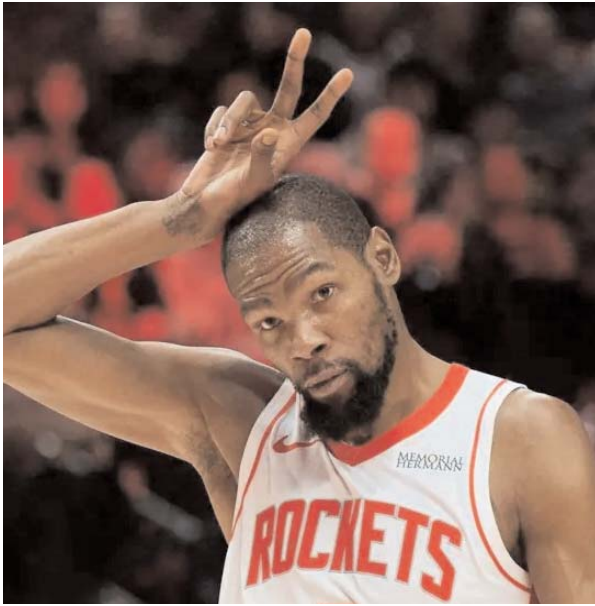


Newcastle. He makes the bench. Scott Bain has also committed to an additional two years as John McGlynn plans for the future as well as the here and now, which has been going very well this season. No signs of the nerves you'd expect a base-

ment battle to bring at a bitterly cold auld Almondvale. Naturally, there's a spring in the step of new Kilmarnock manager Neil McCann who is showing more excitement than he does when he's on SportsScene with Steven Thompson, while David

Martindale is his usual calm, pre-match self. Let's see if their respective demeanours are different at the end of this enormous match... Livingston manager David Martindale tells BBC Scotland: "Scott Arfield and Alex Tamm, their registrations only came through late after training yesterday so we kind of kept the bench open for them but it was hard to actually do any preparation in terms of the match. Hopefully, we can get them on the park. "Big game. I'm not going to try and hide behind that. There's a lot of games left in the season but I think this game, there's a lot of importance in this game.

Durant passes legend Chamberlain on all-time list



Kevin Durant moved past the great Wilt Chamberlain on the NBA all-time scoring list but his 30 points could not guide the Houston Rockets to a win against the Portland Trail Blazers. Durant, 37, has 31,435 points in his career and is now seventh on the all-time list. LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers leads the way with 42,601. The Trail Blazers triumphed 111-105 at Moda Center in Portland. Chamberlain, who died in 1999, is the only player to score 100 points in an NBA game and was a two-time champion with the Philadelphia 76ers and the Lakers. In 1962 he averaged a record 50.4 points a game, and was the leading NBA scorer when he retired in 1973. "You see the numbers. You just can't comprehend some-

body putting up 50 a game with 25 rebounds," Durant said before Friday's game. "You want to compete with that and try to match that as much as you can. "It's amazing just being in the top 10 with him, but to have the opportunity to pass him up, it's pretty sweet." Giannis Antetokounmpo blocked a shot by James and stole the ball from him on consecutive possessions in the final minute as the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Lakers 105-101 in LA to claim a fifth win in seven games. Stephen Curry finished with 27 points and a season-high 10 assists as the Golden State Warriors triumphed 137-103 at home against the Sacramento Kings. The Oklahoma City Thunder overcame a 21-point deficit in the second half to win 117-116 at the Memphis Grizzlies.

Vishnu Manchu Announces 100% Sports Scholarships at MBU & SVIS: A Big Step Toward Building India’s Future Olympians

In a major push to nurture sporting talent in India, Dynamic Star Vishnu Manchu who is serving as MAA President today announced a groundbreaking initiative- 100% sports scholarships at Mohan Babu University (MBU) and Sree Vidyaniketan International School (SVIS). The program, starting from the 2026-27 academic year, aims to provide complete support for young athletes with exceptional potential. This ambitious scholarship program begins with two major sports disciplines- Cricket, Basketball, and Badminton. Under this initiative, selected students will receive full support, covering academics, professional coaching, nutrition, training facilities, and accommodation. The institutions will collaborate with top-tier coaches from India and abroad, ensuring world-class guidance for the athletes. Vishnu Manchu revealed that this mission stems from a deeply personal dream — contributing to India’s sporting future in a significant way. With India preparing



and aspiring to host the 2036 Olympics, Vishnu Manchu envisions that MBU should produce Olympians by then. This long-term roadmap reflects his commitment to developing grassroots sports and offering deserving youngsters a platform to shine globally. *Speaking about the initia-

tive*, he emphasized that many talented children lose opportunities due to financial barriers, lack of mentorship, or inadequate infrastructure. This scholarship program is designed to eliminate all such hurdles and create a structured ecosystem where young athletes can thrive.

Anil Ravipudi: Chiranjeevi–Venkatesh Combo in Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu Will Make Everyone Say ‘Wow’

Mana Shankara Vara Prasad garu is a perfect family entertainer that everyone can connect with. Everyone who admires Chiranjeevi garu will be like 'wow'. The combination of Chiranjeevi garu and Venkatesh garu will be remembered forever: Director Anil Ravipudi Megastar Chiranjeevi and hit machine Anil Ravipudi are going to entertain the audience with the whole-some family entertainment 'Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu'. Adding to the excitement, Victory Venkatesh is playing a key role. Produced by Sahu Garapati and Sushmita Konidela under the banners of Shine Screens and Gold Box Entertainments, this film has Nayanthara playing the female lead, while Smt. Archana is presenting the film. The film promotions are going on wonderfully. The trailer and songs have greatly increased the expectations on the film. 'Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu' will be released worldwide on January 12 as a Sankranthi gift. On this occasion, director Anil Ravipudi shared the features of the film at a press conference.

You said you were nervous about the release time last year. How do you feel about this year?
-I am a little relaxed this time. The nervous percentage has decreased a little. The reason for that is Chiranjeevi garu. We released the Hook Step song at the pre-release event. Chiranjeevi garu's dance to that song, and the mischief that Venkatesh garu and I did in front of him at that event, all of this brought a positive vibe without me knowing it. I am very relaxed with this.

The hook step went viral, didn't it?
-There is a story behind that song. Actually, we thought it would be a melodious mass tune in that place. Both the songs Meesala Pilla and Shashirekha are also melody songs. I thought how about Chiranjeevi's introduction song also being a melody again. I told Chiranjeevi that the song was not that satisfactory. It rained while we were shooting the song and the shooting stopped. Chiranjeevi said that nature had given the signal. He had given the signal, right? Then we started



thinking about this song. This is the song that was supposed to be released in Shashirekha's place. After the entire shoot was done, we shot this song in the last schedule. Finally, mega magic happened.

Bheems gave a wonderful tune. He did it very new. Aata Sandeep has always wanted to choreograph for Chiranjeevi's song. This movie gave him an opportunity. He grabbed that opportunity. He did a won-

derful choreography. It was Ramajogayya who gave the word hook step.

When it comes to music, they mostly work with local technicians. Why?
Bheems mostly encourages new, local talent. Local singers also sang the blockbuster Pongal song in Sankranthi. Udit garu and Hook Step Baba Sahel garu sang the song Meesala Pilla in this film.

- Among the choreographers, Bhanu Master, Vijay, and Sandeep have proven their acting skills wonderfully. All our local technicians are also coming into the limelight. I am very happy.

If you come to Sankranti, you have a track record of not turning back, right?
It is not good to make too much of an impression. The pressure increases. It is enough if there is a feeling that Sankranti Kochi is giving good entertainment. Whoever comes with good content, all those films will play. In my case, the genres I choose are mostly about human relationships, something that every family can relate to. That is a plus for me.

What is the emotional touch you took in this film?
There is an emotional point in this movie that needs to be revealed somewhere in the teaser and trailer so far. You have to see it on screen. Along with the comedy, there will be a strong emotional ride. The scenes between Chiranjeevi, Nayanthara and the children are very heartwarming.

- The way a husband and wife handle a problem is shown in a very new light in this movie. It will definitely connect with everyone. When you see that emotion on the screen, everyone will feel that this is the right thing to do.

It takes a lot of effort to make a story for Chiranjeevi and Venkatesh. Tell us about the journey of this story?
-Luckily, I get hooked on the first idea. Venky garu has a very good sync with me. Chiranjeevi garu really liked the idea I told him. He also liked the characterization a lot. I haven't done a story that runs along with characterization in the recent past. Taking a story from the hero's point of view felt new to me.



I have played a good character with scope for performance in 'Nari Nari Naduma Murari'. It is a fun family entertainer that everyone will enjoy: Heroine Samyukta

Charming Star Sharva and Ram Abbaraju are starring in the wholesome family entertainer 'Nari Nari Nadu Murari' directed by Ram Abbaraju. Produced by Anil Sunkara and Ramabrahmam Sunkara in association with Adventures International Pvt. Ltd. under the banner of AK Entertainments, the film stars Samyukta and Sakshi Vaidya as the female leads. The promotional content has already created a good buzz. The film will hit the theatres on January 14. On this occasion, the film's features were shared at a joint press conference.

How does it feel to arrive

at Sankranti?
It is a great pleasure to be here for Sankranthi. Sankranthi is a big festival. Every film that comes during Sankranthi is well received. This is a very clean comedy entertainer. A perfect movie for the festival.

-I really liked it when the director told me this story. Very beautiful story. I really like doing comedy films. Shooting is also very fun.

What will your character be like in this?
-My character has a lot of importance in this. When there are two heroines, the audience naturally thinks it is a love triangle story.

But this is not the case. The director has written this story with a very unique point. You should see that on the screen.

-The director gave me a very good character. It has a very good situation comedy. I dubbed for this movie myself. I enjoyed it a lot.

-I was so excited when I signed this film, and I was still so excited after it was completed. I watched the movie in dubbing. It was amazing.

How did it feel to act with Sharwa?
-Sharwanand garu is a hero with excellent timing. He is very supportive and

helpful. Working with him is a very good experience.

-The roles of Naresh and Satya will also entertain everyone.

About director Ram Abbaraju?
-The director is very cool. He doesn't feel any pressure when the film is coming out in such a competitive environment. He is always very confident. I have never seen him angry. He is a very clear director.

How did it feel working on Anil's production?
-Anil garu is very passionate about cinema. He is the main pillar of cinema. He supports everyone. I wish

him a huge success.

Witness about medical?
-We have good combination scenes. I have a lot of respect for him. The way he prepares for every scene is very good. He works very hard.

What kind of roles would you like to play?
-I have done a variety of roles so far. Each of my films has a variety. I want to do all kinds of roles. I also want to do biopics. I also want to do comedy characters.

What movie gave you a good experience in 2025?
-I worked with Puri Jagannath. It was a fantastic film. To say the least, I

enjoyed the acting and shooting process a lot.

If you were the one, would the brand of movie hit come?
-We make films for the audience. If there is content, the audience will definitely watch it.

How is the Sankranti festival celebrated?
-It is my habit to celebrate every festival wherever I go. I wish everyone would send good flour dishes to my house (laughs).

When will black gold arrive?
-The shooting may be completed in February. The film is coming along very well.

Mahesh Babu Unveils Nephew Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni’s Intense First Look from Srinivasa Mangapuram

Superstar Mahesh Babu Unveiled Powerful First Look Of- Ashwini Dutt Presents, Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni, Rasha Thadani, Ajay Bhupathi, P Kiran, Chandamama Kathalu's Srinivasa Mangapuram A fresh star from the Ghattamaneni family is ready to make his mark. Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni, belonging to the illustrious family of Superstar Krishna, steps into cinema with a debut that already carries immense promise. His first film Srinivasa Mangapuram is directed by Ajay Bhupathi, known for crafting intense, rooted, and unforgettable worlds in RX 100 and Mangalavaram. The film is backed by Ashwini Dutt of Vyjayanthi Movies and produced by P. Kiran of Chandamama Kathalu, ensuring a powerful and high-quality launchpad. The team previously unveiled the film's title and compelling pre-look poster that grabbed attention. Today, Superstar Mahesh Babu unveiled the powerful first look of his nephew Jaya Krishna's debut film. The young actor is seen riding a motorcycle at high speed through a dusty, rugged ter-



rain. The motion blur surrounding him amplifies the sense of danger. He leans forward aggressively, gripping the bike with one hand while aiming a handgun with fierce determination in the other. His sharp focus and tense posture clearly indicate that he is caught in a high-stakes pursuit. The team brands this launchpad as the "Debut of the Year 2026". Overall, the first look promises a gripping, high-octane action drama—setting the stage for a debut packed with power, intensi-

ty, and attitude. In fact, Jaya Krishna underwent extensive preparation for his role before the shoot commenced. Bollywood actress Rasha Thadani makes her Tollywood debut in the movie billed to be a romantic action saga. Ashwini Dutt, a name closely linked with some of Telugu cinema's most defining launches, is once again at the forefront of introducing a new star- Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni. The film has some promising talents handling different crafts.

Shahid Kapoor goes dark, violent in first look of Vishal Bhardwaj’s ‘O’ Romeo’



Mumbai: The makers of Vishal Bhardwaj's "O Romeo" on Friday unveiled the first look of Bollywood star Shahid Kapoor from the upcoming movie, set to be released in theatres on February 13. Also featuring Triptii Dimri, the film marks the fourth collaboration for Kapoor and Bhardwaj. The duo has previously worked on "Kaminey", "Haider", and "Rangoon". The upcoming action thriller is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala under his production banner Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment. The production house shared the first look of Shahid's titular character on its official social media handles. The poster presents a darkly and violent image with Shahid shown bloodied, roaring in rage,

and marked with tattoos. The official plotline of the movie has been kept under wraps by the filmmaker, best known for masterfully adapting Shakespeare's "Macbeth", "Othello" and "Hamlet" for the big screen with his critically-acclaimed movies "Maqbool" (2003), "Omkaara" (2006) and "Haider" (2014). The cast of "O'Romeo" also includes veteran actors Nana Patekar and Farida Jalal as well as Avinash Tiwary, Vikrant Massey, Disha Patani and Tamannaah Bhatia. Shahid was last seen in Rosshan Andrews's "Deva", where he shared the screen with Pooja Hegde. He will be starring alongside Kriti Sanon and Rashmika Mandanna in an upcoming sequel of "Cocktail".

Kamal Haasan demands ‘principled relook’ at film certification process

Chennai: Actor-Politician Kamal Haasan on Saturday called for an overhaul of the country's film certification process, citing the need for greater transparency and accountability. His comments come at a critical juncture for the Tamil film industry, following the stalled release of Vijay's upcoming flick 'Jana Nayagan'. In a statement, he said, "What is required now is a principled relook at the certification processes with defined timelines for certification, transparent evaluation, and written, reasoned justification for every suggested cut or edit." He emphasised that now is the time for the film fraternity to unite and engage in a meaningful, constructive dialogue with our government institutions to protect artistic freedom.

affirming trust in its artists and its people," Haasan, also a member of the Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, added."He emphasised that now is the time for the film fraternity to unite and engage in a meaningful, constructive dialogue with our government institutions to protect artistic freedom. "Such reform will safeguard creative freedom, uphold constitutional values, and strengthen India's democratic institutions by

