

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

25-01-2026

Total pilgrims: 84,014

Tonsures: 35,131

Hundi kanukalu: 3.69CR

Waiting Compartments..Out side line at Octopus Building (Near Gogabam Dam circle).

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) ..20 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889



Rahul Gandhi invites citizens to share air pollution impact stories on ‘Awaaz Bharat Ki’



WORLD | NEWS
German defense minister urges Trump to apologize for Afghanistan remarks

SPORTS | NEWS
India not far from hosting its first-ever Asian Winter Games: Ice skater Vishwaraj Jadeja



IN BRIFS

Gold Prices Hit Rs 1.6 Lac For The First Time Ever



New Delhi (TSIT): Gold has shattered records by surging past \$5,000 per ounce (Rs 1.58 lakh per 10 grams) for the first time ever, marking a historic milestone in one of the most breathtaking rallies in precious metals history. Silver has followed suit, hovering around or above \$100- \$105 per ounce, with sharp gains extending from its already strong 2025 performance. The development has propelled precious metals to rival major tech stocks in total market value, as investors flock to gold and silver amid global uncertainty. As of Monday, January 26, spot gold climbed to an all-time high of \$5,092.71 per ounce. The current live spot price is hovering around \$5,086 to \$5,097 per ounce. This surge is driven by tensions between the US and NATO over Greenland, adding to financial and geopolitical uncertainty.

Chinese manja claims life of 5-yr-old girl in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (TSIT): Banned Chinese manja claimed another life in Telangana, with a five-year-old girl becoming the latest victim in Hyderabad on Monday. The incident occurred in the Kukatapally area in Telangana when the girl was riding a motorcycle with her father and sister. According to police, the manja of a flying kite got entangled around her neck and caused a deep cut. Nishvika Aditya (5) died on the spot due to profuse bleeding. She was sitting in front of her father, who was driving the bike while her sister was riding pillion. They were coming to Kukatapally from Khajipalli in Medchal-Malkajgiri district. Police registered a case and took up the investigation. This is the second such incident in Telangana in less than two weeks. A 35-year-old man in Sangareddy district lost his life in a similar incident on January 14. Avidesh, a migrant worker from Uttar Pradesh, was riding a motorcycle when the manja got entangled around his neck. He suffered a deep cut and died on the spot. More than a dozen people were injured by Chinese manja in Hyderabad and its outskirts this month.

Republic Day: PM Modi's deep maroon, golden motif turban steals show

New Delhi (TSIT) : On the occasion of India's 77th Republic Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's choice of headgear once again became a major talking point, drawing widespread admiration, media attention, and social media buzz across the country. While paying solemn tributes to fallen soldiers at the National War Memorial early in the day, PM Modi wore a deep maroon Rajasthani-style safa (pagdi), which immediately attracted public and media interest. The turban featured intricate golden zari motifs, vibrant yellow accents, and subtle elements of the classic bandhej (tie-dye) pattern, often associated with Rajasthan's rich textile heritage and traditional craftsmanship. The rich maroon hue, symbolising bravery, sacrifice, and valour, perfectly complemented the occasion's reflective and patriotic tone, while the golden peacock feather motifs and mus-



tard-yellow highlights added a sense of regal elegance and cultural depth. Paired with his signature light blue bandhgala coat, navy blue kurta, and white trousers, the pagdi stood out as a distinctive blend of tradition, symbolism, and contemporary style. Many observers interpreted the choice as a nod to Rajasthan's warrior legacy and India's armed forces, with some reports suggesting

subtle tributes to historical valour, self-reliance, and national pride, themes central to this year's Republic Day celebrations. The headgear quickly went viral on social media platforms, with users praising its craftsmanship, colour combination, and aesthetic appeal. Several posts highlighted the turban as a reflection of India's diverse cultural traditions. News outlets also highlight-

ed it as one of the standout elements of the day's events, with headlines describing how the deep maroon, golden motif turban "stole the show" during the ceremonial proceedings. Comparisons to PM Modi's previous Republic Day looks -- ranging from bright red Bandhani styles to multi-coloured safas -- underscored his long-standing tradition of incorporating regional Indian craftsmanship into national occasions. Fashion analysts noted the pagdi's impeccable tying in the classic Rajasthani style, emphasising its role in projecting cultural pride amid the grandeur of the military parade at Kartavya Path. As images circulated widely across digital platforms, the turban came to symbolise how personal style can honour national heritage, unity, and collective identity. This year's choice further reinforced PM Modi's pattern of meaningful attire on Republic Day, turning a simple headgear into a powerful emblem of respect, tradition, and contemporary leadership.

India, EU concludes negotiations for FTA successfully



NEW DELHI (TSIT) : India and the European Union (EU) have successfully concluded negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement, which will help boost two-way commerce and strengthen economic ties between the two sides, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday, January 26. He said the trade deal from the Indian perspective is balanced and forward-looking, which will help in the better economic integration of

India with the EU. It will propel trade and investments in both economies, he said. "Negotiations have been successfully concluded. The deal has been finalised," Agrawal said. Legal scrubbing of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) text is underway, and the endeavour will be to complete the processes and sign the pact at an early date, he said. The deal is expected to be signed this year, and it may come into effect early next year.

CM Revanth begins executive education at Harvard University

Hyderabad (TSIT): Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy began his executive education at the famed Kennedy School at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, with program orientation and cohort introduction. The program, "Leadership in the 21st Century", began on Sunday afternoon local time with the session on "Analysing Authority and Leadership", according to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office. Monday morning classes started from 7 a.m. with the cohort taking on several different classes, large class case analysis, and consultative group work. Classes will close late evening, around 6 p.m. Meanwhile, winter emergency is on in the entire area, with a raging snow storm Fern, marked by snowfall in excess of 2 feet (24 inches) and temperatures below -20 degrees Celsius in the Boston area. The Chief Minister had left for the United States last week after attending the



World Economic Forum annual meeting at Davos, Switzerland. Revanth Reddy is claimed to be the first Chief Minister in independent India to enrol for a program in the Ivy League. The program is titled, "Leadership for the 21st Century" (chaos, conflict, and courage). He will attend classes till January 30. CMO had earlier said that he will undertake classes, assignments and submit homework, and execute

group projects with fellow global participants. The class will have students from over 20 countries spread across five continents. The Chief Minister will receive program course certification from Harvard, the first for any current Chief Minister in office in Indian history. Opposition BJP criticised Revanth Reddy enrolling for the program, questioning the timing and financial prudence of the move. BJP State chief spokesperson N. V. Subash remarked that leadership is not acquired through short-term courses but demonstrated through governance, accountability, and results on the ground. "Shouldn't such academic pursuits have been completed earlier in life?" he asked, adding that the Chief Minister's primary classroom today should be the state he governs, not an overseas campus. Subash further questioned whether the trip reflects a prioritisation of personal aspirations over public responsibilities.

Patriotic fervour marks R-Day celebrations in Telugu states

Hyderabad / Amaravati (TSIT): Patriotic fervour marked 77th Republic Day celebrations on Monday in the Telugu states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Governors of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh led the celebrations by hoisting the national flag at the main official functions in their respective states. Ministers and top officials led the celebrations held in the districts. Flag hoisting at government offices, educational institutions, public places and in residential areas marked the occasion. Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma unfurled the tricolour at the main ceremony held at Parade Grounds, Secunderabad. He reviewed a colourful parade by the contingents of armed forces, police and paramilitary forces and took the salute. As Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is on a visit to the US, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka accompanied the Governor in paying tributes at the Martyrs' Memorial. The Governor hosted At Home at Lok Bhavan in the evening. Deputy Chief



Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Chief Justice of Telangana High Court Aparesk Kumar Singh, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar, Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, State ministers, and leaders of Congress, BRS and BJP attended the event. Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar and Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy hoisted the flag at the ceremony held at the Legislature complex. Chief Justice Aparesk Kumar Singh hoisted the national flag during the Republic Day programme held at Telangana High Court. In Andhra Pradesh, the main

official function to mark Republic Day was held for the first time in the state capital, Amaravati. Governor S. Abdul Nazeer hoisted the national flag and reviewed the parade. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, ministers and top officials attended the ceremony. The Governor hosted 'At Home' in the evening at Lok Bhavan in Vijayawada. Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, ministers, leaders of various political parties and top officials were present. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu hoisted the national flag at his official residence.

Republic day: DRDO unveils long range anti-ship hypersonic missile

NEW DELHI (TSIT): The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) showcased several of its path-breaking innovations aimed at strengthening national security during the 77th Republic Day Parade at Kartavya Path. The display highlighted India's growing indigenous defence capabilities, with a focus on advanced missile systems and cutting-edge naval technologies. Among the key systems showcased were the Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-AShM) and the DRDO tableau themed 'Naval Technologies for Combat Submarines'.



The LR-AShM, along with its launcher, was presented during the parade as a major milestone in India's hypersonic weapons programme. The weapon system has been designed to meet the coastal

battery requirements of the Indian Navy and significantly enhance maritime strike capabilities. The LR-AShM is a hypersonic glide missile capable of engaging both static and moving targets.

From Op Sindoor to indigenous missiles: India flaunts military might at 77th Republic Day

NEW DELHI (TSIT): India ushered in its 77th Republic Day on Monday with a grand display of its cultural heritage, economic growth and military might that included warplanes, indigenously-built missiles, newly-raised units and lethal weapons used during Operation Sindoor. President of the European Council Antonio Costa and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen graced the celebrations as chief guests, marking a significant diplomatic moment alongside the military display. The annual military parade reflected India's strategic autonomy and diverse sour-



ing of its defence hardware with Russian-origin platforms showcased alongside

US-manufactured ones. Although the overarching theme of the event was 150

years of 'Vande Mataram', the Indian military's Operation Sindoor too found prominence at the parade on the Kartavya Path, the centrepiece boulevard of the national capital. The parade commenced with the President Droupadi Murmu taking the salute shortly after she, Costa and von der Leyen, flanked by the Indian president's bodyguards, arrived at the Kartavya Path in a traditional buggy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, several other Union ministers, the country's top military brass, foreign diplomats and senior officials were among the spectators.

Rahul Gandhi invites citizens to share air pollution impact stories on ‘Awaaz Bharat Ki’



NEW DELHI (TSIT): Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday urged citizens across the country to share their personal stories on how air pollution is affecting their health and the well-being of their loved ones through a portal titled ‘Awaaz Bharat Ki’.

‘Awaaz Bharat Ki’ is an initiative launched by Rahul Gandhi to offer a direct platform for people to convey their thoughts, suggestions and concerns to his office, according to details available on its official website. In a post on X, Gandhi highlighted the human and economic cost of worsening air quality, saying, “We are paying a heavy price for air pollution with our health and with our economy. Crores of ordinary Indians bear this burden every day.”Underlining the urgency of addressing the issue,

he said that the most vulnerable sections of society are suffering the worst consequences.

“Children and the elderly suffer the most. Livelihoods, especially of construction workers and daily wage earners, are severely impacted. This crisis cannot be forgotten until next winter. The first step towards change is to raise our voices,” Gandhi said. Calling on people to participate, he added, “Share your story of how air pollution has affected you or your loved ones at Awaaz Bharat Ki. Your voice matters, and it is my duty to raise it.” The appeal comes at a time when New Delhi and several surrounding cities have been grappling with severe pollution levels over the past few months, leading to serious respiratory and other health-related problems among residents. Dense smog and persistently high pollution levels have made it increasingly difficult for people, particularly children and the elderly, to

step outdoors.Over the past few months, schools in the national capital have also been forced to shift to online classes on multiple occasions due to the Air Quality Index plunging into the ‘severe’ category.

In December last year, residents of Delhi staged protests against rising pollution levels and demanded a concrete action plan to tackle the crisis.More than a hundred protesters, including students, activists and concerned citizens, gathered at Jantar Mantar, urging both the State and Central governments to take immediate steps to curb deteriorating air quality in the national capital. The Congress party, during the Winter Session of Parliament last year, repeatedly raised the issue of air pollution in both Houses. The party leaders also held protests, carrying placards and demanding accountability from the ruling dispensation over the worsening environmental and public health situation.

ED attaches fresh PACL assets worth over Rs 1,986 crore

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it has attached fresh properties worth over Rs 1,986 crore as part of its money laundering investigation against Chandigarh-based PACL (Pearls Group), accused of orchestrating a Rs 48,000 crore Ponzi scheme.

The latest action has taken the total value of assets attached so far in the case to Rs 7,589 crore.

In a statement, the agency said it has provisionally attached 37 immovable properties, located in Punjab’s Ludhiana and Jaipur in Rajasthan, valued at Rs 1,986.48 crore, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

A part of the alleged illicit funds generated from this fraud was used for the acquisition of these 37 assets, it said.The ED probe stems from a CBI case

against PACL Ltd, its late promoter Nirmal Singh Bhangoo and some others.

Bhangoo died in August 2024. The accused entities and individuals of PACL operated an “illegal” collective investment scheme, fraudulently mobilising over Rs 60,000 crore from lakhs of investors across India under the guise of sale and development of agricultural land, as per the ED. Investors were induced to invest through cash down payment and instalment payment plans and were made to sign “misleading” documents, including agreements, powers of attorney, and other instruments, it said.”In the majority of cases, no land was ever delivered, and approximately Rs 48,000 crore remains unpaid to investors,” the agency said. Three charge sheets have been filed by the ED till now as part of this case registered in 2016.



Banks to go on nationwide strike on Jan 27, Unions seek 5-day work week

New Delhi (GNS): Banking operations of public sector banks across the country are likely to be impacted on Tuesday with the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) deciding to go ahead with a nationwide strike on January 27 to press for the immediate implementation of a five-day work week. The strike call by the UFBU, an umbrella body of nine unions representing officers and employees, comes after a conciliation meeting on January 23 with the chief labour

Chandrasekhar said, “This movement is not against customers, but for a sustainable, humane, and efficient banking system. A rested banker serves the nation better. A balanced workforce strengthens financial stability. 5-Day banking is not a luxury; it is an economic and human necessity.” Services such as cash deposits, withdrawals, cheque clearances, and administrative work are expected to be hit at branches of public sector banks (PSBs), including State Bank of



commissioner failed to yield a positive outcome. With banks remaining closed on January 25 (Sun) and January 26 (Republic Day), the strike on Tuesday will result in a disruption of branch-level services for three consecutive days. “Despite detailed discussions during the conciliation proceedings, there was no assurance on our demand. Hence, we have been compelled to proceed with the strike action,” All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA), a constituent of UFBU, General Secretary C H Venkatachalam told PTI.All India Bank Officers’ Confederation (AIBOC) General Secretary Rupam Roy said the decision to declare all Saturdays as holidays was agreed between the Indian Banks’ Association and UFBU during the wage revision settlement in March 2024.“It is unfortunate that the government is not responding to our genuine demand. There would be no loss of man-hours as we have agreed to work an extra 40 minutes daily from Monday to Friday,” he said.

MS Admissions 2026-27 According to another UFBU constituent National Confederation of Bank Employees (NCBE) General Secretary L

India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), and Bank of Baroda.

However, operations at major private sector lenders like HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Axis Bank are expected to remain largely unaffected as their employees are not part of the unions that will be going on strike. Digital banking services, including UPI and internet banking, will continue to function, though ATM cash availability could face localised issues due to logistical delays.

Several public sector lenders, including banking giant SBI have informed stock exchanges about the potential impact. “We advise that while the bank has made necessary arrangements to ensure normal functioning in its branches and offices on the day of strike, it is likely that work in the bank may be impacted by the strike,” SBI said in a regulatory filing on Friday.The unions are demanding the declaration of all Saturdays as holidays, a key point that was reportedly agreed upon during the 12th Bipartite Settlement signed with the Indian Banks’ Association (IBA) in March 2024 but is awaiting government notification. Currently, banks remain open on the first, third, and fifth Saturdays of every month.

Kerala CM Vijayan slams Centre, calls for unity on Republic Day



Thiruvananthapuram (GNS): Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday, January 26, targeted the Centre, saying the spirit of the Constitution and democratic values were facing unprecedented challenges, and called for unity to defend secularism and federalism on the occasion of Republic Day.Extending Republic Day greetings, Vijayan said in a Facebook post that the day renewed the proud memories of India becoming a sovereign, democratic republic, even as conscious attempts were being made to undermine the principles of secularism and federalism enshrined in the Constitution. He said the Constitution was not merely a legal document, but the soul of the idea of India that celebrates diversity and guarantees equal justice.

The chief minister said the occasion called for vigilance against forces attempt-

ing to weaken the vision of “unity in diversity” and impose a monolithic ideology.

“The federal concept of a strong Centre with empowered states is facing serious challenges. We should stand together against policies that aim to weaken federalism by curtailing the financial powers of states and turning constitutional institutions into political tools,” he said.

Vijayan said Kerala’s alternative development models based on decentralisation of power and people’s participation provided strength to the struggle to protect constitutional values. Calling for renewed commitment to secularism and democracy, he said the politics of division must be countered with love and fraternity.

“Let us move forward together in this struggle to protect India—for a New Kerala and a progressive India,” he said.

Reliance stays away from Russian oil, public sector firms lap it up

Betul (GNS): Reliance Industries Ltd, India’s biggest buyer of Russian crude oil, has not bought any barrels from the Kremlin in January so far, while state-run refiners have stepped up imports prompted by discounts hitting some USD 7 per barrel, almost triple the level seen in mid-2025.Reliance, which was touted as the world’s biggest buyer of seaborne Russian oil at around 600,000 barrels per day in 2025, did not buy any Russian crude oil in first three weeks of January, industry sources said, and ship-tracking data showed.

HPCL-Mittal Energy Ltd — a joint venture of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd and the London-based Mittal Group of steel czar Lakshmi Mittal — Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd and HPCL too did not pick up any Russian crude.

However, state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) bought an average of 470,000 bpd, its highest ever, data from maritime intelligence firm Kpler showed. IOC had bought 427,000 bpd in December 2025.

State-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) bought 164,000 bpd this month, up from 143,000 bpd in December 2025. Russian oil firm Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy, which has been cut from other suppliers after the European Union slapped sanctions on it, continued to source crude from Russia, buying some 469,000 bpd this month. Indian imports of Russian oil dipped slightly to 1.1 million bpd in the first three weeks of January from 1.2 million bpd in December. The volumes in both months are much lower than November’s 1.84 million bpd, reflecting the impact of US sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil, Russia’s two biggest oil exporters, that came into effect from November 21. Kpler analyst Sumit Ritolia said India’s Russian crude purchases in January 2026 and across Q1 2026 are expected to average around 1.2 million bpd and 1.3-1.5 million bpd, respectively. “Nayara, BPCL and IOC bought fresh cargoes in January



2026, with others (RIL, MRPL, HMEL) staying out as of now,” he said. Indian refiners are currently sourcing Russian crude through a mix of channels, but the trend for most buyers has shifted toward newer non-sanctioned intermediaries rather than clean, direct liftings from the major Russian producers.

“Direct deliveries linked to Rosneft and Lukoil are still taking place, but they are increasingly concentrated with Nayara, which has continued lifting Russian barrels given its different risk posture and Russian linkage, while other Indian refiners are more selectively buying through non-sanctioned trading entities that have emerged over the last 2-3 months to keep flows moving in a more compliance-friendly structure (for example Alghaf marine, rusexport, etc and other newly active intermediaries),” he added. Close to 60 per cent of India’s Russian imports in January went to state-run refiners IOC and BPCL, and the rest to Nayara Energy.In January, Rosneft supplied 130,000 bpd oil to India while Lukoil shipped 103,000 bpd. Unsanctioned Surgutneftegas and RusExport shipped the bulk of oil, Kpler data showed. A Reliance spokesperson had earlier this month stated that the company did not receive a single Russian cargo in January, while its purchases in December were half those in November. HMEL perhaps stopped purchases of Russian crude oil because of the potential impact on the global operations of Mittal Group. HMEL averaged 153,000 bpd of Russian oil imports in 2025.

Bihar teacher arrested for raising pro-Pakistan slogans during Republic Day ceremony

Patna, Jan 26: In a shocking incident from Supaul district, Bihar, a government school teacher was arrested for allegedly raising slogans in support of Pakistan’s first Governor-General, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, during the Republic Day flag-hoisting ceremony. The event took place at Abhuwar High School under Kishanganj block as part of the 77th Republic Day celebrations. The accused, Mohammad Mansoor Alam, reportedly chanted “Long Live Mr Jinnah” during the ceremony, which was captured on a mobile phone. The video quickly went viral on social media, sparking outrage among residents and the school community.Teachers, students, and attendees immediately objected to the



remarks. Following the incident, the school headmaster filed a formal complaint with the local police. Students later confirmed in their statements that the teacher had urged children to chant slogans such as “Long Live Mr

Acting on the complaint and evidence, Supaul police arrested Alam. Superintendent of Police Sharath R.S. stated, “The accused has been arrested based on the complaint and evidence. Such activities during a national festival are extremely serious. Strict legal action will be taken as per the law.” He added that a thorough investigation is ongoing to examine all aspects of the incident.

The incident has triggered widespread anger among locals and school authorities, with many calling it an insult to the national spirit of Republic Day and demanding strict action. Police have assured the public that the matter will be handled firmly and without leniency.

Uttarakhand temples to restrict entry to Hindus only, BKTC confirms

Dehradun, Jan 26: The Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) announced that entry to the sacred Badrinath and Kedarnath temples, part of the revered Char Dham circuit, will soon be restricted exclusively to Hindus. This move will apply to all temples managed by the committee, the BKTC said.

BKTC president Hemant Dwivedi confirmed that non-Hindus will no longer be allowed to enter any temple under the committee’s jurisdiction. He added that a formal proposal to enforce the restriction will be presented to the temple committee board in its upcoming



meeting. Badrinath temple is scheduled to reopen on April 23 after a six-month winter closure, while the reopening date for Kedarnath will be

announced during Maha Shivratri.

Gangotri and Yamunotri, the other two shrines of the Chota Char Dham circuit, are set to

reopen on April 19, coinciding with Akshaya Tritiya. The announcement comes amid ongoing debates in Uttarakhand over limiting non-Hindu access at major religious sites. Earlier this month, posters declaring Haridwar’s Har ki Pauri as “off-limits for non-Hindus” sparked controversy. The posters, installed by the Shri Ganga Sabha, labeled the area as a “Hindu zone” and carried the message, “Non-Hindus Prohibited Entry Zone.” The Sabha, however, said the aim was to raise awareness about legal rules and prevent disputes, not to discriminate.

77th Republic Day celebrated with patriotic fervour in Mangaluru, Udupi

Mangaluru/Udupi, Jan 26: The 77th Republic Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour and grandeur across Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts on Monday, with ministers calling for peace, social harmony and responsible citizenship while highlighting the state government's developmental initiatives.

In Mangaluru, the district-level Republic Day celebrations were held at Nehru Maidan, where dakshina kannada district in-charge minister Dinesh Gundu Rao unfurled the national flag and delivered his address. He warned that the government would not tolerate any individual or organisation attempting to mislead local youth for personal gain or incite them into violent activities. The minister said peace and harmony would prevail only when people practised the true essence of their respective religions while respecting other faiths. He stressed that sustained law and order was essential for development and urged citizens to cooperate with the



administration. Divisive forces that seek to fragment society, he said, remain a major obstacle to progress.

Referring to development works, Dinesh Gundu Rao said the modernisation of the Mangaluru fishing harbour is being undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 37 crore. The project includes construction of a 320-metre-long new jetty, development of modern infrastructure, reconstruction of auction halls and installation of

drainage facilities, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the fishing community.

Delhi-based probationary IPS officer Ananya Srivastava served as the parade commander and conducted the parade commands in Kannada. During the programme, 10 government school students who secured the highest marks in the SSLC examination were honoured with cash awards of Rs 50,000 each in place of computers. KSRTC drivers who

completed 15 years of accident-free service were felicitated with silver medals. The family of Sindhu Shree, who donated organs after her death, was also honoured.

Cultural programmes were presented by students of Bethel Resal, Yenepoya, Carmel and St Agnes schools. The Bharat Sevadal Mullakadu school team secured first place in the parade competition, while the Scouts boys team from government high school,

Kinnikambla, won second place and received the rolling shield.

Among those present were MP Capt Brijesh Chowta, deputy commissioner Darshan, IGP Amit Singh, police commissioner Sudheer Kumar Reddy, SP Arun Kumar, additional deputy commissioner Raju and heads of various corporations and academies. The programme was compered by Manjula Shetty and Umesh. Meanwhile, in Udupi, the 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the Mahatma Gandhi Stadium, Ajjarkad. Udupi district in-charge minister and minister for women and child development, disabled and senior citizens empowerment Laxmi Hebbalkar hoisted the national flag and led the celebrations.

Addressing the gathering, Hebbalkar said January 26 marked the implementation of the Constitution of India and reminded citizens of their rights and duties. She paid tribute to freedom fighters and urged the youth to uphold moral values and

contribute responsibly to nation-building.

Highlighting government initiatives, the minister said 'Akkapade' centres have been established across all districts and police commissionerates to support women and children facing abuse, neglect or exploitation. She noted that more than 100 bills had been passed in the last two-and-a-half years to address public issues, including the Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Prevention Bill aimed at maintaining social harmony.

On the occasion, progressive farmers were felicitated and scholarships were distributed to meritorious students. The Republic Day parade featured contingents from the district police, women police wing, fire and emergency services, home guards, NCC cadets, and scouts and guides from various schools and colleges.

The formal programme concluded with colourful cultural performances by students from across the district, reflecting India's unity in diversity.

77th Republic Day Celebration at The Mysore Electrical Industries Limited



Bengaluru: We should all work under the Constitution and uphold the importance of the Constitution and has MEI been contributing its own way for the progress of the country, said MEI President S. Manohar.

Speaking at the 77th Republic Day celebrations in The Mysore Electrical Industries Limited, he said that on this auspicious day, the eminent personalities who died fighting for freedom will be remembered and all the great leaders who worked hard to implement the Constitution will be paid tribute.

S. Manohar asked the officers and staff to work towards

further strengthening the organization in collaboration with the state government. Manohar gave the call and on this occasion, the struggle of Krantiveer Sangolli Rayanna was remembered and homage was paid to him. By the citizens, for the citizens, to the citizens

The day when we ourselves dedicated the Constitution to ourselves in 1950 is Republic Day and the Managing Director of the organization, Mrs. Anita. C, addressed the program about the importance and hope of the Constitution and to act socially. Officers and employees of the organization were present on this occasion.

Raj Bhavan Chalo to save MGNREGA: DCM DK Shivakumar



Bengaluru, January 26: Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday announced that a "Raj Bhavan Chalo" protest will be organised on Tuesday to oppose the Centre's alleged move to weaken the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Speaking to reporters at the KPCC office, Shivakumar said the protest would be accompanied by 5-km padayatra in every taluk and demonstrations at the panchayat level across the state. He termed it shocking that the Centre was attempting to dismantle a scheme introduced 20 years ago under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, which guaranteed employment to rural households.

He said all legislators, district in-charge ministers, panchayat members, and MGNREGA beneficiaries would mandatorily participate in the agitation. Shivakumar added that although there was an initial plan to gherao the BJP office, the party decided to organise Raj Bhavan Chalo instead.

Highlighting the importance of the scheme, the DCM said works worth nearly Rs.6,000 crore were carried out annually under MGNREGA in Karnataka, providing employment to lakhs of rural people. He asserted that the Congress would continue its protest under the leadership of Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi until the scheme is restored.

Shivakumar also stated that the issue would be raised in the Assembly, urging the Centre to withdraw the new law, similar to the repeal of the farm laws. Responding to allegations of irregularities in MGNREGA, he challenged critics to a public debate.

How India should adapt to artificial intelligence in healthcare

By Sadhana S

India stands at a crucial moment in its healthcare journey, with Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerging as a powerful tool to address long-standing challenges of access, affordability, and efficiency. As millions continue to struggle with inadequate healthcare services, AI has the potential to become a vital support system—provided it is adopted responsibly and thoughtfully.

AI is already making inroads into Indian hospitals and clinics. Technologies that analyse X-rays, CT scans, and laboratory results are helping doctors detect tuberculosis, cancer, and heart diseases at earlier stages. AI-enabled telemedicine platforms are simplifying remote consultations through chat-based screening and triage, offering particular relief to rural and underserved populations. Government initiatives such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission are laying the groundwork for digital health records, a critical prerequisite for effective AI deployment. Meanwhile, startups are developing tools to monitor chronic illnesses, predict disease risks, and streamline hospital operations. Despite this progress, adoption remains uneven. Large urban hospitals benefit far more than small clinics and rural health centres,



many of which lack the digital infrastructure required to support AI tools. Health data in India is still fragmented across public and private systems, limiting the accuracy and usefulness of AI. Ethical concerns related to data privacy, patient consent, and accountability also pose significant challenges.

For AI to truly strengthen India's healthcare system, a structured and responsible approach is essential. Building a robust digital health backbone through secure and interoperable electronic health records must be the first priority.

Alongside this, clear regulatory frameworks are needed to ensure AI tools used in diagnosis and treatment are safe, transparent, and fair.

Equally important is aligning AI innovation with India's public health priorities—such as tuberculosis screening, maternal healthcare, chronic disease management, and rural telemedicine. AI should function as a support to doctors, easing workloads and enhancing decision-making rather than replacing human judgement.

Finally, capacity building is key. Healthcare professionals must be trained in AI literacy to use these tools ethically and effectively. Collaboration between government, healthcare institutions, academia, and technology companies will ensure that AI-driven innovation benefits all sections of society.

AI is not a cure-all for India's healthcare challenges. However, if implemented with care and responsibility, it can significantly improve access, affordability, and equity—while preserving the human connection that lies at the heart of medicine.

Veteran actress Jayamala releases Amrutha Anjan trailer; film to hit screens on 30th



Bengaluru: The trailer of the upcoming Kannada film Amrutha Anjan was officially released by veteran actress, former MLC and former Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce president Jayamala at a special launch event held at Utsav Lagashi, GT Mall, Bengaluru.

Amrutha Anjan, which began its journey as a short film and garnered millions of views, has already won the appreciation of audiences for its entertaining content. Encouraged by the overwhelming response, a team of young talents from across the state has now brought the story to the big screen as a full-length

feature film, set for theatrical release on the 30th of this month.

Speaking at the event, Jayamala praised the dedication of the young team and shared her association with producer Lokesh Nagappa. She highlighted how talent and education can go hand in hand, citing the journey of Sudhakar, a former student with a strong passion for cinema. Jayamala lauded the team's earlier work, including a popular comedy web series that clocked over two-and-a-half crore views, and wished the cast and crew great success. She urged audiences to watch and support the film made by young and promising talent.

Producer Lokesh Nagappa expressed his happiness over backing Sudhakar's growth in cinema, stating that his belief in the young filmmaker's potential led him to produce the film. He emphasized that the focus was on content rather than commercial expectations and thanked Jayamala for her encouragement and support at the trailer launch.

Director Jyothi Rao Mohit said the inspiration for Amrutha Anjan came from his short film of the same name. He described the movie as a complete comedy entertainer with 80 per cent humour and 20 per cent sentiment, blending elements of love, friendship, relationships, songs, action, and humour. Thanking Jayamala for launching the trailer, he added that the film is being released through Jayanna Films and sought the audience's love and cooperation.

With strong backing from industry veterans and high expectations surrounding its youthful team, Amrutha Anjan is poised to entertain audiences when it releases on the 30th.

Mark St. John's land and immediately begin work to install 5 portal piers for the flyover: Maheshwar Rao



Bengaluru : The Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), Maheshwar Rao, instructed officials to mark the required land at St. John's and immediately begin work to install five portal piers for the Ejipura flyover.

He spoke at a meeting held with officials from the Traffic Police Department and St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences regarding the Ejipura flyover project.

Resolution of the St. John's land-use issue: The construc-

tion of the Ejipura flyover is currently progressing at a fast pace. On the left side while moving from Central Sadan towards Ejipura, a small portion of land belonging to St. John's is required to install five portal piers.

The portal piers need to be constructed along the footpath and adjoining the compound wall of St. John's. In this regard, discussions were held today with the St. John's management, who have agreed to permit the use of the required land.

Accordingly, the Chief Commissioner instructed the engineers and contractors to mark the area and commence the work immediately.

He also directed that barricades be installed as a safety measure while the work on the five portal piers is in progress. Further, space should be provided for storing construction materials until the work is completed, and the compound wall should be reconstructed immediately after the completion of the work.

Regarding the land to be acquired for constructing the ramp in the St. John's area, he instructed officials to expedite the TDR (Transferable Development Rights) process, take possession of the land at the earliest, and carry out the work swiftly.

Bengaluru : With regard to the elections to be held under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the Chief Commissioner, Maheshwar Rao, instructed officials to prepare the voter list strictly as per rules and in a transparent manner.

Speaking at a meeting held at Puttanna Chetty Town Hall, Bengaluru, regarding the preparation of ward-wise voter lists for the general elections of the five City Corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority, as per the directions of the State Election Commission, he said that the election process must be conducted responsibly and systematically.

He informed that the State Election Commission



has issued a revised circular on January 22, 2026 (copy enclosed), and accordingly, officials of all five City Corporations must take appropriate steps and discharge their duties responsibly.

He instructed that the concerned officials in each City Corporation must personally inspect the ward boundaries and

ensure that there is no confusion regarding boundaries. He directed that the voter list preparation process must be carried out in a lawful and transparent manner. He further instructed that Electoral Registration Officers must dedicate 2-3 hours every day exclusively for election-related work. Revenue officers, who are also

Electoral Registration Officers, must give priority to election-related duties along with property tax collection and ensure that the voter lists are prepared without any errors.

During the voter list revision process, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) must visit houses door-to-door for inclusion, correction, and deletion of names and ensure that all relevant documents are properly collected and maintained. Speaking on the occasion, Special Commissioner (Elections) Ramachandran instructed officials to make more progress in the work of mapping the 2002 voter list with the 2025 voter list.

He said that while receiving claims and objections related to the voter list, Forms 6, 7, and 8

must be properly processed. He also instructed that the observers appointed by the State Election Commission for the GBA elections must perform their duties efficiently.

South City Corporation Commissioner, Ramesh, said that the ward boundaries of all five City Corporations under GBA have been finalized, and officials must ensure that all voters fall within their respective ward limits.

He instructed that ward boundary maps should be distributed to Booth Level Officer Supervisors and BLOs, and based on that, a thorough verification should be conducted before finalizing the voter list. He also said that all family members' votes should fall within the same polling booth.

Editorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

ECI's duty to the Republic

Republic Day homilies this year sound distinctly ironic in the context of all that's being done by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to enervate India's democracy. In a message to citizens on National Voters' Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described voting as "a sacred constitutional right" and voters as the "bhagya vidhata" (deciders of destiny) of India. That sentiment simply does not square with the ECI's arbitrary and ongoing disenfranchisement of millions of voters, even as the republic enters its 77th year. The irony is complete when you consider that National Voters Day commemorates the founding of the ECI on January 25, 1950, one day prior to the birth of the republic. How macabre that one of the near twins is presiding over the eclipse of the other.

The ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has become an instrument of exclusion of citizens from the republic, which is directly opposite to the ECI's self-professed mandate of leaving no voter behind. So far, approximately 7.24 crore voters' names have been deleted from the rolls, provisionally or finally, across 13 states and union territories. That's about 13.2% of the pre-SIR voter population in these jurisdictions and 7.3% of India's total of 99.1 crore electors. This hasty overhaul, with deadlines ranging from January 26 to February 7, is likely to translate into a political upheaval when elections are held in these states. We have already seen what it can do in Bihar. There, 65 lakh voters' names were deleted after the slapdash SIR exercise, representing 8.3% of the pre-SIR total electorate of 7.89 crore. This led to an astoundingly one-sided verdict in the subsequent elections, with the two main parties in the ruling coalition each achieving a win percentage above 85%.

Disregarding the outcry from the opposition, voters and both-level officials alike, ECI has pressed on with the SIR in 12 more jurisdictions. Disregarding the outcry from the opposition, voters and both-level officials alike, ECI has pressed on with the SIR in 12 more jurisdictions. Provisional deletions have been steep there as well, with Uttar Pradesh having the highest (2.89 crore), followed by Tamil Nadu (97.38 lakh), West Bengal (58.2 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (42.7 lakh), and Kerala (24.08 lakh).

With elections due in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Kerala in a few months, the large-scale and debatable deletions have created a situation rife with suspicion regarding the role of the commission. Any attempt by the BJP to vitiate the atmosphere there with polarising rhetoric risks turning them into tinder boxes. It would be wise, therefore, for the ECI to conduct the remaining part of the SIR process with due deliberation and fairness. Unrest in these vital and identity-proud states will do the republic no good. Apart from the partisanship of the ECI, well-documented in elections past, the SIR suffers from a systemic bias against poor, rural and migrant voters. They are more likely than other categories of voters to not have the documents demanded by SIR or the resources to fetch them, such as birth certificates or proof of residence or legacy. As Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has said, this class bias is likely to express itself in the election verdict and thereon in governance itself.

Edit

RANDOM VIOLENCE

State terror has arrived for America



In the former Soviet Union about their families' experiences of Stalinist terror, I was struck by how much people seemed to know about what had led to arrests or executions. Neighbors had informed on them, or colleagues had named them under duress. These stories were passed down through generations. How could they know so much? They couldn't. People crafted narra-

police arrested most of the senior staff at the newspaper where my grandfather was a deputy editor, he waited for the knock on his door. When it didn't come, night after night, he became so distressed that he checked himself into a mental institution. That may have saved him. Or it may be that the secret police had already filled their arrest quota.

random. That is how state terror works. Randomness distinguishes a regime based on terror from one that is merely repressive. Even in brutally repressive systems, one knows where the boundaries lie. Open protest leads to arrest; private conversation does not. Writing subversive essays gets you arrested; quietly passing them on probably does not. A terror regime deploys violence precisely to reinforce the message that anyone can be subjected to it.

When we think of terror regimes of the past, it's tempting to imagine a methodical plan, an extermination to-do list. This is how many people read Martin Niemöller's poem "First They Came." In reality, people living under those regimes never knew which group would be designated an enemy next. In Niemöller's day, terror was carried out by secret police and paramilitary forces such as the SA. In 1934, Adolf Hitler ordered the arrest and execution of the SA's own leadership, demonstrating that no one was immune. Stalin carried out similar purges. Terror was not the end goal, but nothing that followed would have been possible without it. The toolbox is not particularly varied. President Donald Trump is using all the instruments: reported ICE arrest quotas; paramilitary forces drunk on their own brutality; the spectacle of random violence in city streets; and postmortem vilification of victims. It's natural that our brains struggle to find logic in what we're seeing. There is a logic, and it has a name.

The Trump administration's recent deployment of ICE brutality in Minneapolis signals a shift from governance to state terror. By utilising random violence and arrest quotas, the regime ensures no citizen is safe

tives from suspicions and hints to satisfy a desperate need for explanation.

Lydia Chukovskaya's short novel Sofia Petrovna captures this process. The protagonist, loyal to Stalin, loses her mind trying to make sense of her son's arrest. My own family history contains a corollary. After the secret

When the KGB archives briefly opened in the 1990s, it became clear that quotas ruled the system. Local units had to arrest a set number of citizens to designate enemies of the people. Sweeping up colleagues, friends, and relatives was often a matter of convenience. Fundamentally, the terror was



been a vital corridor for trade, connecting three continents — Asia, Africa and Europe.

Trade and security are both at risk when security for underwater fiber optic cables is breached because they are essential for data transmission between Africa, Europe and Asia.

Similarly for environmental hazards, Houthi attacks on oil tankers create risks of major ecological disasters in the region.

Terrorism remains a serious threat, with the Houthis and Al-Shabab joining forces to destabilize the region. Human trafficking,

illegal migration and drugs remain perennial threats as well.

The region is highly militarized, with numerous foreign bases in Djibouti, for example. The US has its largest African base there and the primary base for its Africa Command. China has its first overseas military

base there and France has its largest base abroad. Japan, Italy, Germany, the UK and others also maintain a military presence in the country.

In addition, the US launched its Prosperity Guardian operation in the southern Red Sea and the EU has its Operation Atalanta along the Somali coast and Aspidies near Bab Al-Mandab. The Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces has dispatched a Red Sea task force as well. Türkiye is also enhancing its military presence in the region.

While these efforts from outside the region are welcome, there is an urgent need to coordinate the efforts of local players, not only on security issues but on a more comprehensive agenda that also includes diplomacy, economic integration, environmental protection and fighting illicit trade. All these issues argue for closer coordination among Red Sea and Gulf of Aden littoral states. Saudi Arabia is probably the country that is best placed to play the coordinating role, as it has the longest coast along the Red Sea and has deep historical ties with all countries overlooking both these bodies of water. Having the largest regional economy, it has an abiding interest in restoring stability and security in this region. It has committed enormous funds to promoting trade and tourism along its Red Sea coast and islands as part of its drive to diversify its economy under Vision 2030. The country is preparing to host Expo 2030, Fifa World Cup 2034 and other major events in the near future, which also call for keeping this region safe and secure.

The case for a new Red Sea security architecture

Recent events in Yemen, Sudan and Somalia have underscored the need for the nations overlooking the Red Sea to coordinate more closely to end these conflicts. These three cases represent examples where local problems have gradually entangled regional and international players with differing interests. Other disputes also affect this region and require coordination among the littoral states, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Egyptian-Ethiopian dispute over sharing the Nile and the more recent Ethiopian quest for sea access.

While restoring peace and security should be the primary goal of this coordination, promoting trade, investment and development and protecting the marine environment should also be part of a new and robust security architecture to safeguard the Red Sea region.

International trade and trade among the littoral states have been severely affected by these conflicts. The international community should be concerned about the economic effects of these simmering conflicts on trade. For millennia, the Red Sea has been a vital corridor for trade, connecting three continents — Asia, Africa and Europe. In normal times, this route handles 12 percent to 15 percent of international maritime trade and about 30 percent of global container traffic, according to the World Shipping Council. In 2023, the Suez Canal recorded 26,434 vessel transits, including 5,847 container ships, averaging about 16 container vessels daily.

The Houthis started attacking

ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden in October 2023. There have been about 120 such attacks since then. As a result, trade has diverted from the Red Sea to the longer and more expensive route around Africa. In 2025, the trade volume through the Bab Al-Mandab Strait declined to about 35 percent of 2023 levels, while Suez Canal traffic was about 41 percent compared to 2023. Large ships (7,500 tonnes and up) now largely avoid both passageways altogether. Container ship traffic through the Suez Canal is at about 6 percent of what it was in 2023 and only nine ships transited Bab Al-Mandab during 2025.

The Red Sea is also a vital route for oil and liquefied natural gas, the insecurity of which threatens supplies for Europe and other regions. Before the crisis, about 9.2 million barrels per day of crude oil and refined petroleum products passed through the Red Sea, according to US Energy Information Administration figures. This volume represented about 12 percent of total global seaborne-traded oil before 2023, when Houthi attacks started.

While Yemen has turned a new page with the restoration of government authority over areas overlooking Bab Al-Mandab and the Gulf of Aden, large parts of the country's Red Sea coast remain under Houthi control. Somaliland's unilateral quest for independence has taken a bad turn as it has entangled outside players, such as Israel. The war in Sudan also took a turn for the worse in 2025, affecting the security of the whole region.

For millennia, the Red Sea has

Ta.MA.Sha Veg Café celebrates Republic Day with special initiative for children

Hyderabad, January 26, 2026: Marking India's 77th Republic Day, Ta.MA.Sha Veg Café celebrated the occasion with a heartfelt social initiative dedicated to children in Hyderabad, reflecting the spirit of unity, care, and community service.

The initiative was led by Founder Mr. Mahender Vyas and Co-Founder Mr. A.K. Solanky, in collaboration with NextGen Hope & Kalyan Sanstha, under the guidance of its Founder and Chairperson Ms. Aarohi Rawat. The programme aimed to create a joyful and meaningful



experience for children through fun-filled activities, learning opportunities, and nourishment.

As part of the celebration, children participated in interactive games and were introduced to Pickleball, a rapidly grow-

ing global sport, encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyle habits. The event also featured nutritious Asian vegetarian meals curated by Ta.MA.Sha Veg Café, highlighting the brand's commitment to mindful eating

and wellness.

Adding to the joy, each child was gifted school bags and notebooks as a symbol of encouragement, education, and hope for a brighter future.

Speaking on the occasion, the founders stated that giving back to society is a core value of the brand and reaffirmed their commitment to community welfare through such meaningful initiatives.

Through this Republic Day initiative, Ta.MA.Sha Veg Café reinforced its values of compassion, sustainability, and conscious living, extending its impact beyond food to create positive change in the community.

Nuvama Delivers Steady 9M FY26 Performance; Wealth Business Records Strong Double-Digit Growth

Mumbai: Nuvama Wealth Management Limited (NSE, BSE: NUVAMA), one of India's leading wealth management firms, reported a resilient financial performance for the quarter and nine months ended 31 December 2025, driven by strong momentum in its wealth businesses and steady client engagement. For 9M FY26, Nuvama reported a consolidated operating Profit After Tax (PAT) of Rs.780 crore, marking a 7% year-on-year growth. Consolidated revenues rose 8% YoY to Rs.2,297 crore, while operating profit before tax increased 6% YoY to Rs.1,035 crore, reflecting the strength of its diversified business platform. During Q3 FY26, revenues

stood at Rs.755 crore, up 4% YoY, while operating PAT increased 4% YoY to Rs.262 crore. Profit after tax for the quarter was marginally impacted by a one-time statutory adjustment related to new labour codes. The Wealth Management business remained the key growth engine. Revenues grew 21% YoY to Rs.1,245 crore in 9M FY26, while profit before tax rose 23% YoY to Rs.427 crore. Client assets stood at Rs.3.29 lakh crore at the end of Q3, registering 6% YoY growth. Both Nuvama Wealth and Nuvama Private reported strong net flows, supported by higher participation in managed products, lending momentum, and annuity-style ARR revenues. The Asset

Management business continued to scale, with management fees growing 30% YoY in 9M FY26. Assets under management reached Rs.12,605 crore, while the Commercial Real Estate strategy AUM grew 72% YoY to approximately Rs.3,000 crore. The company also received in-principle approval to sponsor a mutual fund and plans to launch schemes in the coming year, subject to regulatory clearances. Asset Services revenues grew 7% QoQ in Q3, aided by improved client engagement and market share gains across domestic and international segments. While Capital Markets revenues declined 21% YoY, the Fixed Income business remained stable, support-

ed by strong FPI flows and rising domestic participation. Commenting on the performance, Ashish Kehair, MD & CEO, Nuvama Group, said the company's organically scaled, diversified platform has enhanced resilience and positioned it for growth across market cycles. He highlighted strong profit growth in wealth businesses, meaningful expansion in asset management, and early signs of recovery in capital markets volumes. Overall, Nuvama's 9M FY26 performance underscores the strength of its integrated business model, disciplined execution, and continued focus on scaling client-centric wealth and investment platforms.

SBI Hyderabad LHO Celebrates 77th Republic Day with '150 Years of Vande Mataram' Theme

Hyderabad: State Bank of India, Local Head Office (LHO), Hyderabad, celebrated the 77th Republic Day with patriotic fervour, adopting the theme "150 Years of Vande Mataram." Shri S. Radhakrishnan, Chief General Manager, SBI Hyderabad Circle, unfurled the National Flag at the Northern Lawns of the LHO premises. Addressing the gathering, Shri S. Radhakrishnan conveyed his Republic Day greetings and called upon the LHO team to draw inspiration from the Prime Minister's vision of excellence, emphasizing that "excellence is a habit." He stated that the Local Head Office sets the benchmark for the entire circle and urged all branches, ATMs and Customer Service Points (CSPs) to consistently deliver a superior customer experience in line with SBI's global reputation as the Best Consumer Bank. He noted that this cultural shift is crucial to achieving the Chairman's strategic goal



of increasing SBI's market share by one percent in every district across Telangana.

The CGM stressed the importance of operational efficiency and zero tolerance for infrastructure downtime, stating that malfunctioning facilities such as ATMs, air condi-

tioners and passbook printers directly impact staff productivity. He advocated aggressive migration of routine transactions to alternate channels such as CSPs, contact centres, YONO and Internet Banking, highlighting that the circle operates over 6,000 CSPs

and ATMs compared to 1,200 branches. He set an ambitious target of 95-98 percent ATM uptime and directed branches to ensure CSPs function effectively and generate sustainable business.

Concluding his address, Shri S. Radhakrishnan underscored the need for "360-degree professionalism" and strong ethical standards. He emphasized mutual respect within the "SBI Family" and urged employees to adopt a vigilant approach towards fraud prevention, following a "see something, say something" principle.

The celebrations were attended by General Managers, senior executives, staff members and their families. The programme concluded with vibrant cultural performances by staff members, felicitation of employees' children for excellence in academics, sports and arts, and honouring Bank Armed Guards for their exemplary service and commitment.

LIC Zonal Manager Puneet Kumar Unfurls National Flag on Republic Day

Hyderabad: Sri Puneet Kumar, Zonal Manager, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), South Central Zone, unfurled the National Flag at the Zonal Office premises in Hyderabad, marking the 77th Republic Day celebrations.

Addressing employees and agents on the occasion, Sri Puneet Kumar reflected on India's journey since becoming a Republic and highlighted

the importance of unity and rapid development for the nation. He stated that technological advancements in LIC have significantly improved customer service delivery, enabling policyholders to access services in minimal time.

While acknowledging the role of technology, he emphasized that the essence of human interaction remains vital and should not be overlooked. He urged LIC employees

and agents to work with honesty and dedication, stating that such commitment is essential for strengthening the nation.

Sri Puneet Kumar also noted that LIC is continuously developing new insurance and investment products to meet the evolving needs of customers. He called upon LICians to focus on three key principles — My LIC, My Country, and My Earth — and appealed to all to avoid the use of plas-

tic and actively protect the environment. He further propagated the concept of Make in India.

Senior officials including Sri P. P. Kelkar, Executive Director (Audit), Central Office, Mumbai; Sri M. Ravi Kumar; Sri S. Sarvana Ramesh; Sri G. S. Sastry; Sri A. A. M. Hilali, along with employees from the Zonal Office and Hyderabad Divisional Office, were present during the celebrations.

FROM CHICKEN BIRYANI TO IDLI: HOW VIJAYAWADA SWIGGY'D IN 2025

Vijayawada, January 2026: Known for its bold flavours and rich culinary heritage, Vijayawada showcased a vibrant mix of tradition and modern food preferences in 2025, according to the Vijayawada Edition of "How India Swiggy'd". From indulgent biryanis to simple breakfast staples, the city's food habits reflected both comfort and experimentation.

Chicken Biryani emerged as the undisputed favourite with 7.78 lakh orders, followed by Idli with 3.2 lakh orders and Veg Dosa with 2.7 lakh orders. Dessert lovers leaned towards classics, with Chocolate Cake and Apricot Cake topping the charts, while traditional sweets like Gulab Jamun, Kaju Barfi and Boondi Ladoo also featured among the top choices.

Breakfast orders remained light and traditional, led by Idli and Veg Dosa, while snack-time cravings between 3 pm and 7 pm saw Chicken Biryani dominating with nearly 218



orders every evening. Late-night orders grew by 47.7% year-on-year, once again led by Chicken Biryani, followed by burgers and fried chicken items.

The city also showed a growing appetite for regional cuisines, with Bengali cuisine emerging as the fastest-growing at over 35% YoY, followed by Punjabi cuisine. Affordable dining

struck a chord through Swiggy's 99 Store, where Chicken Biryani, Veg Dosa, Idli and Veg Burger were most ordered.

Travel-time food delivery saw a sharp rise, with Food on Train orders at Vijayawada Junction increasing by 233%, the highest in the country. Corporate food orders through DeskEats highlighted

Chicken Popcorn as the top choice, while high-protein food emerged as a strong category with 1.3 lakh orders.

Quick delivery via Bolt remained popular, with Chicken Biryani leading orders, and Apricot Delight topping dessert choices. Dining out also surged in 2025, with Vijayawada customers saving Rs. 90 lakh through Swiggy Dineout, a 276% increase over the previous year, and premium dining gaining momentum.

Commenting on the trends, Sidharth Bhakoo, Chief Business Officer, Swiggy Food Marketplace, said that Vijayawada struck a fine balance between classic favourites and national trends, embracing food as an emotion across daily meals and celebrations.

Overall, Vijayawada's food story in 2025 reflected evolving tastes, convenience-driven choices, and an enduring love for iconic dishes, reinforcing the city's dynamic and flavour-rich culinary identity.

AP Grameena Bank Celebrates 77th Republic Day in Guntur

Guntur (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank celebrated the 77th Republic Day with great pride and patriotic fervour at its Head Office premises in Brodipet, Guntur. The celebrations were attended by Head Office staff, Heads of Departments, the General Manager (HR), General Manager (IT), and Vigilance Incharge Mr. Harish Betha. The programme was graced by the presence of the Chairman of the Bank, Sri K. Pramod Kumar Reddy.

On the occasion, Chairman Sri K. Pramod Kumar Reddy unfurled the National Flag and addressed the gathering. In his speech, he highlighted the theme of this year's Republic Day and emphasized the enduring values enshrined in the Constitution, including unity, national integrity, and nation-building. He remarked that Republic Day is not only a moment of pride for the nation but also a reminder for every citizen to uphold their duties and responsibilities towards the coun-



try. Vigilance Incharge Mr. Harish Betha also addressed the staff, stressing the importance of celebrating national and patriotic occasions at the workplace. He stated that as an organization owned by the Government of India, Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank must set

an example by making such celebrations meaningful and inspiring, reflecting its commitment to national values. The event concluded with the collective singing of "Vande Mataram," filling the premises with a strong sense of patriotism and national pride.

NMDC Celebrates 77th Republic Day, Reaffirms Commitment to Responsible Mining

Hyderabad, January 26, 2026: India's largest iron ore producer and responsible miner, NMDC, celebrated the 77th Republic Day with patriotic fervour at its corporate office in Hyderabad and across its mining projects nationwide, reaffirming its commitment to sustainable mining and nation-building.

NMDC Chairman and Managing Director Shri Amitava Mukherjee unfurled the National Flag at the Head Office in the presence of senior management and employees. The celebrations were attended by Shri Vinay Kumar, Director (Technical); Shri Joydeep Dasgupta, Director (Production); Smt. G. Priyadarshini, Director (HR); Shri C. Neelakanta Reddy, CVO; and other senior officials and staff.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Amitava Mukherjee highlighted NMDC's growth journey rooted in responsibility and innovation. He stated that NMDC is emerging as a global benchmark in responsible mining and is set to contribute over 50 million tonnes in FY25 towards India's infrastructure development. He informed that as of December 2025, NMDC produced 36.9 million tonnes of iron ore, registering a 20 percent increase over the corresponding period last year. He also announced the



commencement of mining operations at the Tokisud North Coal Block in Jharkhand in January 2026, marking NMDC's entry into a new commodity and geography. He added that NMDC's people-centric culture earned it the prestigious Great Place to Work Certification.

As part of the celebrations, NMDC organised Republic Day Runs across its projects in Chhattisgarh and Karnataka, symbolising unity, fitness, and collective progress. The runs at the Bachel and Kirandul projects were graced by NMDC Brand Ambassador and two-time World Champion boxer Ms. Nikhat Zareen, who inspired participants with her presence.

Further strengthening community engagement, NMDC, in association with The Hindu, organised chess competitions for students to encourage strategic thinking and sportsmanship. Employees' games were also conducted, and winners were felicitated during the ceremony. Republic Day celebrations across NMDC locations reflected the organisation's unwavering commitment to India's growth, sustainable mining practices, employee well-being, and an inclusive future, as NMDC continues to mine responsibly while powering the nation's progress.

German defense minister urges Trump to apologize for Afghanistan remarks



BERLIN: German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius has called on US President Donald Trump to apologize for remarks suggesting that America's NATO allies in Afghanistan avoided frontline service, joining a chorus of criticism from European politicians and army veterans.

Trump caused deep offense among US allies when he told Fox Business Network last week that the US had "never needed" the transatlantic alliance and accused allies of staying "a little off the front lines" in Afghanistan.

"It's just not right and it's disrespectful to talk about the dead of your allies in that way. They all stood there, at the side of the United States. To claim something else today is simply not true," he told a talk show on Germany's ARD public broadcaster late on Sunday. Thousands of German troops took part in NATO's Operation

Enduring Freedom and Resolute Support missions in Afghanistan and 59 were killed. The operations were launched following the Al-Qaeda attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Pistorius said he would bring up the issue the next time he spoke

ments from other European politicians including British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who called Trump's remarks "frankly appalling," in a departure from his usual avoidance of direct criticism of the US president. Trump on Saturday praised "brave" British soldiers, though he made no apology for his earlier comments and he did not mention the sacrifices of other NATO allies. Britain lost 457 service personnel in Afghanistan.

Trump administration officials have been critical of European countries for failing to meet NATO spending targets and for being too dependent on the US for their own defense. Pistorius, who has been leading a drive to rebuild Germany's armed forces, said Europe had to accept it could not depend on the

Pistorius said he would bring up the issue the next time he spoke with US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and he urged Trump to apologize

with US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and he urged Trump to apologize.

"That would be a sign of decency, respect and also insight," he said. His comments follow similar state-

US as it had over the past 70 years but that the German military was on an "excellent path" to achieving its goals of being back up to strength by 2029.

Indonesia receives first Rafale advanced fighter jets from France, official says

JAKARTA: Indonesia has received three Rafale fighter jets from France in the first deliveries from a multi-billion-dollar defense deal between the two countries, a defense ministry official told Reuters on Monday, marking a major upgrade to the country's aging military hardware.

Jakarta, France's main arms client in Southeast Asia, has placed orders for as many as 42 Rafales, built by Dassault Aviation, as well as French frigates and submarines, as the archipelago steps up defense spending under President Prabowo Subianto, a former special forces commander. "The aircraft have been handed over and are ready for use by the Indonesian Air Force," Defense Ministry spokesperson Rico Ricardo Sirait said in



a message in response to a Reuters query — the first confirmation that Indonesia has possession of the advanced military aircraft after striking an \$8 billion deal with France in 2022 and expanding it last year.

Sirait said the three aircraft arrived on Friday and were stationed at Roesmin Nurjadin Air Base in Pekanbaru, located on the western island of Sumatra. Three more jets are expected to arrive later this year, he added. Indonesia has been

one of the biggest players on the international fighter jet market as it looks to upgrade its aircraft, setting aside big budgets for defense spending. It has been considering a number of options alongside the Rafales, including China's J-10 fighter jets and US-made F-15EX jets. For the longer term, it has also signed a contract to buy 48 KAN fighter jets from Turkiye, a fifth-generation aircraft powered by General Electric F-110 engines that are also used in fourth-generation Lockheed Martin F-16 jets.

EU countries give final approval to Russian gas ban

BRUSSELS: European Union countries on Monday gave their final approval to the bloc's plan to ban Russian gas imports by late 2027, allowing it to pass into law. The policy makes legally-binding the EU's vow to cut ties with its former top gas supplier, nearly four years after Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Ministers from EU countries approved the law at a

meeting in Brussels on Monday, although Slovakia and Hungary voted against.

Hungary said it would take the case to the European Court of Justice. The ban was designed to be approved by a reinforced majority of countries, allowing it to overcome opposition from Hungary and Slovakia, who remain heavily reliant on Russian energy imports and want

to maintain close ties with Moscow. Under the agreement, the EU will halt Russian liquefied natural gas imports by the end of 2026 and pipeline gas by 30 September 2027.

The law allows that deadline to shift to November 1 2027, at the latest, if a country is struggling to fill its gas storage caverns with non-Russian supply ahead of the winter heating season.

Ex-Philippine leader Duterte to face ICC hearing Feb 23

THE HAGUE: Former Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte will face a hearing at the International Criminal Court next month, judges ruled on Monday, rejecting arguments the 80-year-old was unfit to take part.

Duterte will face a so-called "confirmation of charges" hearing starting February 23, where judges decide whether the prosecution's allegations are strong enough to proceed to trial.

"Having regard to the relevant legal principles, the medical assessment of the independent experts... and all of the relevant circumstances of the case, the Chamber was satisfied that Mr. Duterte is



able effectively to exercise his procedural rights," the court said.

Duterte is "therefore fit to take part in the pre-trial proceedings," the ICC added. ICC prosecutors have charged Duterte with three counts of crimes against humanity, alleging his involvement in at least 76 murders as part of his "war on drugs."

The first count concerns his alleged involvement as a co-perpetrator in 19 murders carried out between 2013 and 2016 while Duterte was mayor of Davao City. The second count relates to 14 murders of so-called "High Value Targets" in 2016 and 2017 when Duterte was president. And the third charge is

about 43 murders committed during "clearance" operations of lower-level alleged drug users or pushers.

These took place across the Philippines between 2016 and 2018, the prosecution alleged.

In October, the court had already rejected a defense plea for early release, arguing he posed a flight risk and could be in a position to influence witnesses if freed.

Duterte was arrested in Manila on March 11, flown to the Netherlands that same night and has been held at the ICC's detention unit at Scheveningen Prison since. He followed his initial hearing by video link, appearing dazed and frail and barely speaking.

US' Gaza 'Master Plan' clashes with reality

Anyone who saw Jared Kushner's PowerPoint presentation in Davos last week without knowing the topic would have struggled to identify the territory to which he was referring. Many might have thought this was for North America, with shiny new office and residential blocks and a certain space-age or Hollywood sci-fi feel to the slides of the "Master Plan."

The vaulting ambition of the speaker may have impressed his father-in-law, US President Donald Trump, who is certainly familiar with the world of real estate. No doubt Trump, the freshly minted chairman of the Board of Peace, was the premier target of the messaging. It reflected much of what was released at the announcement of Trump's "Gaza Riviera" plan last February, which envisaged the Strip being entirely emptied of Palestinians. Even this version treats Gaza as a tabula rasa to impose whatever architectural fantasies its authors can conjure up. It treats the enclave as being devoid of any culture,

tradition or history.

Others have been more skeptical — and with good reason. First of all, Israel has not even adhered to the Oct. 10 ceasefire and is bombing and shelling with intensity. Second, the full entry of aid, as referenced in the Trump peace plan, has not yet been achieved. Third, the plan presumes the disarmament of Hamas, something that is far from imminent. Finally, no international stabilization force is on the horizon.

Those are the significant near-term impediments. Delivering this plan, at a time when the conflict still rages, will be nigh on impossible. Just clearing the 60 million tonnes of rubble, which is peppered with unexploded ordnance and a host of toxins, will take an age and cost a fortune.

One major element Kushner did not address was how the land would be acquired and whether owners would be compensated. One major element Kushner did not address was how the land would be acquired and whether owners would be compensated.



pensated One major element Kushner did not address was how the land would be acquired and whether owners would be compensated. According to a 2015 study, about half of the land in Gaza is privately owned. Much of the land is unregistered because owners did not wish to pay tax. What is

clear is that the companies lining up to fill their coffers have no claim to the land at all.

But progress also presumes the Israeli leadership will be comfortable with this. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still smarting from the invitation that was extended to Turkiye and Qatar to join the

executive committee of the Board of Peace. Many members of Netanyahu's Cabinet and right-wing Knesset members have dreams of inhabiting these plush new riviera residences themselves.

Israel will have to consent as the occupying power. For starters, it will have to allow in all the construction materials and abandon its restrictive dual-use list. Throughout Kushner's presentation to world leaders and the business elite, it was clear that Palestinians have had no input into these plans — and not just because the Arabic on the slides was all wrong. He did not outline how the local

Palestinians in Gaza would be won over by the project or where they would go during reconstruction. Kushner said Gaza would be run on free-market principles, as opposed to how Palestinians might wish to shape their economic future. It was clear that

UAE has reportedly expressed an interest in funding the first planned community on the outskirts of Rafah in the south. Beyond that, it is not clear.

More alarming is who might make money out of it. This is a war zone profiteering racket. US companies are lining up at the trough. This is all premised on the naive and ill-founded belief that the entirety of Gaza's problems can be resolved with bulldozers, cranes and cement. The plan has echoes of earlier economic roadmaps for peace, but even those were not so divorced from reality. At no stage did the presentation reference a viable peace process or even mention that Gaza would be the western segment of an independent state of Palestine. It did not address a single one of the underlying causes or drivers of this 100-year-plus conflict. On this occasion, the last word goes to French President Emmanuel Macron, who was reported as saying: "Peace is not a real estate transaction. You cannot build stability on the erasure of a people's history and the privatization of their tragedy."

India not far from hosting its first-ever Asian Winter Games: Ice skater Vishwaraj Jadeja

Leh (Ladakh), Jan 26(UNI) Renowned Indian Ice skater Vishwaraj Rajen Jadeja overheard a conversation his coach Wim Nieuwenhuizen was having with someone in the Netherlands. That gentleman asked Wim, in Dutch, if Jadeja was talented. Wim replied: “No, he is not but is a Rajput. They don’t give up no matter what.” And that’s exactly what Jadeja has done over the last 18 years he has spent in ice skating. Vishwaraj Jadeja has not given up!

He has royal roots and comes from the Dhrol family – back in the day a small kingdom in the Jam Nagar district of Gujarat. His palace is now a school for women, where they need to pay just a nominal fee. Practically, free education as part of the family’s

But just because Jadeja has royal roots, that does not mean he has grown up rich. Royalty was formally abolished in India in 1971 and a very large part of their privileges were withdrawn by the government, and Jadeja was born 14 years later. Despite a modest upbringing, Jadeja, now 40, never made money more important than anything else. He embraced his grandfather’s advice to a tee: “Money comes and goes. Pursue some sport and excel at that. These things stay with you forever.” Jadeja moved to Europe in the late noughties (2000-09) to seek a career in ice skating.



Today, he is the most decorated ice skater in the country.

Over the years, he has set multiple Indian records. Among his top accomplishments, he is unofficially the only one to have ice-skated five kilometres at an altitude of 4500m at Tso Moriri Lake. This happened in 2019. A year later he won three silvers and a bronze in the Winter World Masters Games held in Austria. Last year in the Asian Winter Games in Harbin (China), Jadeja led in a team event in which India finished fifth.

This past Sunday, what was the last day of the long-track ice-skating event of the 2026 Khelo India Games at the Gupukh’s Pond in Leh (Ladakh), Jadeja finished eighth in the men’s 1000m. “I never participated before because we didn’t have safe ice tracks. But this one is good so I decided

to have a go,” said Jadeja before finishing in the top-10. In his own words, he wasn’t exactly there to win, he was there to show how far he, India and ice skating had come together.

Jadeja is an optimistic man and believes if the authorities in India get a little more serious about certain things, the country can host the Asian Winter Games in the next 10-12 years. “Some of the infrastructure has been built in the last few years, particularly after the concept of Khelo India came into being. We now have two Olympic-sized artificial ice rinks in India, in Leh and Dehradun, for short-track ice skating and ice hockey. There are good skiing places too. We just need a few long-track ice skating surfaces and I think we are good to go. “With the right infrastructure in place we can produce an Olympian real

quick and once that happens, we will be considered serious in the international arena. Also, we need to focus on the coach India get a little more serious about certain things, the country can host the Asian Winter Games in the next 10-12 years.

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Abhishek, Suryakumar blaze fifties as India hammer NZ to seal T20I series 3-0

GUWAHATHI: Abhishek Sharma produced a breathtaking 14-ball fifty while skipper Suryakumar Yadav continued his sublime touch with another attacking half-century as India waltzed through the chase in just 10 overs to seal an eight-wicket win over New Zealand in the third T20I, sealing the five-match series 3-0 here on Sunday.

Chasing a modest 154, India turned the contest into a one-sided exhibition of power-hitting with Abhishek remaining unbeaten on a blistering 68 off 20 balls (7x4, 5x6) and Suryakumar smashing an equally fluent 57 not out off 26 deliveries (6x4, 3x6).

The duo stitched together an unbroken 102-run stand for the third wicket in just 40 balls to finish the game with 60 deliveries to spare. Earlier, wrist spinner Ravi Bishnoi marked his return with a superb spell alongside the seasoned duo of Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya as India strangled New Zealand with disciplined bowling to restrict them to an under-par 153/9.

Abhishek’s assault was particularly stunning as the left-hander raced to a 14-ball fifty – the second fastest by an Indian in T20Is, just two balls slower than his mentor Yuvraj Singh – as he dismantled the New Zealand attack with fearless intent.

India, however, had an early hiccup as Sanju Samson’s struggles at the top continued as he was dismissed for a golden duck. Matt Henry’s first delivery brushing the thigh pad before crashing into the off-stump. Samson’s scores in the series now read 10, 6 and 0, putting further pressure



CHASING A MODEST 154, INDIA TURNED THE CONTEST INTO A ONE-SIDED EXHIBITION OF POWER-HITTING WITH ABHISHEK REMAINING UNBEATEN ON A BLISTERING 68 OFF 20 BALLS (7X4, 5X6) AND SURYAKUMAR SMASHING AN EQUALLY FLUENT 57 NOT OUT OFF 26 DELIVERIES (6X4, 3X6).

on his spot with Ishan Kishan making a strong case with his explosive batting. If that setback worried the hosts, Abhishek and Ishan quickly erased them.

Ishan, fresh from his match-winning 76 in Raipur, launched Henry for two sixes and a four in a single over, showcasing his imperious pull and lofted drives. Abhishek, who had fallen for a duck in the previous game, soon joined the carnage, dancing down the track to hammer Jacob Duffy and collecting 16 runs in an over.

India’s powerplay score swelled to 94/2 – their second-best ever, just one short of the 95 they had posted

against England – effectively putting the result beyond doubt. Ishan fell for a brisk 28 off 13 balls. But there was no respite for New Zealand. Suryakumar slipped seamlessly into top gear, piercing gaps at will and improvising with his trademark scoops and flicks as Abhishek continued to clear the ropes with ease. The pair toyed with the field and bowlers alike, wrapping up the chase in ruthless fashion to underline India’s dominance and secure an unassailable series lead.

Playing for India after nearly a year, Bishnoi, who came in for rested Varun Chakravarthy, grabbed the opportunity with both

hands, returning impressive figures of 2 for 18 while maintaining relentless control through the middle overs. India struck early inside the powerplay to put the visitors on the back foot reducing them to 36/3.

Hardik (2/23) set the tone in the opening over with a stunning backward-running catch to dismiss Devon Conway (1). He then struck in his next over as Rachin Ravindra (4) mistimed a short delivery and Bishnoi at deep square leg completed the formalities. Bumrah, introduced as second change, made an immediate impact and was again the pick of the bowling grabbing three for 17. Returning after being rested for the Raipur game, he knocked over Tim Seifert (12) with a full delivery that came in to uproot the off-stump. Bishnoi then bowled with precision, denying the batters any momentum. He prevented Glenn Phillips from reaching a deserved fifty, dismissing him for 48 with his figures reading 3-0-9-1 after operating in the fifth, eighth and 12th overs.

KIWG 2026: Army retain ice-hockey gold; Haryana crowned overall champions



Leh (Ladakh), Jan. 26: The Indian Army showcased its vast experience to clinch a thrilling 3-2 victory over a spirited Chandigarh team and retain the men’s ice-hockey gold medal at the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) 2026, held at the NDS Stadium on Republic Day. The match-winner came just three minutes before the final hooter, providing a dramatic

end to the Ladakh leg of the Games.

While Army celebrated ice-hockey glory, Haryana emerged as the overall champions of the Ladakh phase of KIWG 2026, driven by four gold medals from their figure skating and ice-skating contingent. Hosts Ladakh finished a commendable second overall, edging Maharashtra and Telangana on the basis of silver medals won.



Britain’s Lewis Hamilton waves to fans as he steers his Ferrari Formula One SF-26 at the Ferrari private test track, in Fiorano Modenese, Italy, Friday.....

Serving it up, Carlos Alcaraz advances to the Australian Open quarterfinals

MELBOURNE: No sooner had Carlos Alcaraz advanced to the Australian Open quarterfinals with a win over Tommy Paul, than attention turned to his serve. The top-ranked Alcaraz, in Australia trying to complete a career Grand Slam at the age of 22, has been remodeling it a little bit.

It worked well for him on Sunday in a 7-6 (6), 6-4, 7-5 win over No. 19-seeded Paul. There were no double-faults, he got 70% of his first serves into play and won 79% of those points. He also won 68% of points on his second serve.

The retooled start of his service motion has a familiar look, and hasn’t escaped the attention of Novak Djokovic. The 24-time major winner joked earlier in the tournament that he’d sent Alcaraz a message asking for a copyright fee.

Alcaraz was asked about it in an on-court TV interview on Rod Laver Arena, and played along, too.

“Yeah, I heard that. I have the contract over there but I haven’t seen him yet!” the Spaniard said of his exchange with Djokovic. Expanding on the theme, he said when

videos of the service motion emerged in the pre-season he checked on his phone and had a message from Djokovic which, more-or-less said: “Alright, you have to pay!”

Alcaraz said the locker room jokes keep it fun. Seeking an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam title, Djokovic has been blocked in the last two years by Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner, who have split the eight titles evenly. One missing element on Alcaraz’s tennis CV is a trophy at Melbourne Park. He has never gone past the quarterfinals. He’ll face either local favorite Alex de Minaur or No. 10 Alexander Bublik in the last eight this coming week. Paul reached the Australian Open semifinals in 2023, so had that in his favor going into the fourth-round match with Alcaraz. The pair were going shot for shot in the first-set tiebreaker when a medical episode paused their match for more than 14 minutes.

It was 3-3 when chair umpire Marija Cicak informed them that a spectator at Rod Laver Arena needed urgent medical attention.



Aryna Sabalenka beats 19-year-old Mboko, faces 18-year-old Jovic in Australian Open quarterfinals

MELBOURNE: TikTok influencer and top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka is having to work her way through some rising teenager stars in her bid for a third Australian Open title in four years.

Sabalenka held off 19-year-old Vicky Mboko 6-1, 7-6 (1) at Rod Laver Arena on Sunday to advance to a quarterfinal match against 18-year-old Iva Jovic.

The 29-seeded Jovic overwhelmed Yulia Putintseva 6-0, 6-1 in 53 minutes at John Cain Arena, the so-called People’s Court, and she secured a spot in the last eight of a Grand Slam for the first time.

Coco Gauff, who was still a teenager when she won her first major title in 2023, is back into the quarterfinals in Australia for the third straight year after a 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 win over No. 19 Karolina Muchova.

In a good omen for Gauff, her four previous wins over Muchova have been during runs to the title, including in the semifinals at the 2023 U.S. Open.

In the opening men’s match Sunday, No. 1-ranked Carlos Alcaraz continued his bid for a career Grand Slam at age 22 with a 7-6 (6), 6-4, 7-5 win over No. 19-seeded Tommy Paul to reach the quarterfinals for the third consecutive year in Australia.

He’s never gone past the last eight at Melbourne Park, the only one of the four Grand Slam venues where he hasn’t won the title. That’s a statistic he’s determined to rectify, to the point where he’s reworking his serve to a look a little bit more in style like 10-time Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic.

Jovic has been getting some good advice from Djokovic, a 24-time major



winner, during the tournament. He said he’s been happy to help an up-and-coming star with Serbian heritage. Jovic made it clear last year that she wanted a chance to play the World No. 1. Now she’ll get the chance. Sabalenka, who has joked about waiting for a formal invitation to partner Djokovic in mixed doubles at a major, breezed through the first set in 31 minutes against Mboko but had some difficulty in the second.

Mboko saved match points and played well

enough to beat many players, but not the two-time Australian Open champion. “What an incredible player for such a young age,” Sabalenka said of Mboko. “It’s incredible to see these kids coming up on Tour. I can’t believe I say that. I feel like I’m a kid!” “She pushed me so much, and I’m happy to be through,” Sabalenka added in her on-court TV interview. Sabalenka led the second set 4-1, and then failed to convert three match points while leading 5-4. Mboko slowly took

momentum and forced a tiebreaker only for Sabalenka to dominate.

It was the 20th straight tiebreak victory for Sabalenka. “I try to not to think this is a tiebreak and play point by point,” said Sabalenka, who won back-to-back titles in Australia in 2023 and 24 before losing last year’s final to Madison Keys. “I guess that’s the key to consistency.”

Sabalenka said playing the morning match at Melbourne Park came with some challenges, including shadows and bright sun. “Don’t get me wrong, I like to play the first match, but the tricky part, at some point the sun goes right into your serve point. It’s kind of like tricky. You can break the serve,” she said. “That’s what actually happened. Two breaks that she got, it was on the side when I was facing the sun. Yeah, I didn’t deal that good with

the serve. She did an incredible job serving on that side.” Jovic and Mboko were scheduled to play doubles together later Sunday on Kia Arena against fourth-seeded Elise Mertens and Zhang Shuai.

After her singles win when she broke Putintseva’s serve six times and led 6-0, 4-0 before she dropped serve herself Jovic said she’d just concentrate on her own game when she faced Sabalenka. She saved two break points in the opening game of the match against Putintseva and was dominant throughout. She had her 31-year-old rival chastising herself during the changeovers and practicing shots trying to work out ways to get back into the match. When Jovic hit a crosscourt forehand winner to convert another break in the second set, Putintseva tossed her racket toward the ball.



“Rise of Gana” lyrical video song released from Sudigali Sudheer’s G.O.A.T (Goat)

Popular comedian Sudigali Sudheer is playing the lead in the upcoming film G.O.A.T (Goat), subtitled “Greatest Of All Times.” The film features Divya Bharathi as the heroine and is directed by Vedavyas. It is jointly produced by Mahateja Creations and Jaishnav Productions, with Chandrasekhar Reddy Mogulla as the producer. The movie is currently in post-production and is scheduled for release in February.

Recently, the teaser and songs from the film received an unexpected and overwhelming response. Now, the film unit has released the “Rise of Gana” lyrical video on Monday. The video song was unveiled at an event held at CMR Engineering College recently. The song, composed by Leon James, with lyrics by Kasarla Shyam, is expected to be a powerful mass number that highlights the hero’s characterization. The visuals and lyrics

are said to be highly appealing. Speaking on the occasion, the producer said that the film is being made on a grand scale without any compromise on budget and will be technically superior. He expressed confidence that this film will be a milestone in Sudigali Sudheer’s career and that every frame of the movie will be visually impressive, assuring that it will entertain audiences thoroughly.



Tollywood Stars Travel Based Adventurous Talk Show ‘Soul Trip’... Hero Vijay Datla Turns Host

Under Rizwan Entertainment presentation.. a travel-based adventurous talk show featuring star heroes is set to begin... titled ‘Soul Trip’. This adventurous talk show will entertain audiences with our Tollywood star heroes. The hero and producer Vijay Datla—who has pre-

viously worked on films like Poster and Anveshi—is now completing Season 1 of this celebrity talk show under his own banner Gandabherundam Arts, and it will soon be released on a prominent OTT platform. On the occasion of Republic Day, the poster for the ‘Soul Trip’ talk show was released.

The Padma Shri Belongs to My Telugu Audience” – RAJENDRA PRASAD

The announcement of the Padma Awards on the occasion of India’s 77th Republic Day has brought a proud moment for Telugu cinema, with veteran actor Rajendra Prasad being conferred the prestigious Padma Shri by the Government of India. Born in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, Rajendra Prasad made his entry into Telugu cinema in 1977 with Sneham. Over a remarkable career spanning 48 years, he has portrayed an extraordinary range of characters, winning hearts across generations and earning the affectionate title Nata Kireeti. Expressing his heartfelt emotions after the announcement, Rajendra Prasad said the honour was a blessing from the people. He remarked: “This Padma Shri is my good fortune and the blessing of Telugu audiences. From the moment I heard the news, my heart was filled with happiness. I respectfully thank the Government of India for recognising an actor with such a great honour. I am also deeply grateful to the Andhra Pradesh Government and all elders who recommended my name. For me, this award truly belongs to the audience. For nearly five decades, they have embraced me not just as an actor, but as a member of their own family. The love with which they call me ‘our Rajendra Prasad’ is the greatest recognition of my life. The people of both Telugu states have always treated me like their own son, and I can never repay that affection. I congratulate all the distinguished personalities receiving Padma Awards this year and seek the continued blessings of my audience. As long as I live, I remain your Rajendra Prasad.” Rajendra Prasad’s Padma Shri honour celebrates not only his immense contribution to cinema but also the deep emotional bond he shares with Telugu audiences.



Manchu Manoj’s pan-India period film David Reddy unveils first-look posters



Rocking Star Manchu Manoj’s upcoming pan-India period action film David Reddy has created strong buzz with the release of its first-look posters on the occasion of Republic Day. Produced by Nallagangula Venkat Reddy and Bharat Motukuri under the banners Velvet Soul Motion Pictures and True Radix, the film is directed by Hanuma Reddy Yakkanti. Set against the backdrop of the British era, David Reddy is being made on a large scale as an intense action-drama. The film stars Manchu Manoj in a powerful role, with Maria Ryaboshapka playing the female lead. It is being simultaneously produced in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada, aiming for a wide pan-India release.

The first-look posters showcase Manchu Manoj in two striking avatars titled “Ruthless” and “Brutal,” highlighting his intense screen presence and hinting at high-octane action sequences. His transformation, body language, and fierce expressions have impressed audiences and raised expectations, with many viewing the film as a strong comeback project for the actor. Set between 1897 and 1920 during British colonial rule, David Reddy narrates the story of a warrior who rises against oppression and fights the brutal British regime. With the unveiling of the first-look posters, the film has generated considerable excitement, and the makers have announced that more updates will be revealed soon.

Bronze statue of Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry unveiled at Anakapalli

The bronze statue of legendary lyricist and Padma Shri awardee Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry was unveiled in a grand ceremony at Gandhinagar, Anakapalli, near the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple. The programme was organized by the TANA Literary Wing – TANA World Literary Forum, with support from the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Anakapalli Sirivennela Kalapeetham. Former Minister and Anakapalli MLA Konathala Ramakrishna presided over the event, while renowned filmmaker and writer Trivikram Srinivas unveiled the statue in the presence of Sastry’s family members. A commemorative meeting titled Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry Mahotsava Sabha was later held at the Pentakota Convention Hall. Speaking on the occasion, Konathala Ramakrishna recalled that Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry, who was born and brought up in Anakapalli, brought national and international recognition to his hometown through his literary excellence. He said the installation of the statue at Gandhinagar, where the poet spent his early years, was a moment of pride. He also announced that the Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry Kalapeetham would institute an annual award to honour literary excellence. Trivikram Srinivas said that Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry continues to live on through his timeless words and ideas, stressing the need to preserve the legacy of great personalities to inspire future generations. Former Minister Mandali Buddha Prasad highlighted Sastry’s immense contribution to Telugu cinema and literature, noting that his songs reflected deep human values and patriotism. TANA representative Thotakura Prasad recalled Sastry’s bold transition from a telecom career to cinema and his achievement of winning three consecutive Nandi Awards. Several dignitaries, public representatives, and members of Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry’s family attended the event. Later, Trivikram Srinivas and the poet’s family members were felicitated and accorded a traditional Purna Kumbha Swagatham by the Sri Nookambika Ammavari Devasthanam, followed by darshan, Vedic blessings, and the presentation of sacred prasadam.



Kaithi 2 will happen after Allu Arjun film: Lokesh Kanagaraj

Director Lokesh Kanagaraj on Monday (January 26) clarified that Kaithi 2 with actor Karthi will be his immediate next film after his upcoming project with Allu Arjun (AA23). He was speaking at a press meet convened in the city to quell rumours circulating on social media about his projects. Why Kaithi 2 was delayed Lokesh said the delay behind Kaithi 2 had nothing to do with his remuneration. He explained that when Coolie was releasing, he met Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan, and was invited to direct their collaboration. “Rajini sir and Kamal sir collaborating after 46 years is rare. It was an honour to be called to direct. So I told the Kaithi 2 producers that I would return after completing this film,” he said. Lokesh said he wrote a story for nearly one-and-a-half months, and both actors liked it. However, the collaboration did not materialise. “Both had just done back-to-back action films. Rajini sir’s immediate next is Jailer 2, an actioner. Kamal sir’s next with Anbariv is also action-heavy. They were looking to collaborate on a light-hearted film, which is not my strength,” he opened up. The Rajini-Kamal film is now set to be directed by Sibi Chakravarthy of Don fame, and is backed by Kamal Haasan along with R Mahendran under their Raaj Kamal Films International (RKFI) banner. How the In the meantime, with the Rajinikanth-Kamal



Haasan project no longer on the cards and the Kaithi 2 team having allotted its slot to another director, Lokesh said he decided to honour a long-standing commitment with Mythri Movie Makers during the gap. He also added that Allu Arjun was keen on collaborating for several years, which is how AA23 took off. “That is why Kaithi 2 was delayed, not because I asked for any salary hike,” Lokesh said, putting an end to rumours and speculation. Responding to a question about the Lokesh Cinematic Universe (LCU), Lokesh said the universe was not ending, mentioning it was a term coined by fans. “I will finish the Allu Arjun film, then Kaithi 2, Vikram 2 and Rolex (based on actor Surya’s character in Vikram). There is also Benz, which is part of the LCU. So the LCU is not closed. Those films will happen,” he said. Lokesh also said discussions with Aamir Khan are ongoing for a film collaboration.