



CM Revanth Extends Republic Day Greetings to People of Telangana



HYDERABAD (TIST): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy extended warm greetings to the people of Telangana on the occasion of Republic Day.

In his message, the Chief Minister stated that January 26, commemorated as the day of adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of India, is a moment of pride and celebration for all citizens. He said Republic Day stands as the foundation for India's progress as a democratic, republic, secular, socialist, and sovereign nation. CM Revanth Reddy emphasised that the Constitution embodies the ideals and aspirations of the leaders of India's freedom struggle and the architects who laid the framework for a just and inclusive society.

He further said that the People's Government in Telangana is implementing a wide range of development and welfare programmes in line with constitutional values, with a strong commitment to social justice, equality, and inclusive growth. The Chief Minister called upon citizens to uphold constitutional principles and actively participate in the collective effort to build a stronger and progressive Telangana.



have chosen strategic partnership, dialogue and openness, demonstrating that cooperation is possible even in a fractured global environment.

The proposed EU-India FTA, expected to be announced on January 27, aims to eliminate tariffs on over 90% of traded goods and could boost bilateral trade from the current \$136 billion to over \$200 billion within a decade. The agreement is seen as a strategic move to diversify global supply chains amid growing trade uncertainties and potential tariff hikes elsewhere. In addition to trade, the summit is expected to announce a new Security

and Defence Partnership, expanding cooperation in maritime security, cyber defence and counter-terrorism. Indian companies are likely to gain access to the EU's €50 billion SAFE defence preparedness programme, allowing them to participate in European defence value chains.

Both sides are also expected to sign a Mobility Framework MoU, facilitating easier movement of Indian professionals, students, researchers and skilled workers to Europe, while addressing skill shortages within the EU.

European leaders have described India as "indispensable" to Europe's eco-

TOP EU LEADERS IN INDIA; major EU-India trade deal on cards

NEW DELHI (TST): European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa are on a state visit to India, setting the stage for a significant deepening of India-European Union relations, with the much-anticipated EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) — described by von der Leyen as the "mother of all trade deals" — expected to be announced during their visit. The two leaders were accorded a ceremonial welcome and guard of honour in New Delhi on Sunday. They will attend the 77th Republic Day Parade as Chief Guests and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday during the 16th India-EU Summit.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met the visiting leaders and expressed confidence that the discussions with Prime Minister Modi would "herald a new chapter in India-European Union relations." Von der Leyen said India and Europe



A MOBILE AUTONOMOUS LAUNCHER CARRYING BRAHMOS MISSILES PROCEEDS DURING FULL-DRESS REHEARSAL FOR THE REPUBLIC DAY PARADE IN NEW DELHI.

2 from Telangana named among 2026 Padma Shri awardees



Dr. Kumarasamy Thangaraj Hyderabad



Rama Reddy Mamidi Telangana

New Delhi (TST): Two from Telangana were among 45 individuals from across India chosen for the Padma Shri award in the 'unsung heroes' category on Sunday, January 25. Dr Kumarasamy Thangaraj is a senior scientist at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad, and has been recognised for his decades of research in human genetics and tracing human migration from Africa to India.

Whereas, Rama Reddy Mamidi has been selected for his work in animal husbandry and the dairy sector. Other awardees include Anke Gowda from Karnataka, a former bus conductor, who set up the world's largest free-access library, 'Pustak Mane', comprising

more than two million books in 20 languages along with rare manuscripts.

The 75-year-old bibliophile from Haralhalli village near Mysuru has been chosen for the Padma Shri for his unique effort to empower learners across India. Joining him will be Armida Fernandes, the Mumbai-based paediatrician who set up Asia's first human milk bank, improving the survival prospects of infants, Bundeli war art trainer Bhagwandas Raikwar from Madhya Pradesh, Bhikly Ladakya Dhinda, a 90-year old tribal Tarpa player — a musical instrument made of bottle gourd and bamboo — from Maharashtra, and distinguished social worker from Jammu and Kashmir, Brij Lal Bhat, among others.

No place for Hindi in TN then, now and forever: Stalin



PAYING TRIBUTES ON THE OCCASION OF LANGUAGE MARTYRS DAY, HE SAID, "A STATE THAT LOVED ITS LANGUAGE LIKE ITS LIFE, UNITEDLY STRUGGLED AGAINST HINDI IMPOSITION; PROTESTED WITH THE SAME INTENSITY EVERY TIME IT WAS IMPOSED."

Authority (CMDA) building in the city.

Language Martyrs is a reference to those who had sacrificed their lives, mainly by self-immolation, during the anti-Hindi agitation across Tamil Nadu in 1964-65.

Till this day, the southern state follows the Two Language formula—Tamil and English, even as the DMK has been alleging Hindi imposition through the Centre's NEP 2020.

Meanwhile, AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami and Tamilaga Vettai Kazhagam leader Vijay also paid tributes to the Language Martyrs. "Mother Tamil is equal to our life," Palaniswami, also state Leader of Opposition, said in a social media post.

#LanguageMartyrsDay #StopHindiImposition," the CM said. The CM also paid tributes at the memorial of Language Martyrs Thalamuthu and Natarasan, here. Further, he inaugurated their busts at the Chennai Metropolitan Development

India messenger of peace in conflict ridden world: Prez Murmu in R-Day Address



New Delhi (TST): Amidst geopolitical tensions escalating across multiple continents, President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday said India is spreading the message of peace in the world which is crucial to secure the future of humanity. In her address to the nation on the eve of 77th Republic Day, she spoke about various issues, including Operation Sindo and women empowerment, and also touched upon the topics of Vande Mataram and growing economy of the country.

President Murmu outlined India's position as a "messenger" of peace while reinforcing ancient civilisational commitment to universal harmony.

"In our tradition, we have been offering prayers for peace to prevail in the entire universe. The future of humanity can remain secure only if there is peace in the whole world.

India votes against UNHRC Resolution on Iran

New Delhi: India voted against a UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Resolution which condemned the recent crackdown on protesters in Iran by the Iranian government. India was among seven countries which voted against the Resolution brought by an independent Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. The other six countries which voted against are China, Pakistan, Cuba, Indonesia, Vietnam and Iraq.

The Resolution was passed by the 47-member UNHRC with 25 votes in favour, 14 abstentions and seven against. Iran's Ambassador to India, Mohammed Fathali, thanked India for its "principled and firm support" to Iran. "I extend my sincere gratitude to the Govt. of India for its principled and firm support of IR of Iran at the UNHRC, including opposing an unjust and politically motivated resolution. This stance reflects India's commitment to justice, multilateralism, and national sovereignty," Ambassador Fathali said on X. The Human Rights Council in its 39th special session on the "deteriorating human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran," strongly "deplored the violent crackdown of peaceful protests" resulting in the deaths of thousands of persons, including children, and large numbers of injured individuals, as well as the arrest of thousands in connection with the nationwide protests that started on December 28, 2025.

 
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Thousands Participate in MGNREGA Bachao Sangram Yatra in Hyderabad



Hyderabad (TSIT) Thousands of people participated in the MGNREGA Bachao Sangram Yatra organised in Hyderabad, protesting against the alleged dilution of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme by the government.

The rally was led by Kharirabad (Hyderabad Central) District Congress Committee President, Motha Rohith Mudhiraj. The march commenced from the Rajiv Gandhi statue opposite the Secretariat and proceeded up to the Indira Gandhi statue.

Addressing the gathering, Congress leaders demanded that the government protect the constitutional rights of the poor and ensure the effective

implementation of the MGNREGA scheme without weakening its provisions. They asserted that MGNREGA is a lifeline for millions of poor families and any attempt to dilute it would adversely impact their livelihoods.

AICC Secretary and In-Charge Sachin Sawant, former MPV Hanumantha Rao, RS MP Anil Kumar Yadav, Nampally Assembly In-Charge Feroz Khan, TPCC Vice President Mujahid Alam Khan, along with several other senior Congress leaders and party workers, participated in the yatra and extended their support to the protest.

The leaders reiterated that the Congress party would continue its struggle until the rights of the poor and working classes are fully safeguarded.

Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy Campaigns in Nalgonda Municipal Corporation Elections

Hyderabad: As part of the election campaign for the Nalgonda Municipal Corporation polls, State Minister for Roads & Buildings and Cinematography, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, conducted extensive door-to-door campaigning in Padmavathi Colony and Amulya Colony on Sunday.

During the campaign, the Minister interacted with local residents, sought their support for the Congress party candidates, and explained the State Government's development initiatives and welfare programmes



aimed at improving civic infrastructure and public services. He assured the people that the Congress-led government is committed to strengthening urban amenities, including roads, drainage, drinking water supply, and sanitation facilities in Nalgonda. Residents shared their local issues and concerns with the Minister, who responded positively and assured them that all genuine problems would be addressed on priority after the elections. Party leaders, corporator candidates, and local Congress workers actively participated in the campaign, making the outreach programme lively and effective.

50 Bed Super Specialty Hospital in Medaram

- MEDICAL CAMPS WITH 800 DOCTORS SPECIALLY IN 30 AREAS OF FAIR AREAS

- 325 SKIMMERS AND LIFE-GUARDS FOR SAFE BATHING IN JAMPPANNA RIVER

Hyderabad, January 25, TSIT: The state government has made large-scale arrangements to protect the health of lakhs of devotees who come to the Medaram fair.

On the one hand, providing safe fresh water, carrying out sanitation programmes, taking measures to prevent water pollution in Jampa river and providing medical facilities on a large scale. A 50-bed super specialty hospital has been set up in the TTD Kalyana Mandapam near the Medaram Jatara main venue, and special medical camps have been set up in 30 areas.

The Health Department has deployed 5192 medical and para-medical personnel to prevent any kind of trouble during the fair. 649 medical officers to provide 24 hours medical services during the fair.

154 AYUSH Medical Officers, 673 Nursing Officers, 154 AYUSH Medical Officers, 673 Nursing Officers, personnel have been deployed



1905 ASHA Workers, 1111 Paramedical Staff,

331 Supervisory Staff, 700 other staff specially appointed.

Even after the end of the fair, arrangements were made to organize 10 medical camps to prevent any health problems to the local tribes.

In addition to these, the CSC hospitals of Eturnugaram, Mulugu, Pasra, Govindarao Pet and Mangapeta around Medaram have been strengthened.

325 skimmers, lifeguards for safe bathing in Jampa river: Devotees who come to Medaram must take holy bath in Jampa river. A total of 325 personnel of safe swimmers, Singareni and SDRF personnel have been deployed

along the length of the Jampa river to avoid accidental falls in the Jampa river.

Among them, 210 swimmers, 12 members of the Singareni Rescue Team, by the Fisheries Department, There are 100 SDRF team members.

All of them were given life jackets, special T-shirts, search lights and life saving equipment. 268 personnel to avoid fire accidents: The state fire department has made elaborate arrangements to prevent any fire in the entire premises of the fair. 15 fire brigades, 12 mist bullets and two fire engines were deployed in the fair premises.

A total of 268 fire personnel will be on duty.

The CM praised Dr. Nori's pioneering work in cancer care and his relentless efforts in advancing medical treatment and public health awareness. He also extended his congratulations to the Padma Shri awardees, acknowledging their outstanding contributions across diverse fields. From science and engineering, Gaddamanugu Chandramouli, Krishnamurthy Balasubrahmanyam, and Kumaraswamy Thangaraj, a leading scientist at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB, Hyderabad) were honoured for their research and innovation, while in the medical field, Guduru Venkat Rao and Palkonda Vijayanand Reddy were recognised for their dedicated service and commitment to healthcare.

Hyderabad: The 179th Aradhana Utsavam of Sadguru Sri Tyagaraja Swamy was celebrated with devotion and grandeur at Shilparamam, Madhapur, on Sunday under the aegis of the Sanskriti Foundation, as part of the Hyderabad Tyagaraja Aradhana Music Festival (HTAMF).

The main highlight of the celebrations was the mass rendition of the Pancharatha Kritis, in which nearly 1,500 artists, including about 600 vocalists and over 700 instrumentalists, participated, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere. Artists and scholars from across the Telugu states took part in the week-long festival, with programmes held at the CCRT venue, culminating in the grand Pancharatha Seva.

As part of the 'Guru Samman' tradition, eminent musicians Sangeeta



Vidyanidhi Sri Komanduri Seshadri Guru, Mridangam and Ghata exponent Sri Neman Somayajulu Guru, and noted vocalist "Sunada Sudhanidi" Srimati Manda Sudharani Guru were felicitated with shawls, Guru Samman titles, and Sanskriti Awards for their lifetime contributions to Indian classical music.

Distinguished guests, including Padma Shri Ella Venkateswara Rao and "Kalaratna" Sri Raghavachari, addressed

Telangana

Dharmendra, Achuthanandan, Rohit Sharma, Savita Punia among 131 Padma awardees

FIVE PADMA VIBHUSHAN, 13 PADMA BHUSHAN AND 113 PADMA SHRI AWARDS ANNOUNCED; OTHER NOTABLE HONOUEREES INCLUDE MAMMOOTTY, VIJAY AMRITRAJ, UDAY KOTAK, BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI AND SHIBU SOREN

New Delhi (TSIT) On Republic Day eve, the government announced 131 Padma awards for the year 2026, including five Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan and 113 Padma Shri which include two cases in which the award for two individuals is counted as one. the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said. Former Kerala Chief Minister and veteran communist leader V. S. Achuthanandan and actor Dharmendra have been awarded the second-highest civilian honour, Padma Vibhushan, posthumously for 2026, a government statement said Sunday.

Former Supreme Court judge KT Thomas for public affairs, Hindustani Classical musician and violinist N Rajam in Art, eminent Malayalam journalist P Narayanan in literature and education have been awarded Padma Vibhushan, it said. Playback singer Alka Yagnik, former Uttarakhand chief minister Bhagat Singh Koshyari, actor Mammootty and banker Uday Kotak are among those



awarded Padma Bhushan, the Home Ministry said.

Ad guru Piyush Pandey, JMM founder Shibu Soren and BJP leader VK Malhotra have been awarded Padma Bhushan, while actor and comedian Satish Shah has been awarded Padma Shri, posthumously, it said.

Ninety awardees are women and the list includes six persons from the category of foreigners, NRI, PIO and OCI, and 16 posthumous awardees, it said.

Tennis legend Vijay Amritraj has been awarded Padma Bhushan; cricketer Rohit Sharma, women's cricket captain Harmanpreet Kaur and

hockey player Savita Punia have been awarded Padma Shri, the statement said.

Former JNU VC M Jagadesh Kumar, former Prasar Bharti CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati and actors R Madhavan and Prosenjit Chatterjee are also among those awarded Padma Shri, the ministry said.

Telangana CM hails Padma Awardees, calls them Pride of Telugu states

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Sunday congratulated the recipients of the prestigious Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri awards from the Telugu states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, describing the honours as a fitting recognition of their lifelong dedication and exemplary service to society. In an official message, Revanth Reddy expressed particular happiness over the selection of Dr. Nori Dattatreya, State Government Advisor and internationally renowned oncologist, for the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award.

The CM praised Dr. Nori's pioneering work in cancer care and his relentless efforts in advancing medical treatment and public health awareness. He also extended his congratulations to the Padma Shri awardees, acknowledging their outstanding contributions across diverse fields.

From science and engineering, Gaddamanugu Chandramouli, Krishnamurthy Balasubrahmanyam, and Kumaraswamy Thangaraj, a leading scientist at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB, Hyderabad) were honoured for their research and innovation, while in the medical field,

Guduru Venkat Rao and Palkonda Vijayanand Reddy were recognised for their dedicated service and commitment to healthcare.

Republic Day calls for renewed commitment to constitutional values: Telangana Guv Varma

Hyderabad: Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, on Sunday called upon citizens to reaffirm their commitment to the Constitution and uphold the ideals of justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, and secularism, while extending heartfelt greetings on the occasion of Republic Day.

In his message, Varma recalled the historic struggle for India's independence led by Mahatma Gandhi through non-violence and the supreme sacrifices made by countless freedom fighters.

He noted that India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic on January 26, 1950, when the Constitution came into force under the leadership of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the country's first President.

Highlighting the significance of Republic Day, Varma said it symbolizes India's unity in diversity and serves as a reminder to safeguard constitutional values while striving for national progress.

Referring to Telangana's unique historical journey, the Governor observed that despite India's independence in 1947, the people of Telangana had to wage a heroic struggle against Nizam rule to usher in democracy. He noted that the historic libera-

tion of Hyderabad on September 17, 1948, marked a defining moment, now being commemorated in a befitting manner by the present people's government.

The Governor lauded the State Government, led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, for completing two years in office and for introducing the ambitious "Telangana Rising-2047 Vision Policy."

He said the vision aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's VIKSIT Bharat 2047 goal and aims to build a \$3 trillion economy in Telangana, contributing to India's target of a \$30 trillion economy by the centenary of Independence.

He noted that the vision document was unveiled at the Telangana Rising Global Summit-2025 held in Bharat Future City, which attracted global participation and resulted in investment commitments exceeding \$100 billion, promising large-scale employment generation.

The Governor also highlighted Telangana's initiatives in social empowerment, including SC sub-categorisation and a comprehensive socio-economic survey to enable a B.C. census, aimed at ensuring equitable opportunities for weaker sections.

Concluding his message, Varma paid rich tributes to freedom fighters and wished the people of Telangana and the nation peace, prosperity, and happiness.

Hyderabad District gets 313 NCC Cadets as first responders under YAMS

Hyderabad, Jan 25 (UNI) Hyderabad is set to receive a trained pool of 313 National Cadet Corps (NCC) volunteers as first responders for disaster management following the successful completion of the first Yuva Aapda Mitra Training Camp at 68 Medium Regiment, Bowenpally.

Organised by 1 Telangana Battalion NCC and Revenue (Disaster Management) Department, Government of Telangana, the camp placed significant emphasis on disaster preparedness and response, reflecting the state's vulnerability to natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. Of the total trained cadets, 151 are girl cadets, highlighting strong female participation in community-based disaster response initiatives, a defence release said here on Sunday. The central component of the camp was the Yuva Aapda Mitra training module conducted by the Revenue

Department, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and other line departments. Through a combination of theoretical instruction and hands-on exercises, SDRF, NDRF and other line departments resource persons trained the cadets in disaster preparedness, basic search and rescue operations, first aid, casualty evacuation, and coordination with civil authorities during emergencies.

Special focus was placed on region-specific disaster scenarios relevant to Telangana's terrain and climatic conditions. Officials noted that such targeted training would enable cadets to respond effectively during emergencies and support local administrations in mitigating disaster impacts. The camp concluded with a formal closing ceremony attended by NCC officers and resource persons.

The Medal for Meritorious Service has also been conferred on Home Guards of the Greyhounds unit — Burranolla Renuka, Masaram Ravi, and Pittakala Jangaiah. The Medal for Gallantry has been awarded to Marri Venkata Reddy, Head Constable (3159), Cyberabad, for his act of bravery.

Senior police officials congratulated the awardees, stating that the honours reflect the professionalism, courage, and commitment of the Telangana Police in safeguarding public safety and internal security.

Telangana Police Personnel Honoured with President's Medals

Hyderabad: Several Telangana Police officers and personnel have been selected for prestigious national honours in recognition of their exemplary service and dedication to duty.

Under the President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM), the awardees are M.G.S. Prakash Rao, Additional Superintendent of Police, ISW Intelligence, Hyderabad, and Atmu Dumodar Reddy, Sub-Inspector of Police, CI Cell Intelligence, Hyderabad.

The Medal for Meritorious Service (MSM) has been awarded to B. Sumathi, IGP, SIB Intelligence, Hyderabad; P. Venkat Ramulu, Commandant, 13th Battalion, TGSP, Gudipet, Mancheri; Atturi Bhanu Murthy, Additional Commandant, 8th Battalion, TGSP, Kondapur; M. Shankar, DSP, COW, CID; K.V.M. Prasad, DSP, TGCSB, Hyderabad; C. Vamsi Mohan Reddy, DSP, PCS&S, Hyderabad; T. Laxmi, DSP, TPC,



Congress leaders inspect ongoing road works in Nallagandla HUDA Layout



SERILINGAMPALLY TSIT: Jan 25, 2026: Congress leaders, led by Satyanarayana, conducted an on-site inspection of the road works in Nallagandla HUDA Layout, under the jurisdiction of Serilingampally Mandal and Gachibowli Division. The road project, funded by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), covers the stretch from Rock Garden to the SBI main road. During the visit, Satyanarayana reviewed the progress and quality of the ongoing road works. Emphasizing the importance of timely and high-standard execution, Satyanarayana instructed the contractor to complete the works with superior quality and within the stipulated deadlines. He stressed that the project should be expedited to minimize inconvenience to the local residents and ensure smooth public access. The inspection was attended by several colony residents.

Hyderabad Tyagaraja Aaradhana Music Festival Draws 1,500 Artists for Pancharatna Seva



Vidyanidhi Sri Komanduri Seshadri Guru, Mridangam and Ghata exponent Sri Neman Somayajulu Guru, and noted vocalist "Sunada Sudhanidi" Srimati Manda Sudharani Guru were felicitated with shawls, Guru Samman titles, and Sanskriti Awards for their lifetime contributions to Indian classical music.

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Mann Ki Baat: Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu thanks PM Modi for highlighting Anantapur's water conservation efforts



Amaravati, Jan 25 : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.

Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for highlighting the efforts of the people of Anantapur in water conservation during his radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'.

"Thank you, Hon'ble Prime Minister Sir, for highlighting the inspiring efforts of the people of Anantapur in water conservation during your first Mann Ki Baat of the year today," the Chief Minister posted on X.

Naidu said that water security is one of the "Padi Sutralus" (10-point principles) adopted under the Swarna

Andhra Vision.

"We are committed to building resilient water conservation infrastructure by integrating modern technology with traditional water management practices. Your message today further motivates us in this mission," he added.

During his address, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the community-led water conservation initiative in Anantapur, noting the active participation of local residents.

He pointed out that the region has long struggled with severe drought due to its red and sandy soil and erratic rainfall patterns. "The soil here is red and sandy. This is

the reason people face water scarcity. Many regions do not witness rainfall for long periods. Many a times, people even compare Anantapur with the drought conditions of a desert," the Prime Minister said. He said that to address the problem, residents took a pledge to clean reservoirs and, with administrative support, launched the 'Ananta Neeleeru Samarakshanam' project.

The Prime Minister noted that more than 10 reservoirs have been revived under the initiative and are now filled with water. Over 7,000 trees have also been planted, leading to an increase in green cover.

"In Anantapur, along with water conservation, greenery has also increased. Children can now enjoy swimming here. In a way, the entire ecosystem has blossomed again," he said. Prime Minister Modi also shared a video clip of the water conservation efforts in Anantapur on X, along with a post in Telugu.

"I congratulate the people of Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh who are working to rejuvenate water tanks," he wrote.

Bhu Bharati' to ensure land security for farmers

Khammam (TSIT): The Telangana government aims to digitise every inch of land and provide permanent ownership security to farmers, said Revenue, Housing and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Sunday. He stated that the Bhu Bharati Act has been introduced to resolve complications created under the previous government's Dharani portal and to make land administration farmer-friendly.

Speaking after distributing appointment letters to licensed surveyors at the Khammam Collectorate (DOC), the Minister said the government has replaced outdated survey practices with advanced rover technology, ensuring accuracy up to centimetre-level measurements. He said 600 rovers



have been procured and supplied to districts, and 5,500 trained licensed surveyors have been deployed across mandals based on land extent. In Khammam district, appointment letters were issued to 47 surveyors selected in the second phase.

The Minister said forensic audits into irregulari-

ties under the Dharani system have already been completed in Sircilla and Siddipet districts, and the reports are under government review. Similar audits will soon be conducted in the remaining 31 districts, he added, dismissing opposition allegations over land registrations as baseless.

Vijay Arts Academy Conducts 35th Annual Awards Ceremony



Hyderabad: Vijay Arts Academy organised its 35th Annual Cartoon, Painting and Essay Writing Awards Ceremony on Sunday at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad. Students from Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts participated in large numbers. Over 15,000 students took part in the competitions conducted throughout the year, with participation from about 100 schools and colleges. Certificates were given to all participants, while 1,500 students were selected on merit and 300 prizes were awarded. The competitions were held in four categories ranging from Nursery to Degree level.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Bheerappa Nagari, Director and Vice-Chancellor of NIMS, stressed the importance of extracurricular activities for children's mental well-being and personality development. Ch Priyanka, Special Commissioner, I&PR Department, appreciated the efforts of Vijay Arts Academy in encouraging young talent.

Dr. Shrekanth Sharma, Director, SEE NI-MSME, and noted singer Surekha highlighted the role of parents in motivating children and preserving Indian art and culture. Dr. M. Manzoor Hussain, retired Registrar, JNTU, expressed happiness over students showing greater interest in creative fields.

Congress targets clean sweep in municipal polls

Khammam (TSIT): Revenue, Housing and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Sunday called upon Congress leaders and cadre to work in coordination to ensure a clean sweep in the upcoming municipal elections. Addressing preparatory meetings related to Illandu and Edulapuram municipalities at his camp office in Khammam, the minister said the election process is likely to begin shortly and could be completed by Shivaratri.

The minister said candidate selection would be done in a transparent manner based purely on scientific surveys and public opinion. He made it clear that there would be no place for lobbying or hereditary politics and that only candidates with winning potential and commitment to public service would be given B-forms. He urged aspirants who do not get tickets to stand by the party decision and work for the official candidates' victory.

Ponguleti said the government has already sanctioned crores of rupees for the development of yellandu and Edulapuram and assured that more funds would be mobilised if Congress candidates win in all wards. He asked party workers to take government welfare schemes and development works to the people at the grassroots level to strengthen the party ahead of the elections.



Minister Mohammad Azharuddin Assures Development of Jahangir Pir Dargah

RANGAREDDY: State Minority Welfare Minister Mohammad Azharuddin on Sunday visited the revered Hazrat Jahangir Pir Dargah located in Kothur mandal of the Shadnagar Assembly constituency in Rangareddy district. He was accompanied by Shadnagar MLA and State Government Public Sector Undertakings Chairman Veerlapalli Shankar, and former MLA Chowlapally Pratap Reddy.

Speaking to the local media during the visit, Minister Mohammad Azharuddin described the Jahangir Pir Dargah as a sacred place and a symbol of communal harmony. He expressed happiness over visiting the shrine and



stated that development works would be taken up afresh, without dwelling on the past, to ensure overall improvement of the dargah. The Minister said that he had received several representations in the

Assembly regarding the development of the dargah. He assured that the works would be carried out as requested by MLA Veerlapalli Shankar. Emphasising a forward-looking approach, he said

that new development initiatives would be initiated to enhance facilities for devotees.

Minister Azharuddin

also shared that devotees visit the dargah with deep

faith and prayers, and he

expressed confidence that

their wishes would be ful-

filled. He noted that this

was his first visit to the

shrine and said he was

pleased to be part of the

occasion. On the sidelines,

he appealed to the people

to continue supporting

MLA Veerlapalli Shankar,

who has been consistently

working for the constitu-

ency. Following the visit,

the Minister was felicitated

by local residents and

devotees, marking the

occasion with warmth and

respect.

She wished the Banjara

community to come for-

ward in the fields of educa-

tion, employment and

health for generations the

Banjara community has

maintained its unique lan-

guage, dress, dances,

she said that it is com-

mendable to move forward

while preserving the festi-

vals and customs.

The MP said that

through the launch of the

Banjara Gotra Calendar,

the awareness of the

Shan culture and history

will increase among the

youth and this is a good

attempt to pass on the tribal

heritage to the coming gen-

erations.

Stating that social unity,

mutual respect and cultural

values are the strength of

the country, he said that

such spiritual gathering

programs are platforms for

uniting the society.

MP Dr. Kadiyam Kavya

assured that the Banjara

community should achieve

development in all fields

and that his contribution

will always be there.

She said that she will

work for the development

of tribal building in

Hanumakonda.Banjara

Welfare Association

President Porika Veeranna

Naik, former Sangem ZPTC

Veeramma,

Retired DEO Jawahar

Lal Naik, DMHO

Ravirathode, Retired RJD

Venkatram, and Bhoj Naik,

Dr. Ramesh Naik, Venkat

Naik, Sarpanch Banothu

Aruna Rajesh Naik and others participated.

Chemists Remove Misleading Discount Boards in Medchal-Malkajgiri



Uppal, January 25: Under the aegis of the Medchal-Malkajgiri District Chemists and Druggists Association, a drive was launched on Sunday to remove discount boards displayed by certain chain medical stores, which were allegedly misleading the public. Association members said that such discount boards were creating confusion among customers and adversely affecting small and independent medical shop owners. As part of the initiative, medical shop owners from Uppal, Ramanthapur and Nagole areas voluntarily participated in the programme. A large bike rally was organised to create public awareness, following which the members removed the discount boards put up in front of select medical stores. The association stated that the move was aimed at ensuring fair business practices and protecting the interests of small traders. Medchal-Malkajgiri District Chemists and Druggists Association president G. Venugopal Sharma, secretary Tirumala Reddy, treasurer Nagaraju, along with several association members from Uppal, Ramanthapur and Nagole, took part in the programme in large numbers.

Camp Court Held at Dharmabad Railway Station; 36 People Punished

Bureau/Anantoli Kalidas

Dharmabad : A camp court was held at Dharmabad Railway Station on January 23, 2026, under the chairmanship of Railway Judge Satish Aher from Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar. Strict and punitive action was taken against those who violated railway rules. The camp court heard several cases, including traveling without a ticket, trespassing onto railway tracks without a ticket, pulling the train's emergency chain, parking vehicles inside and outside the railway station and in no-parking areas, and unlicensed hawking within the railway premises. In this operation, a total of 36 people were subjected to strict and punitive action and fined by the Railway Court at Dharmabad Railway Station. It was clarified on this occasion that the purpose of the camp court was to create awareness among citizens about railway rules and to prevent violations. Judge Satish Aher, RPF Assistant Police Sub-Inspector Ramashish Kumar, Police Head Constable E.M. Waghmare, Police Head Constable Vilas Dongre, Constable Bhanudas, and other officers and staff were present at the camp court. The railway administration appealed to passengers and citizens to abide by railway rules and park their vehicles only in designated areas.



Several programs held on the occasion of Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray's birth centenary; grand renovation of Hemadpanthi temple

Nanded-TSSSeveral social and religious programs were organized in Yevati, Dharmabad taluka, on the occasion of the birth centenary of Hindu Hriday Samrat Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray. The program was organized by the Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray party under the guidance of former Mayor Advocate Surendra Belkonikar. District chief Jyotiba Kharate was present at the event.

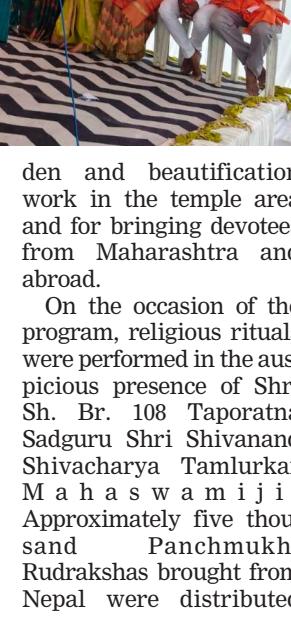
Continuing the tradition of conducting various social programs every year, this year, on the occasion of Balasaheb Thackeray's birth centenary, the ancient and historical Shri Swarnayugim Hemadpanthi Shiva Temple (Mahadev Temple) in Yevati village was renovated. While repairing the dilapidated parts of the temple, special emphasis was placed on preserving the original historical character of the structure. Stone work, the sanctum

sanctorum, the meeting hall, and the surrounding area were cleaned and renovated.

This renovation has significantly enhanced the beauty of the temple and provided safe and proper facilities for devotees. Villagers, the temple committee, and donors provided valuable cooperation in the renovation work. Former Mayor Advocate Surendra Belkonikar announced a donation of Rs. 1 crore 51 lakh for gar-

den and beautification work in the temple area and for bringing devotees from Maharashtra and abroad.

On the occasion of the program, religious rituals were performed in the auspicious presence of Shri Sh. Br. 108 Taporatra Sadguru Shri Shivanand Shivacharya Tamlurkar Maha swami ji. Approximately five thousand Panchmukhi Rudrakshas brought from Nepal were distributed. Sub-District Chief Ganesh Girilal, Taluka Chief Maroti Kageru, Veerabhadra Warle, City Organizer Raju Shirmane, senior Shiv Sena members Ganpat Katre, Pandurang Panchal, Bhagwan Panchal, Anil Chapre, the Sarpanch, Deputy Sarpanch, members of Yevati village, as well as villagers and Shiv Sena office bearers and workers, worked tirelessly. Thousands of devotees from Dharmabad city and taluka were present at the programme.



SC issues notice to Centre, CBI, RBI

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi has issued notices to the Union of India, Central Bureau of Investigation, Reserve Bank of India and others on the plea filed by Naresh Malhotra



New Delhi, Jan 25: The Supreme Court has sought responses from the Centre, the CBI and others on a plea filed by a 78-year-old retired banker who was duped of Rs 23 crore after allegedly being put under "digital arrest" for nearly a month.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi has issued notices to the Union of India, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and others on the plea filed by Naresh Malhotra.

Over 70 fugitives wanted by India located abroad during 2024-25: Report

New Delhi, Jan 25: Over 70 fugitives, wanted by India, were located abroad during 2024-25, according to an official report. As many as 203 fugitives wanted by other countries were detected/located in India during the same period.

A total of 71 "wanted persons/fugitives wanted by India" were located abroad in 2024-25, according to the annual report of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

The number of such wanted fugitives located abroad is the highest in the over a decade time, officials claimed. A total of 27 fugitives/wanted persons returned to India, from abroad in the last financial year, said the ministry's annual report for 2024-25.

It also gave details on the working of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which acts as the National Central Bureau (NCB) - the nodal point for Interpol in India.

During the period of April, 2024 to March, 2025, 74 Letters Rogatory (LRs) were sent abroad, out of which 54 pertained to CBI cases and 20 of them to state law enforcement and other central agencies, the report said.

It was confirmed by Indian law enforcement agencies including CBI that 47 LRs were fully executed during the said period and 29 were disposed of as closed/withdrawn on partial execution.

As March 31, 2025, a total 533 LRs were pending with other countries, out of which 276 pertained to CBI cases and 257 to state police and other central law enforcement agencies. As many as 32 LRs/treaty based requests were received from various countries requesting to provide assistance in the investigation of criminal matters.

T'gana: 900 strays killed so far, sarpanch booked

Hyderabad, Jan 25: In a fresh incident of alleged stray dogs killing in Telangana, about 300 canines were allegedly killed in Jagtial district, taking the toll to 900, animal rights activists claimed.

The killings are suspected to have been carried out by some elected representatives, including Sarpanches, allegedly to fulfil promises made to villagers ahead of gram panchayat elections held in December last year, to address the stray dog menace.

The latest incident came to light after a complaint was lodged, alleging that 300 stray dogs were killed in Pegadapally village by administering poison-



ous injections January 22.

Blaming the village Sarpanch and Gram Panchayat secretary for the gruesome act, the complaint alleged that the former hired few individuals to kill the strays.

Based on the complaint, police registered an FIR against the duo under relevant sections of BNS and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, police said Saturday.

that the ordeal began August 4 last year, when he received a call from a man claiming to be a Mumbai Police officer. The caller accused him of being linked to a drug-trafficking racket.

Subsequently, fraudsters impersonating ED and CBI officials also contacted him.

"Out of fear, the victim complied with their instructions and kept transferring money from his bank accounts to the accounts specified by the fraudsters. The accused also threatened the victim of dire consequences if he revealed the matter to anyone," police added.

Realising that he was duped, Malhotra got a complaint lodged on the National Cyber-crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) September 19 last year, following which the matter was transferred to the Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) unit. Police had said an FIR was registered and Rs 12.11 crore of the cheated amount were frozen in various bank accounts.

Inspector Ch Kiran said, during the inquest, around 70 to 80 dog carcasses were exhumed from the burial site. The burial appeared to have taken place three to four days ago.

"At this stage, we cannot confirm the involvement of the accused persons in the incident," he said, adding that post-mortem reports were awaited and further investigation was in progress.

In January alone, several incidents of stray dog killings were reported in the state.

As per the complaint lodged by animal rights activists, 100 dogs were allegedly poisoned to death at Yacharam village near here January 19 though 50 carcasses were found immediately.

Unapologetic on Op Sindoor: Tharoor on issues with Cong

Kozhikode (Kerala), Jan 25: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor Saturday said he has never violated the party's stated positions in Parliament, asserting that his only public disagreement in principle was over Operation Sindoor.

Answering questions during a session at the Kerala Literature Festival here, Tharoor said he had taken a strong stand on that issue and remained "unapologetic".

His statement comes amidst recent reports stating "Tharoor's differences with the party leadership", with a speculation that he is upset over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi not adequately acknowledging his presence at a recent event in Kochi and over alleged repeated attempts by state leaders to sideline him.

Explaining his position, Tharoor said that, as an observer and writer, he had written a newspaper column after the Pahalgam incident, stating that it should not go unpunished and that there should be a kinetic response.

Earlier, answering questions during a session at the Kerala Literature Festival here, Tharoor said he had taken a strong stand on 'Operation Sindoor' and remained "unapologetic," about it.

Explaining his position, Tharoor said that as an observer, commentator and writer, he had written a newspaper column after the Pahalgam terror attack, stating that it should not go unpunished and that there should be a kinetic response.

He said that while India is focused on development, it should not be dragged into a prolonged conflict with Pakistan, and that any action should be limited to targeting terrorist camps.

Tharoor said that to his surprise, the Indian government did exactly what he had recommended.

"How could I be expected to



criticise it when I myself recommended it. I supported it fully throughout Operation Sindoor and afterwards," he said.

When the government sent him abroad as part of a multi-party delegation over Operation Sindoor, his party, for some reason, did not like it.

"You can speak to them and find out," he said. Tharoor said it was Jawaharlal Nehru who posed the famous question: "Who lives if India dies."

"When India is at stake, when India's security and its place in the world are involved, India comes first," he said.

He added that political parties may have differences as part of the process of building a better India, but when national interests are involved, India must prevail.

Terrorists had gunned down 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam in April 2025, sending shockwaves across the country. In response, India launched Operation Sindoor, a precision military offensive targeting terror launchpads in Pakistan.

CBSE mandates mental health, career counselors in all affiliated schools

New Delhi: In a significant policy reform aimed at strengthening students' mental health and providing them with career guidance, the Central Board of Secondary Education has made the appointment of socio-emotional and career counsellors mandatory in all affiliated schools. For this, the national education board amended Clause 2.4.12 of the CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws, 2018, following a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed before the Rajasthan High Court in July 2025 by Kota-based advocate Sujeev Swami and some psychology experts. The PIL highlighted rising mental health challenges among students, including academic stress and lack of structured career guidance, and sought mandatory provisions for qualified counsellors and a uniform mental health support framework in schools.



The President of the European Council Mr. Antonio Costa and the President of the European Commission Ms. Ursula von der Leyen met the

Union Minister of External Affairs Dr. Subrahmanyam met Jaishankar.

Techie death: Accident site draws curious crowds

Residents and commuters were seen peering into the area of Noida's Sector 150 and asking security personnel and media persons whether it was the same location where the software engineer was allegedly pleading for help for hours after his car plunged into the ditch.

the same location where the software engineer was allegedly pleading for help for hours after his car plunged into the ditch. Many paused briefly to take photographs and videos, discussing where the onus falls. Rakesh Chauhan, a retired teacher in his early 60s, slowed his car while passing through the area and asked, "Is this the place where the boy drowned?" Expressing anguish, he said the tragedy reflected "gross negligence" and lamented that the



victim could have been saved had timely efforts been made. A car driver, Raman, pointed out that the trench lay only a few metres from the road

safety arrangements were put in place only after the tragedy. "If these steps had been taken earlier, his life could have been saved," he said before leaving the spot.

A police personnel deployed at the site said many people stop to inquire about the incident, often leading to crowding.

A tea vendor located about 200 metres from the site said there were "several other vulnerable spots" in the area that posed similar risks.

Mithlesh Kasana, a resident of Dadri, said the area has seen frequent visits by police officials, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and local residents since the incident.

The software engineer died in the early hours of January 17 after his car skidded in dense fog and plunged into

an unbarriered, water-filled trench in Sector 150 crossing over a drain at a sharp, almost 90-degree turning road. The incident triggered widespread public outrage, leading the Uttar Pradesh government to remove the Noida Authority CEO on January 19 and earlier terminate the services of a junior engineer in connection with the case.

Police, who have lodged cases of negligence, culpable homicide not amounting to murder and for pollution and violations of environment laws, have arrested three builders and launched a probe against real estate developers MZ Wiztown and Lotus Greens, while investigations are continuing to fix accountability for the lapses that allegedly led to the fatal accident.

Residents and commuters were seen peering into the area of Noida's Sector 150 and asking security personnel and media persons whether it was

Editorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

Rescue units or spectators to tragedy?

The utter incompetence of multiple civic agencies in saving a drowning man in the heart of Greater Noida last week throws light on an effete state that is simply unable to summon up the will to serve its citizens. Yuvraj Mehta's desperate cries for help from atop his sinking car, and the lack of capacity as well as courage among rescue personnel on the shore amid a fog enveloping the dreadful night make for a depressing picture of India under the current dispensation. The man, 27-year-old Yuvraj Mehta, was driving back home under poor visibility conditions at midnight Friday, January 16, when his SUV plunged into a 50-ft flooded construction site that had neither a protective barrier nor warning signage. Mehta survived the initial fall and climbed onto the roof of his sinking car.

For nearly 90 minutes, he desperately signalled for help using his mobile phone's torch and spoke to his father on the phone, who rushed to the site. Rescue personnel from four agencies—the Noida civic authority, the fire brigade, police and the National Disaster

Response Force—assembled on the shore but quibbled over the conditions, the equipment, the method and even the temperature of the water as the car went under the water, taking the young man with it.

The case has sparked nationwide outrage after the naked truth of the lack of prowess of our emergency services played out for everyone to see. Supposedly, trained rescue personnel refused to enter the water because the water was cold and feared the presence of iron rods under water. They lacked the thermal gear to operate at 30-foot depth and the fog lights needed to work in darkness. Even in terms of derring-do, they were shown up by a local delivery agent who jumped in to help with a rope tied around his waist. But by then, the vehicle had submerged and Mehta had succumbed to asphyxiation and cardiac arrest. This tragedy highlights failure at multiple levels, a many-headed failure that shows up at every crisis and in every disaster, be it a stampede at a crowded event, an outbreak of fire at an establishment with no safety arrangements, and the all-too-common and annual bouts of urban flooding in multiple cities. In the crisis management aspect, we have been witness to poorly trained and poorly equipped responders, as was glaringly evident in Greater Noida last week. But also, we see all too often contributory failings in the form of derelict safety regulation and administration. It's a shame that basic safety measures such as cautionary signage, working streetlights, and concrete barricading were absent on the street on which Yuvraj Mehta met his death. The fact that these were the conditions in the streets of a much-touted urban area is the least of it. Badly contoured lakesides and open excavation pits are universal conditions in the cities of India. Municipalities ignore them and local people normalise them, converting them into death traps. Yuvraj Mehta's death must jolt civic administrations and rescue agencies to overhaul their training methods, response protocols and equipment.

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Transport grids planned for all cities in Karnataka: DCM Shivakumar

Bengaluru : Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that transport grids are being planned for all the cities in the state keeping in mind a 25-year horizon.

Addressing a press conference at Vidhana Soudha after returning from his visit to the World Economic Forum at Davos, he said, "During the Davos meet, companies have expressed interest in investing in tier 2 and tier 3 cities as well. Companies want infrastructure in these towns. We are looking at developing a transport grid including Ring Roads for all the cities in the state keeping in mind growth projections for the next 25 years. Time is precious and we need to plan for it from now itself in association with various departments."

"The investors are predicting 70% urbanization levels in the next 25 years and they wanted to know our plan to develop required infrastructure. In this backdrop, we have decided to develop a transport grid including aspects like road needs and road widths, etc.," he added.

45 companies have expressed interest in Karnataka

We had discussions with about 45 companies who have expressed interest in investing in data centres, GCCs, food processing, aviation, renewable energy, EV, electronics and advanced manufacturing. The companies have taken information on the availability of water and power for their industries," he added. "We decided not to sign the agreements with



the investors in Davos. Instead, we would like to invite them to the state to get a first-hand idea about the human resource, infrastructure, weather and other resources. Of the Rs 11 lakh crore investment committed during Global Investors Meet, half of it is being realized. Investors are aware of massive investments such as Foxconn. They are aware that South Indian states offer excellent business environment after China," he explained.

Many investors are excited about the AI city we are planning in Bidadi. Some of them expressed reservations about the opposition to the project. I told them that the project would be realized as farmers are giving up their land on their own. No other state has given the amount of compensation we have given for the Bengaluru Business Corridor," he said.

"I discussed the tunnel project with the Maharashtra CM too as they are building a lot of

tunnels. They have some suggestions about parking facilities near tunnels. We would like to visit some of the tunnel projects in Maharashtra," he added.

Need to create awareness about discipline

"Davos is twice the size of Sadashivanagar and all the world leaders had to walk from place to place. I noticed the discipline on roads during my travel. We need to create awareness about road discipline. This is my first visit to Davos and I had an opportunity to meet many world leaders and businessmen," he said.

"I noticed that the world is looking at India through Bengaluru which has 450 Fortune 500 companies. We discussed upgrading the infrastructure for the rapid urbanization. I met many leaders including World Bank President Ajay Banga, National General Secretary Mark Rutte, finance minister of Saudi Arabia among others. BDA Chairman Harris sent out a message to the investors that Bengaluru

is gearing up for the future," he noted.

Asked how many companies have expressed interest in Karnataka, he said, "Forty five companies had discussions with us. We also discussed developing tourism in coastal Karnataka."

Asked about FDI, he said, "There are some guidelines for FDI. Some people were interested in Race Course, but I told them there are other lands in Bengaluru. Many of them expressed interest in lands in 40 km radius from Bengaluru airport."

Speed of doing business

"Many companies asked us to look into ease of doing business and the lengthy process of getting approvals. We are planning to achieve 'speed of doing business' for quicker approvals. Discussion with JICA for tunnel roads

Asked if anything would be changed in the tunnel projects after inspecting tunnels in Davos, he said, "Our tunnel projects have modern designs. Maharashtra has an agree-

ment with JICA for their tunnel projects. I will also travel to Japan to discuss our tunnel projects with JICA."

Asked about his 'India Rising' comments were contradicting Rahul Gandhi's stand on India's growth, he said, "Don't bring politics into this, let's look at it in a broad-minded way. We would not want to hurt India abroad. Rahul Gandhi has also never done it. He has expressed his unhappiness internally. We will not let down our country."

Will not respond to BJP leaders' comments

Asked about BJP leaders' criticism of his Davos visit, he said, "I will not reply to BJP leaders' comments. I am answerable to the people of Karnataka and India. I had said in the past that the world looks at India through Bengaluru and I have said the same thing abroad as well. No other state has the capability that we have."

"Karnataka is not competing with other states but at a global level. Atal Behari Vajpayee and PM Modi have called Bengaluru a global city," he added.

Speed of doing business

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Move to take action against Governor is condemnable: MP Basavaraj Bommai

Bengaluru : Former Chief Minister and Member of Parliament Basavaraj Bommai has strongly criticised the State government for proposing legal action against the Governor, calling the move unconstitutional and politically motivated.

In a statement posted on X (formerly Twitter), Bommai said the State government, in an attempt to divert attention from its own failures, is making allegations against the Central Government and showing disrespect to the constitutional office of the Governor. He said initiating legal action against the Governor amounts to an affront to the Constitution and is highly condemnable.

Bommai stated that there have been several instances in the past where Governors have not gone through documents page by page, and such proce-



dural issues should not be politicised. He said the use of abusive language against the Governor is an insult not only to the individual but also to the Constitution and the dignity of the Raj Bhavan.

The MP also demanded action against senior Congress legislator and MLC B.K. Hariprasad, stating that his conduct reflects the mindset of the Congress party. "It is absolutely necessary to initiate action against him for his remarks," Bommai said.

Recalling past events, Bommai pointed out that

Ready for debate on Bidadi township, let media decide date: DCM DK Shivakumar



Kanakapura: Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday said he is

ready for a public debate with Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on the Bidadi township project and invited the media to decide the date for the discussion. Speaking to reporters after inaugurating a new Rama temple near Kanakapura, Shivakumar said he had

earlier accepted a similar challenge when Kumaraswamy was the Chief Minister and was extending the invitation once again. "I am ready for a debate on the Bidadi township. Let the media decide the date. Inform me three days in advance and I will block my calendar," he said.

Responding to Kumaraswamy's statement that the DK brothers should come forward for a debate, Shivakumar reiterated that he was prepared whenever Kumaraswamy was ready. He also dismissed the Union Minister's claim that he would not allow the Bidadi township, stating that the project was originally initiated during Kumaraswamy's tenure. "He himself has admitted that he promised 800 square feet of land to farmers. We are only continuing the same project now," he said.

Shivakumar said that political leaders

may not be permanent, but their decisions would have a lasting impact. "This project will benefit future generations, and they will remember us for it. We have widened roads in my constituency and paid compensation of ₹500 per square foot," he added.

On Kumaraswamy's remarks that people want him back in State politics, Shivakumar said he saw no contradiction. "He is already in politics. I don't understand the distinction between national and State politics," he remarked.

Highlighting development and social initiatives in Kanakapura constituency, Shivakumar said around 500 temples have been built in the region. "My father built the Shakareshwara temple during his time. We have supported the construction of mosques and churches as well. We help people of all religions," he said. Referring to his emotional connection with the constituency, Shivakumar recalled that people from the area had walked barefoot to Delhi when he was jailed. "I was released after 48 days because of their prayers. The people of my constituency are my real assets," he said, adding that he had given up ancestral property and donated land for schools and hostels.

Every vote strengthens the foundation of democracy: Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot

Bengaluru: Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot on National Voters' Day called upon citizens to exercise their right to vote freely, fairly and without fear, pressure or inducement, and urged them to actively uphold democratic values.

Addressing the 16th National Voters' Day celebrations organised by the State Election Commission in Bengaluru, the Governor said the occasion serves as a reminder of the importance, dignity and role of citizens in India's democratic system. He noted that India, as the world's largest democracy, derives its strength from constitutional ideals and the informed participation of every citizen.

"Voting is not only a legal right but also a constitutional responsibility. One vote, one voice and one responsibility form the soul



of democracy," the Governor said, adding that every vote contributes to governance, social justice and development priorities. He described voting as an offering to the Republic, stating that each vote strengthens the foundation of democracy.

change. He urged young voters to actively engage in democratic processes to build a strong and inclusive India.

The Governor also administered the Voters' Pledge to over 1,000 participants, including officials, staff and students, reaffirming their commitment to uphold democratic values and encourage ethical voting practices. Chief Electoral Officer Anbukumar said National Voters' Day was being celebrated across the state and emphasized the vital role played by voters in a democratic country. He said the Election Commission of India has introduced several initiatives to ensure inclusive and smooth voting, providing regular opportunities for youth, women, persons with disabilities and other underprivileged sections to enrol in the voters' list.

Stress leads to wrinkles on the face and results in pimples."Dr. C. N. Manjunath "

Children's Cultural Fest at BOSCO Bengaluru

Bengaluru: Bangalore Oniyavara Seva Coota (BOSCO), an NGO dedicated to supporting underprivileged children and youth, organised a grand Children's Cultural Fest at BOSCO Mane, Bengaluru, to honour the legacy of Don Bosco, a remarkable figure whose life and work continue to inspire and uplift Young at Risk.

Through this festival, children were given a platform to showcase their talents, celebrate their culture, and build confidence in a supportive environment. The programme began with lighting the lamp by the dignitaries.

Most Rev. Dr. Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bengaluru and Chief Guest for the programme, addressed the children by blessing them and offering words of encouragement.

He remarked, "Today is not only the Feast of Don Bosco, but also a festival for children. Looking at all of you, I feel as if I am in a garden of colourful flowers. Heaven's kingdom belongs to children. May you always cherish your dreams, work hard, and grow up to be responsible citizens who bring pride to your families



and society." Addressing the management and staff, he added, "Whatever you do for children is done for humanity."

Mr. Akbar Ali Udupi, State Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Karnataka, remarked on the occasion, "Spending time with children is like being in the garden of Heaven. The tongue is the face of one's personality, so use it to show love, compassion, sacrifice, and empathy. Today, BOSCO has recognized you; tomorrow, let the whole world recognize you."

Pujyashri Shivanubhava Charanmurthy Shivarudra Swamiji, Spiritual Leader and Founder of Sri Belimatha Maha Samsthana Socio-Cultural and Education Trust, expressed his delight at the children's radiant smiles. Quoting Basavanna's Vachanas, he advised them to follow Don Bosco's resolution to cultivate kindness, respect elders, and pursue education with dedication, as these values will guide them to success and happiness.

How India Should Adapt to Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare

Bengaluru: The world is on the cusp of a transformation in healthcare, and Artificial Intelligence is at the heart of this process.

For countries like India, where millions continue to struggle from the lack of proper and affordable healthcare, AI could very well turn out to be a game-changer in the form of a support system in healthcare. However, in order to make effective use of AI, it is essential that India uses it in a responsible way.

Artificial intelligence is already beginning to penetrate Indian hospitals and clinics. Tools that analyse X-rays, CT scans, and lab results are helping doctors detect diseases such as tuberculosis, cancer, and heart conditions earlier than before. Telemedicine platforms supported by AI chat-screening and triage systems are making remote

consultations easier, especially in rural areas. Government initiatives such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission are also paving the way for digital health records which is an essential requirement for AI systems. Startups are developing AI-based tools to monitor chronic illnesses, predict disease risk, and streamline hospital workflows. However, adoption remains uneven. Large urban hospitals benefit the most, while small clinics

and rural health centres often lack the infrastructure needed to support AI tools. Health data in India is still fragmented across private hospitals, government institutions, and standalone clinics, which limits AI's accuracy and usefulness. There are also important ethical questions around privacy, consent, and accountability when AI systems influence medical decisions.

To make AI truly effective in healthcare, India needs a structured approach rather than rapid, unplanned adoption. First, building a strong digital health backbone is essential. Secure and compatible electronic health records allow doctors and AI systems to work with complete and reliable information. Without this foundation, AI risks being inaccurate or underused.

CM Stalin announces Republic Day medals for 44 intelligence, special operations personnel

CHENNAI: Chief Minister M K Stalin on Sunday ordered the conferment of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Medal for Excellence in Intelligence and Excellence in Special Operations on 44 personnel on the occasion of Republic Day 2026.

The awards will be given to 43 police officers and personnel and one Special Branch Assistant from the Intelligence Unit in recognition of outstanding performance in intelligence work and special operations. The medals are instituted to acknowledge exemplary service and motivate personnel engaged in sensitive and high-risk assignments.

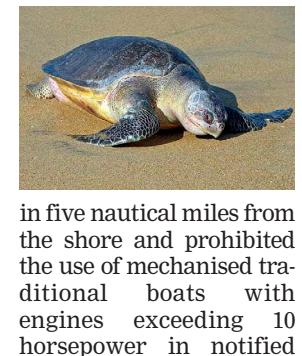


Each awardee will receive a gold medal weighing 10 grams along with a cash award of Rs 25,000. The medals will be presented by the Chief Minister at a function to be held later.

RAIN LIKELY IN 16 TN DISTRICTS, INCLUDING CHENNAI, TILL 1 PM

Fishing Regulation Act.

Awareness campaigns are also being conducted in fishing hamlets in coordination with the Forest department, Coastal Security Group, Coast Guard, fishermen associations, NGOs and village panchayat leaders.



A total of 270 awareness programmes have been held during the current nesting season. The TEDs, designed with technical support from the ICAR Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Kochi, allow turtles caught in trawl nets to escape safely without damaging the catch.

In the first phase, TEDs worth Rs 11.75 lakh were distributed to 50 vessels on a pilot basis, followed by distribution to 2,613 boats at a cost of Rs 6.29 crore. Installation work is currently underway, officials said.

CHENNAI: The Chennai Regional Meteorological Centre has forecast rain in 16 districts of Tamil Nadu till 1 pm today, with light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunder at a few places. According to the weather bulletin, light to moderate rain with isolated thunderstorms is likely in Chengalpattu, Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai and Villupuram districts.

Light to moderate rain may occur in Chennai, Kanchipuram, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvalur and Tiruvarur districts. Light rain is expected in Ariyalur, Tiruvannamalai, Ranipet, Kanchipuram, Tiruchirappalli and Pudukkottai districts. Earlier, the weather department had stated that light to moderate rain accompanied by thunder and lightning was likely at a few places across Tamil Nadu and in Puducherry and Karaikal today.

Free turtle excluder devices worth Rs 6.40 cr to be distributed to TN fishermen

CHENNAI: In a conservation initiative aimed at protecting endangered sea turtles without affecting fishermen's livelihoods, the Tamil Nadu government on Sunday announced a Rs 6.40 crore scheme to distribute Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) free of cost to mechanised fishing vessels operating along the State's coastline.

The programme, implemented through the Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare department, seeks to prevent sea turtles, particularly during their annual nesting season, from being trapped in fishing trawl nets. The nesting period extends from January 1 to April 30 every year.

As part of turtle protection measures, the State has imposed a ban on mechanised fishing with

in five nautical miles from the shore and prohibited the use of mechanised traditional boats with engines exceeding 10 horsepower in notified turtle nesting zones. The use of specific fishing nets has also been restricted during the breeding season.

According to the government, monitoring and enforcement are being strengthened through joint patrols and real-time tracking of fishing vessels using ISRO-enabled transponders via the 'Nabhimitra' online application. Action has been initiated against violators under the TN Marine

Fishing Regulation Act.

Awareness campaigns are also being conducted in fishing hamlets in coordination with the Forest department, Coastal Security Group, Coast Guard, fishermen associations, NGOs and village panchayat leaders.



A total of 270 awareness programmes have been held during the current nesting season. The TEDs, designed with technical support from the ICAR Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Kochi, allow turtles caught in trawl nets to escape safely without damaging the catch.

In the first phase, TEDs worth Rs 11.75 lakh were distributed to 50 vessels on a pilot basis, followed by distribution to 2,613 boats at a cost of Rs 6.29 crore. Installation work is currently underway, officials said.

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The growing sophistication of cyberwarfare has resulted in a notable escalation in recent years. Cyberattacks have evolved beyond mere disruptions of digital systems and now have the potential to cause real-world harm with devastating consequences. This may be a paradigm shift in the landscape of modern conflict. As our reliance on digital technologies continues to expand across various sectors, so does the potential for cyber threats and attacks.

Last month, a hacking group known as "Gonjeshke Darande" (Predatory Sparrow) claimed responsibility for a cyberattack that knocked out the majority of gas stations across Iran, leading to long queues. Almost 70 percent of the country's gas stations experienced service disruptions, according to Iranian state TV. The disruption was attributed to a "software problem" and the public was advised against rushing to those stations that were still operational.

Already this year, the global landscape has been marred by a series of more than 15 major cyberattacks spanning diverse sectors and affecting numerous countries. These incidents underscore the pervasive and evolving nature of cyber threats in our interconnected world. From critical infrastructure to financial institutions, government entities to private enterprises, the targets have been varied, highlighting the indiscriminate reach of malicious actors in the digital realm.

Nation states, nonstate actors and even individuals are increasingly leveraging advanced cyber capabilities in order to achieve financial, political and strategic objectives.

The humanitarian challenges stemming from cyberattacks have unfortunately emerged as a pressing concern, as hospitals, power grids, financial institutions and critical infrastructure are no longer immune to the reach of such adversaries. As the world becomes increasingly reliant on technology for essential services, communica-



tions and commerce, the vulnerabilities exposed by malicious cyber activities pose profound threats to humanity's well-being.

This is why it is important to look at the intricate web of humanitarian challenges associated with cyberattacks by delving into the implications for individuals, communities and global organizations and ways to tackle this issue.

First of all, it is critical to point out that the infrastructure that is essential for the functioning of societies has increasingly become a target — and is susceptible — to cyber threats. The interconnectivity of systems controlling energy, water supply, transport and healthcare leaves these sectors vulnerable to malicious cyber activities. Disruptions in these areas can have cascading effects, jeopardizing the delivery of vital services and posing significant challenges for humanitarian organizations responding to crises. As humanitarian organizations collect and store vast amounts of sensitive data, the risk of data breaches looms large. More fundamentally, the healthcare sector, a core pillar of humanitarian efforts, has increasingly become a prime target for cyberattacks. Ransomware attacks on hospitals have the potential to disrupt patient care, compromise sensitive medical records and even endanger lives. Unfortunately, the humanitarian consequences are dire in such cases because, if the integrity of medical services is compromised, vulnerable popula-

tions would be left without access to critical healthcare during times of need. Cyberattacks can also compromise emergency response systems. Attacks can disrupt communication channels, hinder logistics and compromise the efficiency of relief efforts. This not only endangers lives but also exacerbates the challenges faced by communities already grappling with the aftermath of disasters. Humanitarian crises, whether caused by natural disasters or conflicts, demand swift, immediate and coordinated emergency responses. It is also critical to focus on vulnerable and marginalized communities, as cyberattacks disproportionately affect these communities, exacerbating existing inequalities. Access to essential services, financial systems and communications platforms is critical for marginalized populations and any disruption in these areas further marginalizes and isolates them. In addition, as humanitarian organizations collect and store vast amounts of sensitive data, the risk of data breaches looms large. It is evident that safeguarding the confidentiality of personal information is paramount for maintaining the integrity of humanitarian efforts. But the problem is that cyberattacks that compromise the privacy of affected populations can erode trust and deter individuals from seeking assistance.

One of the key challenges in tackling cyberattacks is related to the

issue of accountability. It is often difficult to identify the perpetrators of cyberattacks with certainty. This lack of clear attribution can hinder efforts to hold the responsible parties accountable for their actions. This ambiguity also undermines the potential for legal recourse and international cooperation in addressing cyber threats with a humanitarian impact.

This is why it is critical for humanitarian organizations to enhance their cybersecurity capabilities and resilience. Capacity-building initiatives ought to concentrate on training personnel, implementing robust cybersecurity measures and developing contingency plans to respond effectively in the event of a cyberattack. Proactive investment in cybersecurity infrastructure is also crucial for mitigating the impact of cyber threats on humanitarian operations.

In addition, efficiently addressing the humanitarian challenges of cyberattacks requires a collaborative approach. Strengthening international cooperation on cybersecurity and fostering diplomacy to establish norms and regulations are essential. The establishment of clear guidelines and frameworks can contribute to a more secure cyberspace, reducing the potential for humanitarian crises resulting from malicious cyber activities. In a nutshell, the humanitarian challenges of cyberwarfare underscore their impact on people's well-being. The evolving nature of cyber threats poses multifaceted risks to critical infrastructure, healthcare, emergency response systems and marginalized communities. This underscores the urgent need for international cooperation — including on fortifying defenses and enhancing resilience. Only through concerted efforts to fortify cybersecurity measures and foster a global understanding of the humanitarian consequences of cyber threats can we navigate the complex terrain of the digital age, while ensuring the protection and well-being of individuals and communities worldwide.

Dharmapuri sugar mill worker's son sweeps 23 medals at Tanuvas



CHENNAI: At the 25th convocation of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, 25-year-old EL Aruneshwaran stole the spotlight by sweeping 23 awards.

A graduate of the Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal, his haul included prestigious honours like the Dorabji Tata Prize and the Tanuvas Alumni Association Medal for his 2018-19 academic performance.

The Dharmapuri native credited his success to his parents — his father is a sugar mill accountant, while his mother is a homemaker — and his sup-

portive faculty. "This is a proud moment. I am grateful to my parents, who struggled to educate me," he said. "My father was very particular about my education. The dean and

teachers of various departments motivated and guided me," he added. Aruneshwaran is currently pursuing an MSc at the Indian Veterinary Research Institute in Uttar

Pradesh. While completing his master's, he is preparing for civil service exams with a mission: to become a government veterinary doctor and serve the farming community.

CM Stalin unveils statues of Tamil language martyrs Thalamuthu and Natarajan



CHENNAI: Marking Tamil Language Martyrs' Day, Chief Minister M K Stalin on Sunday paid homage to freedom-era language activists Thalamuthu and Natarajan at Moolakothalam here and later unveiled their busts at the Thalamuthu-Natarajan Maaligai in Egmore, commemorating their role in the historic anti-Hindi agitation of 1937-39.

Observing Tamil Language Martyrs' Day, the Chief Minister recalled that the agitation erupted after Hindi was made a compulsory subject in schools in 1938, with failure to pass resulting in denial of promotion. The move, he

said, triggered widespread protests cutting across parties and social movements, drawing participation from students, scholars and reformers.

Natarajan, the first martyr of the agitation, died in custody in January 1939 after pro-

longed illness following his arrest at a protest in Adyar. His death galvanized the movement, drawing thousands to his funeral procession. Two months later, Thalamuthu, a young protester from Kumbakonam, died in

The sacrifice of Thalamuthu and Natarajan stands as a beacon for Tamil consciousness and linguistic self-respect," Stalin said, noting that their legacy continues to inspire generations.

Earlier, the Chief Minister participated in a commemorative procession and paid respects at the memorial of social reformer S Dharmambal. Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, senior ministers, legislators, Mayor Priya and officials were present at the events.

Humanitarian sector must be prepared for cyberattack threat

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AI GUIDES TO SMART PARKING: TECH-DRIVEN TRAFFIC PLAN TO STEER REPUBLIC DAY CROWD TO KARTAVYA PATH



NEW DELHI: From AI-generated informational videos to car-calling systems, Delhi Traffic Police has rolled out a slew of technology-driven measures to ensure smooth traffic flow and a hassle-free commute for people heading to Kartavya Path for the Republic Day parade and the Beating Retreat ceremony.

In a first, the traffic police has prepared detailed animated videos with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI), depicting the arrival, alighting, departure and parking plans for invitees. Officials said the videos are aimed at familiarising visitors with the movement and parking arrangements well in advance.

The videos are available on the Ministry of Defence website and can also be accessed through the QR code-based parking system issued to invitees. They explain in detail how arrival, alighting and parking will be managed on the day of the event, a senior police officer told PTI.

The parking management system covers 22 designated parking lots and has been designed to accommodate around 8,000 vehicles. Every year, nearly 77,000 passes are issued to spectators for the Republic Day parade, of which about 8,000 are earmarked for those arriving by private vehicles. The police said.

Another first this year is the introduction of shuttle services for security personnel deployed

for Republic Day arrangements. Shuttles will operate from four locations — Khan Market, Amritsar, Sher-Gil Marg, Patel Chowk Metro Station and HC Mathur Lane — to ferry personnel to their respective destinations. The shuttles will run at a frequency of 10 minutes, he said.

To assist commuters in reaching their designated parking areas on Republic Day, invited guests and ticket holders can use Google Maps or Mappi for real-time navigation support. A senior police officer said the platforms will provide details of appropriate routes to Kartavya Path and the exact location of allotted parking spots.

Car-calling systems have also been introduced this year to avoid crowding after the conclusion of the programme and to ensure smooth dispersal of invitees. Under the system, invitees can inform an officer stationed at the exit gate, following which announcements mentioning the car number or the driver's name will be made. The traffic police has advised people to follow official advisories, use public transport as far as possible and rely on digital navigation tools for a smoother commute to Kartavya Path.

Mcap of 9 of top-10 most valued firms plunges by Rs 2.51 lakh cr

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms slumped by Rs 2.51 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit, in line with a weak trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 2,032.65 points or 2.43 per cent.

"Markets witnessed a sharp sell-off during the week, with bears firmly in control. Weak global cues, persistent FII outflows, a depreciating rupee, and subdued corporate earnings kept pressure elevated throughout the week," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10



most valued firms, including Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel, plunged by Rs 2,51,711.6 crore. The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled Rs 96,960.17 crore to Rs 18,75,533.04 crore.

ICICI Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 48,644.99

crore to Rs 9,60,825.29 crore. The valuation of HDFC Bank tanked Rs 22,923.02 crore to Rs 14,09,611.89 crore and that of Bharti Airtel diminished by Rs 17,533.97 crore to Rs 11,32,010.46 crore.

Market capitalisation (mcap) of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped by

Rs 16,588.93 crore to Rs 11,43,623.19 crore and that of Larsen & Toubro tanked Rs 15,248.32 crore to Rs 5,15,161.91 crore. Mcap of Bajaj Finance declined by Rs 14,093.93 crore to Rs 5,77,353.23 crore and that of State Bank of India edged lower by Rs 11,907.5 crore to Rs 9,50,199.77 crore.

Market valuation of Infosys dived Rs 7,810.77 crore to Rs 6,94,078.82 crore. However, mcap of Hindustan Unilever climbed Rs 12,311.86 crore to Rs 5,66,733.16 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and Larsen & Toubro. "The correction was fuelled by a confluence of factors: escalating geopolitical tensions, aggressive FII selling, and panic regarding the Rupee's weakness," Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart Ltd, said on markets sell-off last week.

Why stock markets often trade lower ahead of Union Budgets

NEW DELHI: As the government prepares to present the Union Budget 2026-27, data from 2010-2022 shows that markets often trade lower ahead of the event due to fear of policy surprises, though post-budget rebounds are common — with an average 1.36 per cent gain in the following week, according to market watchers. This pre-budget weakness is attributed to elevated volatility, as seen in the average 2.65 per cent intraday trading range on budget day itself, they said.

Over the past 15 years, the average return for Nifty one week before the budget has been negative at -0.52 per cent, with the index closing higher only on 8 occasions. This pattern aligns with broader trends, where Nifty posted negative returns in the month preceding the



budget in four out of the last five years, including a drop in January 2025.

"For the Union Budget 2026, expectations centre on balancing fiscal prudence with growth stimulus amid global headwinds like US tariffs under President Donald Trump," said Rahul Sharma, Director, Head - Technical and Derivative Research, JM Financial Services Ltd. Key anticipations include increased capital expenditure on

Infrastructure, Defence, and Railways to shield the economy from external shocks, with a hike in defence allocation. Industry bodies seek boosts for MSMEs, manufacturing, green energy, AI and exports through incentives like faster GST refunds and investments in logistics. "Fiscal deficit is projected at 4.4 per cent of GDP, with emphasis on job creation, rural demand, and sustainable development to propel India toward a \$5 trillion economy.

RBI may cut rates further if India-US trade deal is delayed: Goldman Sachs



MUMBAI: India's strong economic fundamentals continue to support a healthy growth outlook, but prolonged uncertainty over the India-US trade deal could push the Reserve Bank of India to step in with further rate cuts.

According to Goldman Sachs, if trade-related headwinds persist beyond the first quarter of FY27 and start weighing on growth, the RBI may use its remaining policy space to support the economy through additional monetary easing. The brokerage said India's mass consumption story, especially in rural areas and among lower-income households in cities, is still in the early stages of recovery.

This recovery is being supported by a good crop cycle, higher state-level transfer payments to women in lower-income families and GST cuts that benefited the bottom end of the consumption ladder.

Goldman Sachs believes these factors are helping demand gradually pick up, even though broader global uncertainties remain.

In an interaction with NDTV Profit, Santanu Sengupta, Chief

The brokerage said India's mass consumption story, especially in rural areas and among lower-income households in cities, is still in the early stages of recovery.

India Economist at Goldman Sachs, said the India-US trade deal is expected to be finalised by the first quarter of FY27.

However, he warned that if the agreement is pushed beyond this period and into the second half of the next financial year, it could create growth headwinds.

Consumption through income tax and consumption tax cuts. This helped India record a strong real GDP growth of 7.6 per cent year-on-year in calendar year 2025. However, nominal GDP growth fell to a six-year low, excluding the pandemic period, mainly because of very low inflation.

MAHE Bengaluru's MAHETHON 2026 Makes Spectacular Debut, Inspiring a Healthier, Greener Tomorrow

Bengaluru, January 25, 2026: The inaugural edition of MAHETHON 2026, organized by MAHE Bengaluru Campus of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Institution of Eminence Deemed-to-be University, was a spectacular success. MAHE Bangalore campus, brought together over 10,000 runners across multiple categories, spanning all fitness levels and age groups. The marathon featured an AIMS-certified route, with the race commencing and concluding at the MAHE Bengaluru Campus, Yelahanka. Powered by AXIS Bank, MAHETHON united students, professional athletes, corporate teams, armed and police forces, families, and children, all sharing a commitment to health, community well-being, and the environment. MAHETHON 2026, Bengaluru's Biggest Running Festival, was officially flagged off by Shri S. R. Vishwanath, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA), Yelahanka. The Senior leadership from MAHE, including Dr. Madhu Veeraraghavan, Pro Vice-Chancellor of MAHE Bengaluru Campus and MLHS, MAHE Manipal, Dr. Sharath Rao Pro Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences, MAHE, Chief Operating Officer Dr. Anand Venugopal, MAHE, and Dr. Raghavendra Prabhu P, Additional Registrar, MAHE Bengaluru joined him. The event was also attended by members of the civil society, governing body, academic leaders, corporate partners, and



senior administrators, who actively encouraged and motivated participants across all race categories.

Addressing the gathering, Shri S. R. Vishwanath, MLA remarked, I sincerely appreciate the Manipal Group of Institutions for bringing quality healthcare and education institutions closer to the people. It is heartening to see participants travel all the way from Bengaluru and other places, which reflects the trust and confidence people have in Manipal institutions. The work being done by MAHE Bangalore campus is truly commendable. Such programmes open new opportunities for our region, and I am very happy that this initiative was conducted locally for the benefit of our people... I have ensured that the state of the roads in Yelahanka has been addressed; however, some areas still require repair and attention. I assure everyone that by MAHETHON 2027, all roads in Yelahanka will be

well-maintained and in good condition.

Reflecting on the spirit of the event, Dr. Madhu Veeraraghavan noted:

"Today, as we witness the energy and enthusiasm of every participant at MAHETHON, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to each runner who chose to be part of this journey, and my sincere gratitude to our sponsors whose support has made this event possible. Together, we've created something truly remarkable for our MAHE community."

The marathon featured multiple race categories, including the Half Marathon (21.1K), 10K, 5K, and 3K Fun Run, promoting broad participation and inclusivity. A defining feature of MAHETHON 2026 was the dedicated participation of armed forces personnel and persons with disabilities, reflecting the event's commitment to inclusivity and community engagement. The fastest runners in each category were celebrated for their outstanding performances.

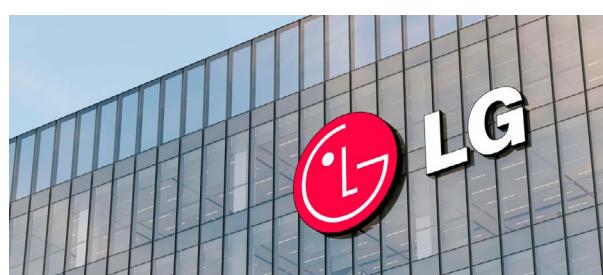
es, with a total prize money pool of ₹3.75 lakh.

Held under the theme "Run Green, Breathe Free" with the tagline "Bengaluru Runs for Earth," the event seamlessly combined fitness with environmental stewardship. As part of the celebrations, a tree-planting drive was organised, highlighting MAHE Bengaluru's commitment to eco-friendly practices, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable mobility, while promoting healthy lifestyles and community well-being.

The event was conducted ahead of India's 77th Republic Day, celebrating national pride, unity, and community participation. Dr. Raghavendra Prabhu, Additional Registrar, MAHE Bengaluru, observed that MAHETHON will now be held annually on the fourth Sunday of January, establishing it as a flagship event that promotes fitness, environmental awareness, and MAHE's ongoing commitment to the community.

The success of MAHETHON 2026 underscores MAHE's dedication to health, sustainability, and social engagement. Alongside the Manipal Marathon hosted at Manipal, MAHETHON strengthens MAHE's pan-India presence in community-driven sporting initiatives. By combining fitness, inclusivity, and environmental responsibility, the event has set a benchmark for future editions, inspiring communities to come together in celebration of well-being, sustainability, and civic pride.

Future-ready lineup available immediately; consumers set to save up to Rs.19,000 with enhanced energy efficiency.



Key Highlights of the 2026 Lineup:

Enhanced Energy Savings: The new norms are designed to drastically reduce power consumption for households. Industry estimates indicate that upgrading to a new 5-star AC under the 2026 norms can help consumers save approximately ₹9,000 over a 10-year period, depending on usage and tariff rates.

Understanding the New Ratings: Under the stricter 2026 framework, the efficiency threshold has been raised; for instance, a model previously rated as 5-star may now be classified

as 4-star. This reclassification reflects a higher standard of efficiency rather than a drop in performance, encouraging the adoption of superior, low-power technology. Availability: LGEIL future-ready line-up has been available in the market since early January – making it among the first brands to offer its 2026 BEE compliant residential air-conditioners. This ensures that customers purchasing early for the summer are not buying outdated technology.

Key features: This year our focus on empowering customers with features

like Precool and Energy Manager+. Pre cool, An innovative feature designed to ensure your home is perfectly cool and comfortable the moment you step in. Precool feature uses Geo fencing technology to locate user and ThinQ operates Air conditioner basis Automation applied by user once you enter the pre-defined distance range. Energy Manager+ analyses your AC usages History and recommends realistic operating hours and consumption. Users can set Periodic Budget target as required basis recommendation. Sanjay Chitkara, Co-Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, LG Electronics India Limited

Commented on the launch: "As India moves towards stricter energy efficiency norms, LG Electronics India Limited remains committed to supporting this transition through early compliance

and future-ready product innovation. With our portfolio already aligned to the new BEE standards, LGEIL enters the new season well-prepared to offer reliable, energy-efficient air conditioning solutions that help our consumers save money while enjoying superior cooling."

To ensure a smooth transition for consumers, LGEIL is launching a comprehensive awareness campaign across print, digital, and retail channels to explain the benefits of the new star ratings. Furthermore, LGEIL manufacturing and supply chain operations have fully aligned with the new guidelines. While the new 2026-compliant models are the focus, air conditioners manufactured under the previous standards will remain available until existing stocks are liquidated, offering consumers flexibility in their purchasing decisions.

Egypt aims to double trade with India to \$12 billion

NEW DELHI: Egypt has set a strong goal to nearly double its trade with India, aiming to reach \$12 billion in the coming years. Currently, trade between the two countries stands at around \$5 billion, which Egypt believes is far below the real potential of the partnership.

Speaking at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of South Asia here, Egypt's Ambassador to India, Kamel Zayed Galal, said both nations have many opportunities to grow together, especially in sectors like energy, manufacturing, agriculture, and connectivity.

He also shared that Indian investments in Egypt, which are now around \$3.7 billion, are expected to cross \$10 billion in the future. The Ambassador encouraged Indian companies to see Egypt as a long-term strategic partner rather than just

a short-term business destination. Energy cooperation is becoming a major focus, especially in renewable energy and green hydrogen.

Galal explained that Egypt has strong solar and wind resources along with growing infrastructure and easy access to major global shipping routes. These advantages could help Egypt become an important hub for green energy production and exports. He also pointed to fertilisers, agriculture and industrial manufacturing as areas where closer supply chain links could quickly increase trade. The Ambassador highlighted Egypt's industrial zones and its free trade agreements with African and European countries as major benefits for Indian businesses. He said Egypt is not just a market to sell products but also a base for production and exports to wider regions.

Egypt's ports on the Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea, along with the Suez Canal – which handles about 12 percent of global trade – make it a key global trade gateway. India and Egypt upgraded their relationship to a Strategic Partnership in 2023 after meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. According to Galal, the focus has now moved from building ties on paper to delivering real economic results. Talking about Egypt's foreign policy, the Ambassador said the country supports strategic independence, cooperation among many nations and respect for national sovereignty. It avoids strict political blocs and believes this approach closely matches India's views, especially on the need to reform global bodies like the United Nations.

New FBI-style UK police force to take over counter-terrorism, fraud investigations

LONDON: A new National Police Service made up of "world class talent" will be created to take over counter-terrorism, fraud and other serious gang violence investigations in the UK, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said on Sunday.

"We will create a new National Police Service – dubbed 'the British FBI' – deploying world-class talent and state-of-the-art technology to track down and catch dangerous criminals. In doing so, local forces will be able to spend more time fighting crime in their communities," she said. The NPS will cover England and Wales but be able to operate in the wider United Kingdom including devolved Scotland, setting national standards and training. It will be led by a national Police Commissioner, who will become the most senior police chief in the country. The announcement forms part of wider police reforms unveiled by the UK Home Office, including a reduction in the



overall number of police forces in England and Wales, with some merged to create bigger regional constabularies tackling complex crimes, such as murder, drugs and county lines gangs. Meanwhile, counter-terror policing currently led by the Metropolitan Police, the National Air Service run by West Yorkshire Police and National Roads Policing will all be brought under the new NPS.

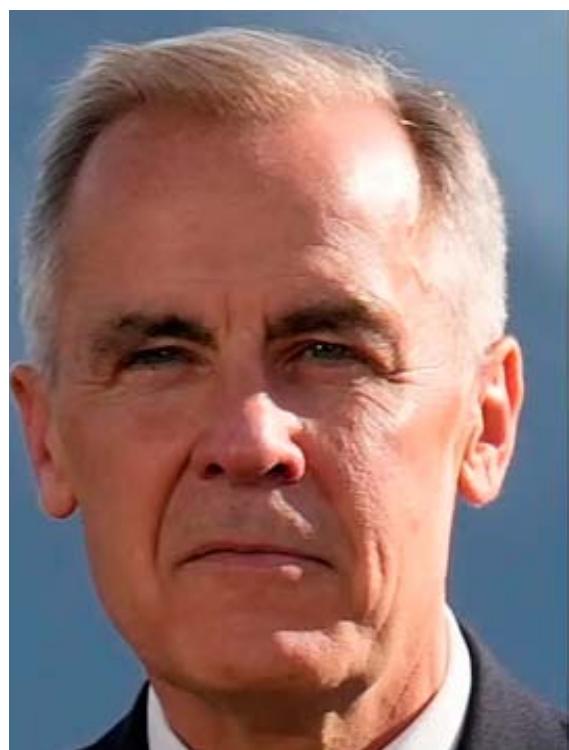
Intelligence and resources will be shared across different forces in stages to ensure the public receive the same level of security no matter where they live, the Home Office said. In a joint article in 'The

Telegraph', the heads of the NCA, Met Police, counter-terrorism, National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing backed the new national force to replace the "outdated" 43-force model in the face of growing complexity of organised crime.

They wrote: "Criminals do not respect local boundaries or national borders – yet too often our policing structures still do. The system [our officers] operate within is too messy and too complicated. Expertise is locked away in silos."

"Technology systems do not speak to each other and front-line officers have to wade through complexity or battle with bureaucracy rather than focusing on protecting communities." The Opposition Tories said the changes must not come at the expense of local and community policing. "Labour wants to force through mega-forces after stripping 1,316 officers from the front line. More top-down reorganisation risks undermining efforts to catch criminals and it delivers no real improvement on the ground," said Chris Philp, shadow home secretary.

Trump threatens Canada with 100 per cent tariffs over its new trade deal with China



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to impose a 100 per cent tariff on goods imported from Canada if America's northern neighbour went ahead with its China trade deal, intensifying a feud with Prime Minister Mark Carney, a rising voice in the West's push-back to Trump's new world order. Trump said in a social media post that if Carney "thinks he is going to make Canada a Drop Off Port" for China to send goods and products into the United States, he is sorely mistaken."

While Trump has waged a trade war over the past year, Canada this month negotiated a deal to lower tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles in return for lower import taxes on Canadian farm products. Trump initially had said that agreement was what Carney "should be doing and it's a good thing for him to sign a trade deal." Carney's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump's threat came amid an escalating war of words with Carney as the Republican president's push to acquire Greenland strained the NATO alliance. Trump had commented while in Davos, Switzerland, this week that "Canada lives because of the United States." Carney shot back that his nation can be an example that the world does not have to bend toward autocratic tendencies. "Canada doesn't live because of the United States. Canada thrives because we are Canadian," he said.

Trump later revoked his invitation to Carney to join the president's "Board of Peace" that he is forming to try to resolve global conflicts.

Trump's push to acquire Greenland has come after he has repeatedly needed Canada over its

sovereignty and suggested it also be absorbed the United States as a 51st state. He posted an altered image on social media this week showing a map of the United States that included Canada, Venezuela, Greenland and Cuba as part of its territory.

In his message Saturday, Trump continued his provocations by calling Canada's leader "Governor Carney." Trump had used the same nickname for Carney's predecessor, Justin Trudeau, and his first use of it toward Carney was the latest mark of their soured relationship.

Carney has emerged as a leader of a movement for countries to find ways to link up and counter the US under Trump. Speaking in Davos before Trump, Carney said, "Middle powers must act together because if you are not at the table, you are on the menu" and he warned about coercion by great powers – without mentioning Trump's name. The prime minister received widespread praise and attention for his remarks, upstaging Trump at the World Economic Forum.

The prime minister even spoke of a "rupture" between the US under Trump and its Western allies that would never be repaired.

Trump, in his Truth Social post Saturday, also said that "China will eat Canada alive, completely devour it, including the destruction of their businesses, social fabric, and general way of life."

Carney has not yet reached a deal with Trump to reduce some of the tariffs that he has imposed on key sectors of the Canadian economy. But Canada has been protected by the heaviest impact of Trump's tariffs by the Canada-US-Mexico Agreement. That trade agreement is up for a review this year. In the fall, the Canadian province of Ontario aired an anti-tariff ad in

the US that prompted Trump to end trade talks with Canada. The television ad used the words of former President Ronald Reagan to criticize US tariffs. Trump pledged to increase tariffs on imports of Canadian goods by an extra 10 per cent. He did not follow through.

As for China, Canada had initially mirrored the United States by putting a 100 per cent tariff on electric vehicles from Beijing and a 25 per cent tariff on steel and aluminum. China had responded by imposing 100 per cent import taxes on Canadian canola oil and meal and 25 per cent on pork and seafood.

But as Trump's pursued pressure tactics, Canada's foreign policy has been less aligned with the US, creating an opening for an improved relationship with China. Carney made the tariff announcement earlier this month during a visit to Beijing. "The China trade deal is quite limited as is the US deal with China on (semiconductor) chips. The China deal may grow, however. I expect Chinese interest in funding a pipeline to northern British Columbia," said Nelson Wiseman, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Toronto. Carney has said that Canada's

relationship with the US is complex and deeper and that Canada and China disagree on issues such as human rights. Canada is the top export destination for 36 US states. Nearly USD 3.6 billion worth of goods and services cross the border each day. About 60 per cent of US crude oil imports are from Canada, as are 85 per cent of US electricity imports. Canada is also the largest foreign supplier of steel, aluminum and uranium to the US and has 34 critical minerals and metals that the Pentagon is eager for and investing in for national security.

US envoys urge Netanyahu to move into Gaza ceasefire's second phase

CAIRO: Top US envoys met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday, urging his government to move into the second phase of the ceasefire in Gaza. Netanyahu met with US President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and Middle East adviser, according to the prime minister's office, which did not give details. A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity to describe the talks, told reporters the envoys had been working closely with Netanyahu on recovering the remains of the last hostage in Gaza, and on the next steps for demilitarising the territory.

The US is anxious to keep the Trump-brokered deal moving, but Netanyahu faces pressure to wait until Hamas returns the hostage's remains. The biggest signal of the second phase would be the reopening of the Rafah border crossing between Gaza and Egypt.

Ali Shaath, the head of a future technocratic government in Gaza that is expected to run day-to-day affairs, said Thursday the border crossing will open in both directions this coming week. There was no confirmation from Israel, which said it would consider the matter this week. The crossing's Gaza side is currently under Israeli military control.

The family of Ran Gvili, whose body is still in Gaza, urged more pressure on Hamas. "President Trump himself stated this week in Davos that Hamas knows exactly where our son is being held," the family said Saturday. "Hamas is deceiving the international community and refusing to return our son, the



last remaining hostage, in what constitutes a clear violation of the agreement it signed."

Hamas said Wednesday it has provided "all information" it has on Gvili's remains to ceasefire mediators, and accused Israel of obstructing search efforts in areas it controls in Gaza. The ceasefire took effect on Oct 10.

Egypt pushes for Rafah crossing to open

Egypt's top diplomat pressed for an immediate opening of the Rafah crossing with the director of Trump's new Board of Peace in Gaza, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said Saturday, including the ability of Palestinians to enter and exit the territory. Foreign Minister Bader Abdellatif spoke by phone with Bulgarian diplomat Nickolay Mladenov, the high representative for Gaza, the ministry said in a statement. They discussed the implementation of the ceasefire's second phase, including the

deployment of an international monitoring force, the opening of the Rafah crossing in both directions and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the strip, the statement said.

The Egyptian minister said implementing the second phase is a "key entry point" to launch Gaza's reconstruction. The statement didn't say when the crossing will open for travellers and the evacuation of sick and wounded.

Israel is expected to discuss opening the Rafah crossing during Sunday's Cabinet meeting.

Hamas in a statement Saturday said a delegation met in Istanbul with the head of Turkey's National Intelligence Organization about the ceasefire's second phase and "the fulfillment of the requirements of the first phase."

Two teens killed in Gaza while searching for firewood. Also on Saturday, an Israeli strike killed two Palestinian teens in Gaza, according to hospital authorities. The boys,

cousins aged 13 and 15, were searching for firewood, according to Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, which received the bodies. The boys were killed in the area that Israel's military has said is safe for Palestinians, about 500 metres (yards) from the Yellow Line, which separates the Israeli-controlled areas in eastern Gaza from the rest of the strip, said a relative, Arafat al-Zawara.

Israel's military said it had targeted several militants who crossed the Yellow Line and planted explosives, threatening troops. It denied that those killed were children. Since the ceasefire, more than 480 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry, which is part of the Hamas-led government, maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by UN agencies and independent experts. Israel disputes its figures but has not provided its own.

US Treasury Secretary sees 'path' to remove 25% tariff imposed on India for buying Russian oil

NEW YORK: US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said there is a "path" to remove the 25 per cent tariffs imposed on India for buying Russian oil, noting that such purchases by Delhi from Moscow have "collapsed".

United States President Donald Trump has imposed 50 per cent tariffs on India, including 25 per cent for its purchases of Russian oil, leading to a strain in the bilateral ties between the two countries.

Bessent on Friday defined the sanctions imposed on India as a "success". "We put 25 per cent tariffs on India for buying Russian oil. And the Indian purchases by their refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success. The tariffs are still on. The 25 per cent Russian oil tariffs are still on," Bessent said in an interview with Politico.

"I would imagine that there is a path to take them off. So that's a check and a huge success," he added.

Bessent also criticised Europe for not imposing tariffs on India. "Our virtue-signalling European allies refused to do it (impose tariffs) because



they wanted to sign this big trade deal with India," he said.

Bessent accused India of importing and refining more oil from Russia after the invasion of Ukraine.

"Before the Ukraine invasion, approximately 2 per cent or 3 per cent of Indian oil that went into their refineries came from Russia. The oil was sanctioned. It got deeply discounted and moved up into the high teens-17,18,19 per cent was being refined. Huge profits from the refiners," he said.

He accused Europe of funding Russia's war by purchasing the oil refined in India. "But in the ultimate act of irony and stupidity, guess who was buying the refined products from the Indian...refineries made from Russian oil."

SUSPECTED RUSSIA SHADOW TANKER ANCHORED OFF FRENCH COAST

MARTIGUES: An oil tanker seized by France in the Mediterranean and suspected of being part of Russia's sanction-busting "shadow fleet" lay anchored Sunday near a southern French port and guarded by the French navy. The Grinch was intercepted Thursday morning in international waters between Spain and North Africa. The French navy escorted it to the Gulf of Fos in southern France, the regional maritime prefecture said in a statement on Saturday. The vessel will be kept at the disposal of the Marseille public prosecutor as part of a preliminary investigation for failure to fly a flag, it added. The captain and crew will also be questioned, according to a source close to the case.

The tanker was at anchor about 500 meters off the town of Martigues, an AFP

photographer observed on Sunday morning. A French navy ship and two gendarmerie patrol boats were stationed nearby.

All you need to know about Macron's Davos sunglasses

PARIS: At the power gathering of world leaders in Davos, Switzerland, the reflective shades worn by French President Emmanuel Macron captured attention in ways that words didn't.

Hiding an unsightly but what Macron says is a benign medical issue with his right eye, the sunglasses bled into news feeds, triggered a jab from US

President Donald Trump, and spawned memes and an AI-generated spoof of Macron as a fighter jet pilot, set to Kenny Loggins' "Danger Zone" track from the Tom Cruise blockbuster "Top Gun."

"Those beautiful sunglasses," Trump said in his Davos address. "What the hell happened?"

Here's what to know about the now famous

shades and what they say about Macron and politics.

The shades were made by a French firm, Henry Jullien, Macron's office told The Associated Press. They were its Pacific S 01 model, which don't come cheap, retailing for 659 euros (USD 775) on the manufacturer's website. It struggled with demand after Macron wore them for a hard-hitting speech

in Davos, publicity that money can't buy. It launched a dedicated page to capitalise on the buzz, saying "our eShop website is experiencing an exceptional volume of visits and enquiries." Shares of its Italian parent company, iVision Tech SpA, soared on Milan's stock exchange - from 1.51 euros (USD 1.78) a share when Macron spoke Tuesday.



Sainyam and Gaurav win 10m Air Pistol Trial 2 Finals

NEW DELHI: Sainyam of Chandigarh and Gaurav Kumar of Uttar Pradesh came on top in the women's and men's 10m Air Pistol Trial 2 finals respectively as the National Selection Trials 1 & 2 concluded here Sunday.

World Cup Final silver medalist Sainyam continued her good run of form, finishing on top in the finals with a dominant final score of 243.1, 5.4 points more than Rhythm Sangwan (237.7).

Meenu Pathak once again finished in the top three in the finals, finishing with a score of 218.5. Earlier in qualification, Suruchi Singh finished on top with an impressive 587.31x, but could only finish in eighth place in the finals. Palak shot 579.16x to finish second in qualification and shot 178.2 in the finals to finish fifth. The experienced Shwetha Singh took the third



spot in qualification with a score of 578.18x and came back in the finals to finish on sixth place. Meenu Pathak shot 577.12x in qualification while Priya Muralidhar hit 576.16x. Rhythm Sangwan and Sainyam scored 576.15x and 576.13x while Divya T.S completed the top eight with a score of 575.19x.

Gaurav improved on his second-place finish in Trial 1, finishing on top in T2 in a tightly contested final. Gaurav, who qualified third for the finals with a score of 584.21x, shot 245.5 in the finals to take the top spot ahead of Yogesh Kumar who finished second with a final score of 244.6. Harsh Swami of Uttar Pradesh took the third spot with a final score of 221.9 after qualifying for the finals in second place with a score of 585.26x.

Haaland dropped as Guardiola rejigs Manchester City squad

MANCHESTER: In a turn of events few expected even in the brutally result-oriented world of the English Premier League, Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola left out Erling Haaland from the starting lineup for the league game against Wolverhampton amid a slump in form.

The Norwegian striker, one of the most prolific strikers in the EPL and also in top-tier leagues around the world, was



named on the bench after a rare poor run in the recent matches, with only one goal in his last eight games in all competitions, which came off a penalty against

Brighton. Guardiola made the big call after two straight losses — to Manchester United in the league and Bodo/Glimt in the Champions League. The Norwegian striker, one of the most prolific strikers in the EPL and also in top-tier leagues around the world, was named on the bench after a rare poor run in the recent matches, with only one goal in his last eight games in all competitions, which came off a penalty against Brighton.

Top seeded Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi, meanwhile, benefited from a similar oversight by Matthias Bluebaum of Germany to salvage half a point. On a day filled with drama,

Inexplicable blunder causes Gukesh's loss

WIJK AAN JEE: World champion D Gukesh was himself to blame as he fell into a blindspot and made an unimaginable blunder to go down to Nodirbek Abdusatorov of Uzbekistan in a sixth round match of the Tata Steel chess tournament here on Saturday.

Indian GM Gukesh blundered almost with a blind eye and had to resign immediately in a position he would have survived with a possible draw. It's very clear to what is referred as a blind-spot in chess when at a given moment the player is not able to recognize for a few seconds what's happening. While this was the first instance for Gukesh to go through this after becoming a Grandmaster, his fans and followers would hope that it was also the last time.

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NEW DELHI: Cricket Scotland's chief executive Trudy Lindblade on Saturday expressed gratitude towards the International Cricket Council for inviting his country to next month's T20 World Cup in place of Bangladesh, adding that they are "preparing to arrive in India immediately".

Scotland were on Saturday confirmed as replacement of Bangladesh in Group C, after Bangladesh withdrew from the competition. Details around squad selection for the tournament will be shared in the coming days," Cricket Scotland said. Cricket Scotland chairman Wilf Walsh said he received a call from ICC chairman Jay Shah on confirming Scotland's participation.

"Earlier today I received correspondence from the ICC asking if our men's team would play at the Men's T20 World Cup, and we have accepted," Lindblade said on Cricket Scotland's website. "We are grateful to the ICC for extending this invite. This is an exciting opportunity for Scotland's players to compete on the global stage in front of millions of supporters. We also acknowledge this opportunity has arisen out of challenging and unique circumstances. "Our squad have been training for some weeks in preparation for upcoming tours and are now preparing to arrive in India added.

Babar, Afridi return; Rauf dropped as Pakistan name T20 WC squad

LAHORE: Pakistan on Sunday announced the Salman Agha-led squad for the ICC T20 World Cup, which will be played in India and Sri Lanka from February 7, with the veteran duo Babar Azam and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi making a return.

Having recently become the all-time leading run-getter in Men's T20Is, Babar Azam adds rich experience to the Pakistan batting lineup, while pacer Haris Rauf, who has performed well in the ongoing Big Bash League, having taken 20 wickets in just 11 matches, has been omitted from the 15-man squad. Skipper

Agha, Faheem Ashraf, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Sahibzada Farhan and Usman Tariq have received their maiden mega-event call-ups to the Pakistan squad. Meanwhile, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Nawaz, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan and Usman Khan have played in at least one or more editions of the tournament since 2021.

Pakistan boasts a strong batting lineup, which includes the likes of Fakhar Zaman, Saim Ayub, and Sahibzada Farhan. In the absence of Rauf, Pakistan have relied on Afridi and Naseem Shah in their pace unit.

There is also a strong presence of all-rounders in the squad, with the likes of Faheem Ashraf, Shadab Khan and Mohammad Nawaz providing multiple options with the bat and ball.

The 2009 winner are slotted in Group A alongside co-hosts and defending champions India, the Netherlands, the USA and Namibia. They will kickstart their campaign against the Netherlands on February 7 in Colombo at the Sinhalese Sports

Club (SSC) Ground. Pakistan's squad announcement comes just a day after the PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi said a final decision on their T20 World Cup participation would be made after talking to government.

Pakistan squad: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Naseem Shah, Sahibzada Farhan (wk), Saim Ayub, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Usman Khan (wk) Usman Tariq.

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 60, 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 at 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 US 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.

"Cricket is at its strongest when every team and every player is treated with respect, supported appropriately and consistently, and able to participate on fair terms. The game is at its best when all participants are genuine contributors to its success."

"WCA is a global body for professional cricketers with membership of players from several countries. But, Indian cricketers are not members of the WCA."

"In recent times, the WCA has become increasingly concerned by broader trends in the sport, including agreements not being honoured, rights being eroded, and a lack of meaningful consultation with players and their representatives — all of this amounts to a careless

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. Jovic made

Novak Djokovic advances to Australian Open quarterfinals on a walkover after Jakub Mensik withdraws



MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic has had a walkover into the Australian Open quarterfinals after Jakub Mensik withdrew 24 hours ahead of their scheduled fourth-round match with an abdominal injury. The tournament confirmed Mensik's withdrawal late Sunday. The match had been scheduled for Rod Laver Arena on Monday night.

"After last couple of matches, I started to feel worse, and actually the problem is my abdominal muscle on the left side," Mensik said in comments published by the tournament. "Like I said, last few matches it got significantly

worse, and I think if I would step on the court tomorrow, it would be such a big risk for me for my next weeks, for my next tournaments, and actually for my health."

No. 16-seeded Mensik beat Ethan Quinn in straight sets on Saturday.

Novak Djokovic has won the Australian Open a record 10 times. The 24-time major winner became the first player to reach 400 wins in Grand Slam singles when he beat Botic van de Zandschulp 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (4) on Saturday night in the third round of the Australian Open.

Bangladesh's exit from T20 World Cup "sad moment": Global players' body

LONDON: The World Cricket Association (WCA) on Sunday expressed concern over Bangladesh's exit from the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying it was "a sad moment" that requires "deep reflection".

The ICC on Saturday confirmed that Scotland has replaced Bangladesh in the T20 World Cup beginning February 7, saying the "difficult decision" was taken since it was not feasible to meet Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) request to shift their matches to Sri Lanka so close to the tournament.

"The withdrawal of Bangladesh from the T20 World Cup, and resulting absence of a valued cricketing nation from cricket's pinnacle international T20 event, is a sad moment for our sport, the Bangladesh players and fans, and one that requires deep reflection," WCA CEO Tom Moffat said in a statement.

The BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns in the wake of Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from

the IPL. The ICC, however, maintained that there was no verifiable security threat to the Bangladesh national team, officials or supporters in India and it was not appropriate to amend the published event schedule.

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GRATEFUL TO ICC FOR T20WC INVITE, PREPARING TO ARRIVE IN INDIA IMMEDIATELY: CRICKET SCOTLAND CEO



imminently to acclimatise to local conditions, ready to play and contribute to what should be a fantastic ICC Men's T20 World Cup," she added.

Scotland, however, will need some time to announce their 15-member squad for the tournament which begins on February 7.

The ICC has confirmed Scotland will replace Bangladesh in Group C, after Bangladesh withdrew from the competition. Details around squad selection for the tournament will be shared in the coming days," Cricket Scotland said. Cricket Scotland chairman Wilf Walsh said he received a call from ICC chairman Jay Shah on confirming Scotland's participation.

"I welcomed a call from ICC Chair Jay Shah earlier today confirming that Scotland will receive an invitation to play at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. I was pleased to accept on behalf of our team, who are willing and ready to go," he said. "We thank the ICC for this opportunity and look forward to competing with some of the best sides in the world in India in the coming weeks," Walsh added.

West Bengal to confer Governor's Award of Excellence on legendary Telugu actor Mohan Babu

In a moment of historic significance for Telugu cinema and the Telugu-speaking community across the globe, legendary actor Shri Mohan Babu will be conferred with the Governor's Award of Excellence by the Government of West Bengal. The award will be presented at a ceremonial function at Lok Bhawan, Kolkata, on Republic Day, January 26, 2026, in the august presence of the Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal and other distinguished guests.

The ceremony will be followed by the traditional At Home reception. This recognition marks a historic first, as it is the first time the state of West Bengal has conferred an Award of Excellence on a Telugu actor, reflecting the growing national appreciation of Telugu cinema's cultural and artistic contributions to Indian cinema. The honour coincides with a significant milestone in Shri Mohan Babu's illustrious career—50 years of exceptional contribution to Indian cinema. From humble beginnings to becoming one of the most respected figures in the film industry, his journey is widely regarded as a testament to discipline, perseverance and artistic integrity.

Over five decades, Shri Mohan Babu has made an indelible mark through a diverse body of work spanning multiple genres and languages. Apart from his achievements as an actor and producer, his role as an educationist and his contributions to social upliftment have earned him admiration beyond the world of cinema.

The award is seen not only as a personal honour for Shri Mohan Babu but also as a moment of pride for Telugu

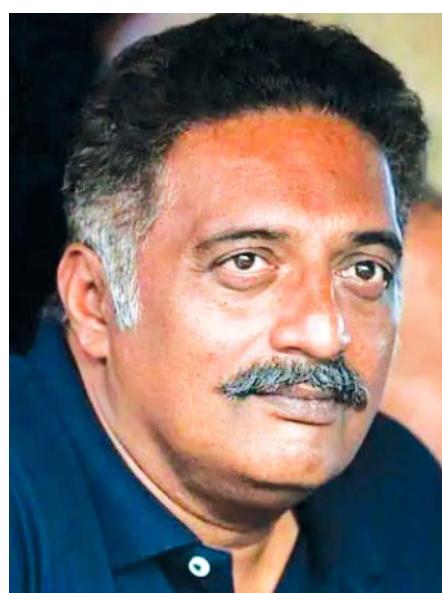


people everywhere, reaffirming the national stature of Telugu cinema and its rich cultural legacy.

The conferment by West Bengal, a state renowned for its own artistic and cinematic heritage, symbolises India's unity in diversity and the idea that artistic excellence transcends language and regional boundaries.

As the nation celebrates Republic Day, this recognition stands as a powerful reminder that contributions to art and culture belong to the country as a whole, enriching India's shared cinematic and cultural heritage.

Hindi films have lost their roots, are fake and money-driven: Prakash Raj



Unlike Malayalam and Tamil cinema, which he hailed for their strong, content-driven storytelling, actor Prakash Raj said mainstream Hindi cinema has lost its roots, becoming increasingly "fake" and "money-oriented". Speaking at the ongoing ninth edition of the Kerala Literature Festival (KLF) on Saturday, January 24, the award-winning actor criticised Hindi films for their artificiality, saying they have become like a "Madame Tussauds museum" where everything seems beautiful with no substance. "In the present context, I feel Malayalam and Tamil cinema are making very strong films... Hindi cinema, on the other hand, has lost its roots. Everything looks beautiful, wonderful, like plastic, as you see in the Madame Tussauds museum. "We (the South) still have stories to

tell, the new young directors of Tamil are talking about Dalit issues. And that gives so much of hope," said Raj, renowned for his work across Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada, and Malayalam cinema, in a session titled "The Artist I Became". The 60-year-old filmmaker-actor further analysed what ails Hindi cinema, tracing its decline to the post-multiplex era, when it began catering primarily to urban audiences. Raj, known for his performances in hit films such as "Singham" and "Wanted", argued that the industry's focus on glamour and surface-level aesthetics has weakened its emotional connection with viewers. "After multiplexes, the Bombay film industry started making films only for multiplexes. Very cute films and things like that. Because they were running well. They went into that Page 3 culture, and with that lost the touch with rural Rajasthan and Bihar," he explained. This shift, he argued, also led to the decline of the nation-building narratives that once defined post-independence Hindi cinema. To buttress his point, Raj cited the 1977 blockbuster "Amar Akbar Anthony", and its famous scene of three men from different religions donating blood to save one person, reflecting shared values, social harmony and collective aspirations. "Now, it's not like that anymore. Today, it's all about money and appearances—reels, page 3 coverage, and loud self-promotion. In the process, I feel the industry has lost its connection with the audience," he concluded.

The four-day literary extravaganza is hosting over 400 speakers, including Nobel Laureates Abdulrazak Gurnah and Abhijit Banerjee, astronaut Sunita Williams, author Kiran Desai, essayist Pico Iyer, Jnanpith winner Pratibha Ray, sports icons Rohan Bopanna and Ben Johnson, and Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales. KLF 2026, now in its ninth edition, will come to a close on January 25.

THE FEEL-GOOD ROMANTIC ENTERTAINER SKY TRAILER OUT NOW; Gearing up for a grand theatrical release on Feb 6

The upcoming film Sky stars Murali Krishnam raju, Shruti Shetty, and Anand in the lead roles. The film is produced under the banner of Valour Entertainment Studios by Nagireddy Guntaka, Srilakshmi Guntaka, Murali Krishnam raju, and Pridhvi Pericherla. The movie is directed by Prudhvi Pericherla. With this film, a new music director, Shiva Prasad, is being introduced to the industry. Sky is all set for a grand theatrical release on February 6. The trailer of Sky was released today. It opens with fun and lively moments shared between friends. The



journey of friendship turning into love between the hero and heroine is beautifully portrayed, with emotions that feel natural and engaging. The trailer clearly shows that the heroine's character has been designed with strength and depth. The hero's personal life flashback is touching and emotional. Due to certain misunderstandings, conflicts arise in the love story between the lead pair. How the couple reunites, and what tragic incident from the hero's past involving his father shaped his life, can only be experienced on the big screen.

GOVINDA'S SON YASHVARDHAN AHUJA TO MAKE BOLLYWOOD DEBUT: REPORT

Filmmaker Sajid Khan has returned to direction after a long break. He has started shooting for his upcoming horror film titled Hundred. According to reports, the film went on floors on January 23 at Mumbai's Film City. The makers chose Basant Panchmi as the special day to begin filming. This project marks Sajid Khan's comeback to filmmaking and also signals a major shift from his usual comedy genre to horror. Hundred will introduce Yashvardhan Ahuja to Bollywood. He is the son of veteran actor Govinda and Sunita Ahuja. The film also stars Nitanshi Goel, who recently gained popularity for her role in Laapataa Ladies (2024). The film is being produced by



Amar Butala's Guilty By Association Media along with Balaji Telefilms, headed by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor. Producer Amar Butala has worked on several successful films in the past. He produced Mission Majnu (2023) and co-produced hit films such as Mission Mangal, Kesari, Total Dhamaal, Tubelight, and Bajrangi Bhaijaan.

Nikhil, Bharat Krishnamachari, Pixel Studio's ambitious pan India project Swayambhu to have a grand release in theaters worldwide on April 10th

Nikhil, who received nationwide acclaim with the pan-India blockbuster Karthikeya 2, is now set to entertain the audience with his ambitious 20th film "Swayambhu". This historical action epic, produced on a grand scale, is directed by Bharat Krishnamachari. Samyukta and Nabha Natesh are the heroines. Produced by Bhuvan and Sreekar under the banner of Pixel Studios. Presented by Tagore Madhu. With top-class production values and a powerful pan-India vision, Swayambhu Nikhil stands out as one of the most ambitious ventures. Swayambhu is set to have a grand release in theaters worldwide on April 10th. This is the perfect date for a summer release.

The VFX is going to be amazing. Top VFX companies in India are working on this film. The makers are working with full commitment to deliver a world-class output, taking the necessary time to bring the visual wonder to the audience. Swayambhu is the highest budget film in Nikhil's career. After Karthikeya 2, it is the film that has huge buzz at the pan India level. Nikhil underwent a complete physical transformation and intense training for his role in this. The promotional content released so far has raised huge expectations for the film.



Nayanthara's character poster from Mammootty, Mohanlal-starrer 'Patriot' released

The makers of director Mahesh Narayanan's eagerly-awaited thriller 'Patriot', featuring both superstars of Malayalam cinema – Mammootty and Mohanlal in the lead, on Sunday released the character poster of actress Nayanthara in the film, much to the delight of fans and film buffs. The makers, through the film's official Instagram handle, shared the poster and wrote,

"Presenting #Nayanthara in #Patriot. Dissent is patriotic. In a world full of traitors, be a Patriot!"

Interestingly, the film poster released by the unit had a bit of Morse code on it. Fans were quick to decipher the Morse code and claimed that it read "April 23rd release". It may be recalled that IANS had reported earlier that sources had hinted at the possibility of the film releasing on April 23 this year.

Although there has been no official announcement on the release date of the film, sources in the industry had said that the film was likely to hit screens on April 23 this year. It may be recalled that on January 4 this year, the makers of the

film had announced that the unit had wrapped up the film's shooting. They wrote, "That's a wrap. Blood, sweat, belief. #PATRIOT marches on. See you on the Big screen." They also shared a BTS video of all the stars on the sets on the occasion.

The film, which has triggered huge expectations ever since it was announced, also features acclaimed actors Fahadh Faasil, Kunchacko Boban, Nayanthara, and Revathy in addition to the two Malayalam superstars.

A teaser which the makers released last year went on to amplify the expectations of fans and film buffs.

The teaser begins with a voiceover which says, "I remember there was a time when this nation was controlled by the two

of them. Together. Over these years, what they earned wasn't just followers. Faith. Trust."

We then see a series of intriguing but intense scenes and hear Mammootty's voice say, "They are going to bring social score to people." We next hear Mohanlal, who appears to play an army general in the film, say, "There are three of us. Do you think you can stop us?"

The teaser then gives us an idea that there is a program called Periscope and that Kunchacko Boban plays a character called Daniel.

Nayanthara is heard asking, "This program which is part of the student laptop scheme. Is that similar to Periscope?" We also hear another voice, asking, "Is this program watching them secretly?" The teaser ends with Mammootty asking someone to complete the sentence, "Great Indian traitor... or Patriot."

Overall, the teaser gives the impression that the film will revolve around a group of socially responsible individuals trying to thwart an illegal attempt by the government to monitor its citizens.

Rajinikanth gifts gold chain to Madurai fan who sells parottas at Rs 5 a piece

On the work front, Rajinikanth is currently working on director Nelson's 'Jailer 2'.

ing on director Nelson's 'Jailer 2'. The actor had only recently confirmed that he would be



beginning work on director Cibi Chakravarthy's film in April this year. Rajinikanth, who met his fans outside his residence on the festival day of Pongal earlier this month, was asked about his eagerly-awaited upcoming film with director Cibi Chakravarthy, which is being produced by actor Kamal Haasan's production house Raaj Kamal Films International. Responding to the question, Rajinikanth had said, "Shooting is to begin in April this year. It will be a proper commercial entertainer." The film has triggered excitement ever since actor, producer and politician Kamal Haasan announced that his production house,

Raaj Kamal Films International (RKFI), would be producing the film, tentatively being referred to as #Thalaivar173. It may be recalled that one of Tamil cinema's most successful directors, Sundar C, was to originally direct this film, which Kamal Haasan had said would be a magnum opus. However, to everybody's surprise, director Sundar C later opted out of the project. Soon after Sundar C's exit, the makers, in the new year, announced that director Cibi Chakravarthy would be directing the film. Music for the film, which has the tag line 'Every family has a hero' is to be scored by Anirudh.