



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

29-12-2025
Total pilgrims: 59,631
Tours: 18,609
Hundi kanakulu: 4,36 CR
Waiting Compartments: 13

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

HYDERABAD | BENGALURU | CHENNAI | VIJAYAWADA | KOCHI

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NATION | NEWS



Rajnath highlights
Lord Ram's values
in modern India



WORLD | NEWS

Russian claims of
Ukrainian attack on govt
sites 'unfounded',
EU's top diplomat says

India test-fires 2 Pralay missiles off Odisha confirms salvo capability

Bhubaneswar (TSIT): India on Wednesday validated the battlefield salvo mode of its indigenously developed quasi-ballistic missile Pralay, launching two rounds 30 seconds apart from a single mobile launcher at 10:30 am from Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha, the Defence Ministry said.

Both 150-500 km-range, solid-propellant weapons followed identical trajectories and hit their designated impact points within circular-error probability, tracking radars at Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, confirmed. The user-evaluation trial, witnessed by Army, Air Force and DRDO teams, paves the way for induction into the Strategic Forces Command.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and DRDO chief Dr Samir V. Kamat



congratulated Research Centre Imaarat Hyderabad and industry partners BDL & BEL for

"establishing reliable, ripple-fire capability essential for modern theatre operations".

713 Cr Released Towards Pending Employees' Bills

HYDERABAD (TSIT): The State government has released 713 crore towards clearing pending bills payable to government employees for the month of December, following orders issued by Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister.

Acting on the Deputy Chief Minister's directions, officials of the Finance Department released the bills on Wednesday, providing relief to employees awaiting settlement of long-pending dues. It may be recalled that the Praja Government had earlier assured employee unions that Rs.700 crore would be released every month towards pending bills. By the end of June, the government had released Rs.183 crore. Subsequently, from August onwards, a minimum of Rs.700 crore has been consistently released each month, in line with the assurance given.

INBRIEF

Assam couple lynched,
burnt alive over
witchcraft allegations

Karbi Anglong: In a horrific incident of mob violence rooted in superstition, a married couple was brutally killed after being accused of practising witchcraft in Assam's Karbi Anglong district. The incident occurred on Tuesday at No. 1 Beloguri Munda village in the Howrahgat area. The victims were identified as 43-year-old Gardi Birowa and his 33-year-old wife, Mira Birowa. According to reports, a group of villagers forcibly entered the couple's house and attacked them with sharp weapons. After assaulting the couple, the attackers set the house on fire, resulting in both victims being burnt alive inside the premises.

**New Year Greetings
from CM Revanth**

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy extended warm New Year greetings to the people of Telangana on the occasion of the New Year.

The Chief Minister expressed optimism that the State government would move forward with renewed vigour in the coming year towards achieving the ambitious

Telangana

Rising Vision 2047. He reiterated that the government would accord top priority to fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of all sections of society, including farmers, women, workers, and the underprivileged. Highlighting the government's commitment to inclusive growth, he said development and welfare would go hand in hand to ensure social equity and economic progress across the State. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy wished that the New Year would help every family achieve their cherished goals and bring happiness, good health, and prosperity to all citizens of Telangana.



In the last 10
years, the
Broadband
subscriber base in
India has increased
by more than
six times.

Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) showed.

As per the data, out of 1,070.81 million internet subscribers, the number of wired Internet subscribers is 44.42 million, and the number of wireless Internet subscribers is 973.39 mil-

lion.

Meanwhile, the broadband Internet subscriber base increased by 1.63 per cent from 979.71 million at the end of June to 995.63 million at the end of September this year. The narrowband Internet subscriber base decreased from 23.14 million in the June quarter to 22.18 million at the end of the September quarter.

At the same time, wireline subscribers decreased from 47.49 million at the end of the April-June quarter to 46.61 million at the end of the September quarter, with a quarterly rate of decline of 1.84 per cent. On a year-on-year (YoY) basis, wireline subscriptions increased by 26.21 per cent at the end of the July-September quarter. Monthly ARPU for wireless service increased by 10.67 per cent YoY in the quarter as well.

ARAVALLI ROW:

SC asks expert committee to consult stakeholders; sets out parameters for examining crucial issues



the panel to examine if the definition of 'Aravalli Hills and Ranges', restricted exclusively to the 500-meter area between two or more Aravalli Hills, creates a structural paradox wherein the geographical scope of protected territory is significantly narrowed.

Consequently, it should be determined if this restrictive demarcation has inversely broadened the scope of 'non-Arvalli' areas, thereby facilitating the continuation of unregulated mining and other disruptive activities in terrains ecologically contiguous but technically excluded by this definition, it said.

It said that prior to the implementation of the committee's report, or the execution of the directions contained in its November 20 judgment, "a fair, impartial, independent expert opinion must be obtained and considered, after associating all requisite stakeholders". It asked

Sri Anumula Revanth Reddy Garu
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Telangana

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Telangana secures Rs.22,000 crore tourism investment pledges.



HYDERABAD (TSIT): Telangana secured investment commitments worth Rs.22,324 crore in the tourism sector during 2025, marking the year as a major turning point in positioning the state as a global tourism destination.

In its year-end review released on Wednesday, the Tourism Department described 2025 as a watershed year, driven by the "Telangana Tourism

Policy 2025-2030." The investments are expected to generate nearly 90,000 employment opportunities across the state.

A major share of the inflows came through the Tourism Conclave 2025, which attracted 30 projects with investments of Rs.15,279 crore, while the Telangana Rising Global Summit contributed another Rs.7,045 crore. International investors committed to large-scale projects in convention, cultural, and wellness tourism segments. The year also witnessed

significant global exposure with Hyderabad hosting the Miss World 2025 pageant, showcasing Telangana's infrastructure and safe, visitor-friendly environment. The state further created history during the Bathukamma festival by achieving two Guinness World Records for the tallest floral arrangement and the largest folk dance performance.



This New Year,
the banker to every Indian
brings power to every Indian



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HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Corporate office at #167-169*, 2nd Floor, Little Mount, Saidapet, Chennai-600 015.

APPENDIX-IV [Rule 8(1)] Possession Notice (For Immovable Property)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Hindu Housing Finance Ltd., under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (ACT NO.54 OF 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice to below mentioned Borrower/s / Guarantor/s. After completion of 60 days from date of receipt of the said notice, the Borrower/s / Guarantor/s having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/s / Guarantor/s and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on them under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this.

Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/Guarantor/LAN No. Demand Notice Date and Amount Total Outstanding amount as on DATE OF PHYSICAL POSSESSION

1. Bhaskar Reddy Cherukuti, S/o. Vema Reddy 2.Venkateswaramma Cherukuti, Dio. Ram Reddy Both are R/o. No.4-99, Vepoor Village, Hanwada Mandal, Mahaboobnagar District-509334....Co-Borrower LAN: AP/IDB/MBNR/A00000695 26/11/2024 & Rs.17,94,669/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakhs Ninety Four thousand six hundred and sixty nine Only) Total Outstanding as On Date 31/12/2025 Rs. 20,60,520/-

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:

All that the Plot No.103, Admeasuring 200 Sq Yards, Ward No.14, Block No.10, Sy No. 122, Situated at Christianpally, Mahaboobnagar District, Telangana and bounded as: BOUNDARIES: North: Plot No.104, South:Plot No.102, East: Plot No.112, West: 20' Road.

The Borrower/s / Guarantor/s in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Hindu Housing Finance Limited, for an above-mentioned demanded amount and further interest thereon.

Place : Mahaboobnagar. Sd/-Authorised Officer, For Hindu Housing Finance Limited Date : 30-12-2025

KACHIGUDA BRANCH
P.B. No. 1253, 3-4-215, R.K. Complex, Kachiguda Sta Road, Kachiguda, Hyderabad-27 Tel no: (040)2756895, 27564456

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of BANK OF INDIA, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued on 30-08-2025 and acknowledged/paper publication on 05-10-2025 calling upon the borrowers Mrs. Polkumppally Shalini & Mr. Polkumppally Kiran Kumar Resident of House No. H-11-2-231 (New), Northern part of house No: H-11-2-23 & H-11-2-24 (8/Old) Bapu Nagar, Road No:4, Saroogaam Village and mandal Rangareddy Dist, Telangana State, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.44,18,845.09 Rupees Forty Four Lakhs Eighteen Thousand Eight hundred forty five and Nine Paisa) + Interest @ 9.05% p.a. + 2.00% 2025 as Penal Interest at monthly rests from 30-07-2025 with costs, expenses, charges etc excluding payment amount after 30-08-2025 and within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. Mrs. Polkumppally Shalini & Mr. Polkumppally Kiran Kumar Residential House H-11-2-231 (New), Northern part of house No:1-1-2-23 & H-1-2-24 (8/Old) Bapu Nagar, Road No4, Saroogaam Village and mandal Rangareddy Dist, Telangana State, having failed to discharge their liabilities in full, notice is hereby given to them in particular and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken the Possession of the property described herein below, under Section 13(4) of the said Act on this 23rd Day of December 2025.

The attention of the Borrower(s) and Guarantor/s is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 respect if time available to redeem the secured asset(s).

FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of the property Residential Land and building bearing House No:11-2-231 (New) (Northern Part of house No:1-1-2-23 and H-1-2-24 Old) Having its plinth area of 500 sq. feet in ground floor and 580 sq. feet in first floor,admeasuring 150 sq.yds or 125.41 sq.mts situated at Bapu Nagar, Road No.4 Saroor Nagar Village, Saroor Nagar Mandal, Rangareddy Dist, LB within the limits of L.B Nagar Circle, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Registration sub district Saroor Nagar in the name of Mrs. P. Shalini & Mr. P. Kiran Kumar bounded by East: 28' Wide Road, West: House of A.Krishna Mohan, North: 10'-0" wide Raod, South: Part of Same House

Place : Hyderabad Authorized Officer BANK OF INDIA Date : 30-12-2025

Central Bank of India
CONTRARY TO YOUR BELIEF
Central Bank of India

DEMAND NOTICE TO THE BORROWER Date: 24.11.2025

1) Applicant Borrower: Mr. G NAGA MALLESHWARI, House Number 2-2/2, Khan Manzil, Gowthami Nagar, Chanda Nagar, Tirumaliguda, Hyderabad, Pincode: 500050.

2) Co-Applicant: Mr. GOLLA KRISHNA S/o GOLLA ADDIPAVVA, Plot No. 14, Maheendra Residency Colony, Zaiheerabad Town, Sangareddy District, Telangana. Pin: 502220.

Sub: Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 to the borrowers. The undersigned holding the post of Chief Manager (here mention the post not being below the post of Chief Manager) is his capacity of the Authorized Officer of Central Bank of India under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest, 2002 (hereinafter called the "SARFAESI Act", for the sake of brevity) hereby issues this notice to you as follows: You are aware that at your request, you have been granted by Central Bank of India (hereinafter called "Bank"), through its ZAIHEERABAD BRANCH, financial assistance as detailed in column 2 to 3 of Schedule A hereof. The said financial assistance was sanctioned, inter alia, against security interest created in favour of Bank by executing, inter alia, security documents in the manner as detailed/mentioned in Schedule 'B' along with details of property. That you did not operate the account and did not repay the dues of bank as per the terms of sanction and consequently, your account was classified a non performing asset w.e.f 18/11/2025, in accordance with the applicable guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India from time to time. In spite of repeated requests by Bank, you have failed to repay the dues of bank. The facility wise details of the amount due from you are mentioned in columns 4 to 10 of Schedule A hereof. The total amount due against you being the sum total of all the amounts due under various financial facilities, as detailed in columns 4 to 10 of Schedule A hereof, becomes to Rs.27,34,094.76 (Rupees Twenty Seven lakh Thirty Four thousand Nine hundred and Sixty Six paisa) with further interest at the applicable rates of interest mentioned in the Schedule A from the date of notice 24/11/2025 till date of full and final payment along with incidental expenses, charges and costs recoverable from you as per terms of contract and/or a per law, within sixty days from the date of this notice. If you fail to repay to the Bank the total dues which you have been called upon to pay hereinafter the Bank will exercise all or the rights available to it under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act read with the Rules framed thereunder. You are also put on notice that in terms of Section 13(13), you are legally bound not to transfer the secured assets detailed in Schedule 'B', by way of sale, or otherwise, without obtaining prior written consent of the Bank. Your attention is also drawn to Section 29 of SARFAESI Act which provides that any contravention of provisions of the SARFAESI Act amounts to an offence punishable with imprisonment up to one year or fine or both. This notice of demand is issued without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which the bank has already exercised and/ or may exercise, including any legal action for recovery of the said dues and also for further demands for the sum that may be found fall due and payable by you to us. Your attention is drawn to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 in respect of time available to you to redeem the secured assets. (Authorized Officer)

Mr. AMBADAS DWIVEDI
Chief Manager

Schedule-A'

Details of financial facilities sanctioned and availed AND the details of the amount due

1	Type of financial facility sanctioned and availed	Cent Home Loan-TL 4064169533
2	Amount of the financial facility sanctioned	Rs. 30,00,000.00
3	Total amount of ledger balance outstanding on the date of notice	Rs. 26,81,872.76
4	The date up to which the interest has been charged in the ledger	31/08/2025
5	Amount of interest EXCLUDING PENAL INTEREST, if any, from the date the interest was last charged in the ledger to the date of notice	Rs. 52,141.00
6	Rate of interest with periodicity of compounding at which amount in column (6) has been calculated	8.75%
7	Amount of penal interest charged without compounding from the date the penal interest was last charged up to date of notice	Rs. 81.00
8	Incidental expenses, charges, and costs, if any, as per law/terms of sanction	Rs. 0.00
9	Total amount due up to the date of noticed	Rs. 27,34,094.76

Schedule-B'

(Details of Security Documents executed by the borrower)
Date and nature of document (mortgage deed/ deed of hypothecation deed/deeds etc.) by which the assets mentioned in Column 2 of this table are secured. In case of equitable mortgage, give particulars of EM.

Sl. Name of Document
1 Original Sale Doc/388/2021 Dated 08/01/2021 (Deposited with the bank)
2 Registered MODT/794/2021 Dated 21/01/2021 (In fav. of bank.)

Schedule-C'

(Detailed description of the secured asset/ Mortgaged Property/ Hypothecated Goods)

Immovable Asset:

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY
An Existing House, Built on Plot No. 656, (TLP/6/5/2018/H), in Sy.No. 72/1@1, 72/1@2, 72/1@3, 72/1@4, 72/1@5, 72/1@6, 72/1@7, 72/1@8, 72/1@9, 72/1@10, 72/1@11, 72/1@12, 72/1@13, 72/1@14, 72/1@15, 72/1@16, 72/1@17, 72/1@18, 72/1@19, 72/1@20, 72/1@21, 72/1@22, 72/1@23, 72/1@24, 72/1@25, 72/1@26, 72/1@27, 72/1@28, 72/1@29, 72/1@30, 72/1@31, 72/1@32, 72/1@33, 72/1@34, 72/1@35, 72/1@36, 72/1@37, 72/1@38, 72/1@39, 72/1@40, 72/1@41, 72/1@42, 72/1@43, 72/1@44, 72/1@45, 72/1@46, 72/1@47, 72/1@48, 72/1@49, 72/1@50, 72/1@51, 72/1@52, 72/1@53, 72/1@54, 72/1@55, 72/1@56, 72/1@57, 72/1@58, 72/1@59, 72/1@60, 72/1@61, 72/1@62, 72/1@63, 72/1@64, 72/1@65, 72/1@66, 72/1@67, 72/1@68, 72/1@69, 72/1@70, 72/1@71, 72/1@72, 72/1@73, 72/1@74, 72/1@75, 72/1@76, 72/1@77, 72/1@78, 72/1@79, 72/1@80, 72/1@81, 72/1@82, 72/1@83, 72/1@84, 72/1@85, 72/1@86, 72/1@87, 72/1@88, 72/1@89, 72/1@90, 72/1@91, 72/1@92, 72/1@93, 72/1@94, 72/1@95, 72/1@96, 72/1@97, 72/1@98, 72/1@99, 72/1@100, 72/1@101, 72/1@102, 72/1@103, 72/1@104, 72/1@105, 72/1@106, 72/1@107, 72/1@108, 72/1@109, 72/1@110, 72/1@111, 72/1@112, 72/1@113, 72/1@114, 72/1@115, 72/1@116, 72/1@117, 72/1@118, 72/1@119, 72/1@120, 72/1@121, 72/1@122, 72/1@123, 72/1@124, 72/1@125, 72/1@126, 72/1@127, 72/1@128, 72/1@129, 72/1@130, 72/1@131, 72/1@132, 72/1@133, 72/1@134, 72/1@135, 72/1@136, 72/1@137, 72/1@138, 72/1@139, 72/1@140, 72/1@141, 72/1@142, 72/1@143, 72/1@144, 72/1@145, 72/1@146, 72/1@147, 72/1@148, 72/1@149, 72/1@150, 72/1@151, 72/1@152, 72/1@153, 72/1@154, 72/1@155, 72/1@156, 72/1@157, 72/1@158, 72/1@159, 72/1@160, 72/1@161, 72/1@162, 72/1@163, 72/1@164, 72/1@165, 72/1@166, 72/1@167, 72/1@168, 72/1@169, 72/1@170, 72/1@171, 72/1@172, 72/1@173, 72/1@174, 72/1@175, 72/1@176, 72/1@177, 72/1@178, 72/1@179, 72/1@180, 72/1@181, 72/1@182, 72/1@183, 72/1@184, 72/1@185, 72/1@186, 72/1@187, 72/1@188, 72/1@189, 72/1@190, 72/1@191, 72/1@192, 72/1@193, 72/1@194, 72/1@195, 72/1@196, 72/1@197, 72/1@198, 72/1@199, 72/1@200, 72/1@201, 72/1@202, 72/1@203, 72/1@204, 72/1@205, 72/1@206, 72/1@207, 72/1@208, 72/1@209, 72/1@210, 72/1@211, 72/1@212, 72/1@213, 72/1@214, 72/1@215, 72/1@216, 72/1@217, 72/1@218, 72/1@219, 72/1@220, 72/1@221, 72/1@222, 72/1@223, 72/1@224, 72/1@225, 72/1@226, 72/1@227, 72/1@228, 72/1@229, 72/1@230, 72/1@231, 72/1@232, 72/1@233, 72/1@234, 72/1@235, 72/1@236, 72/1@237, 72/1@238, 72/1@239, 72/1@240, 72/1@241, 72/1@242, 72/1@243, 72/1@244, 72/1@245, 72/1@246, 72/1@247, 72/1@248, 72/1@249, 72/1@250, 72/1@251, 72/1@252, 72/1@253, 72/1@254, 72/1@255, 72/1@256, 72/1@257, 72/1@258, 72/1@259, 72/1@260, 72/1@261, 72/1@262, 72/1@263, 72/1@264, 72/1@265, 72/1@266, 72/1@267, 72/1@268, 72/1@269, 72/1@270, 72/1@271, 72/1@272, 72/1@273, 72/1@274, 72/1@275, 72/1@276, 72/1@277, 72/1@278, 72/1@279, 72/1@280, 72/1@281, 72/1@282, 72/1@283, 72/1@284, 72/1@285, 72/1@286, 72/1@287, 72/1@288, 72/1@289, 72/1@290, 72/1@291, 72/1@292, 72/1@293, 72/1@294, 72/1@295, 72/1@296, 72/1@297, 72/1@298, 72/1@299, 72/1@300, 72/1@301, 72/1@302, 72/1@303, 72/1@304, 72/1@305, 72/1@306, 72/1@307, 72/1@308, 72/1@309, 72/1@310, 72/1@311, 72/1@312, 72/1@313, 72/1@314, 72/1@315, 72/1@316, 72/1@317, 72/1@318, 72/1@319, 72/1@320, 72/1@321, 72/1@322, 72/1@323, 7

Governor greets
on New Year

Hyderabad, Dec 31 (TSIT): "May the year 2026 bring everyone good health, prosperity, fulfillment of aspirations, and lasting happiness. I call upon everyone to commit to the vision of Viksit Bharat by working towards a developed India through innovation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development, ensuring progress reaches every citizen," said Governor Jishnu Dev Varma. Extending his warmest congratulations and best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year 2026 to all Indians, and particularly to the people of Telangana, the Governor

urged all to continue our successful efforts against social ills and poor health, striving to build an equitable, just, friendly, inclusive, peaceful, sustainable, and healthy society.

Nara Lokesh Spearheads Major Reforms in Andhra Pradesh Education and IT Sectors

Amravati (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh is witnessing a significant overhaul in its Education, IT, and Skill Development sectors under the stewardship of Minister Nara Lokesh. The state government has adopted an aggressive strategy to strengthen institutional frameworks while simultaneously attracting global investments to position the state on the global map.

In the education sector, the government fulfilled a long-pending demand by completing the 'Mega DSC' process to fill 16,347 teacher posts within a record 150 days. To ensure transparency, a new Teacher Transfer Act was introduced, eliminating external influence. Further reforms include



the 'No Bag Day' initiative and the consolidation of 45 administrative apps into a single interface to reduce the burden on teachers. The state's 'Learning Excellence in Andhra Pradesh' (LEAP) program has notably received appreciation from Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Simultaneously, the administration is pushing for Andhra Pradesh to become an IT and electronics hub. Plans are underway to establish a 'Quantum Valley' in Amaravati, with a dedicated task force already formed. Major conglomerates like TCS, Cognizant, and Daikin are setting up campuses, while the government has approved a massive Rs.87,520 crore

investment for the Raiden Infotech (Google) Data Center. During the recent CII partnership summit, 52 MoUs worth Rs.1.22 lakh crore were signed, projecting employment for

over 2.32 lakh individuals. Bridging the gap between education and employment, the Skill Development department has trained 4.10 lakh youth this year, with international placement drives

via OMCAP sending candidates to Germany and Japan. Additionally, the government is set to launch 'Naipunyam,' an AI-based digital platform to streamline employment services.

Gitam students donate 140 units on New Year's Eve to stock NTR blood bank.



Hyderabad : The NSS unit of GITAM (Deemed-to-be University) wrapped up the year with a voluntary blood-donation camp that collected 140 units in six hours on Tuesday.

Resident director DVCSR Varma flagged off the drive, joined by faculty and student coordinators, before donors filed into the mobile bus parked inside the campus. Doctors from NTR Memorial Trust Blood Centre screened each volunteer and handed out certificates and refreshments.

"One unit can save three lives; our target was 100, but students smashed it," said NSS programme officer Dr K. Padma. The blood bank will use the stock for thalassaemia and emergency surgeries across Hyderabad hospitals.

Man charred to death as two vehicles collide in Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam

Amaravati, Dec 31 : A man was charred to death in a collision between two vehicles in Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district on Wednesday.

Police said a Bolero vehicle caught fire after colliding with an unidentified vehicle on the Nandyal-Amaravati highway. The driver was trapped in the fire and was charred to death. Another person traveling in the same vehicle was injured.

The accident occurred near Rangareddy village in Racharla mandal around 5.45 a.m.

According to police, the Bolero vehicle laden with cashew was heading to Anantapur from Tuni.

It collided with an unidentified vehicle coming from the opposite direction. The Bolero vehicle caught fire as a result of the collision.

Alerted by the passers-by, fire services personnel rushed to the spot with a fire engine and doused the fire.

The deceased was identified as Swamy (50). Another person, Kandipalli Jayarami Reddy, was injured. He was shifted to the government hospital at Giddalur. Police said they have registered a case and are investigating. An official said they were trying to trace the vehicle which collided with the Bolero.

Strict Action Against WALTA Act Violations: Forest Range Officer.



Mancheri, Dec 31, TSIT : Forest Range Officer of Talla Peta Range, Sushma, has warned that strict legal action will be taken against individuals violating the provisions of the Water, Land and Trees Act (WALTA).

She clarified that farmers and residents must obtain prior permission from the Forest Department before cutting or transporting trees such as teak, neem, tumma and jitregi grown on their agricultural lands or within private premises.

The officer stated that several cases have come to the department's notice where people assumed full ownership

ted only after official clearance is issued by the Forest Department. The deposited amount will be refunded once the farmer plants two saplings in place of each tree removed and maintains them for a period of three years. Sushma warned that unauthorized felling of trees or illegal transportation of timber would invite stringent legal action under the Act.

She emphasized that strict enforcement of the WALTA Act is essential for the protection of forests, wildlife and ecological balance, particularly in areas surrounding the Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary.

Pallavi school Attapur crowns 15th sports day with five house trophies and alumni medals.



Hyderabad : Pallavi International School, Attapur, closed its 15th Annual Sports Day, "Khel Mahotsav," with a drum-roll of victories on Tuesday evening as 2,000 parents and students packed the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium.

Chief guest Dr. Eugene George, head basketball coach at YMCA Secunderabad, handed over the overall sports championship to Satpura House after a day of track finals, kho-kho and throw-ball play-offs. Guest of honour Santosh Chary, international swimming medalist and SAT coach, presented the literary and artistic trophies, urging pupils to "swap 30 minutes of

screen time for pool or court time".

The ceremony also felicitated three 2025 CBSE toppers—now in junior college—for scoring 98.99 percent, while karate, yoga and skating squads staged a synchronised drill that drew the loudest cheer. Principal Annapurna Koduru thanked 80 teachers who coached 1,400 athletes since July, adding, "Sports teaches the same patience algorithms demand; together they build unbeatable minds."

The two-hour gala ended with a neon-lit dance and a countdown to 2026 that left the stadium floor strewn with confetti and house flags.

Medicover doctors perform scar-less POEM, restore swallowing for man who lost 25 kg.



Hyderabad: A 46-year-old Sudanese national, Osman Babikr Elhaj, ate his first normal meal in two-and-a-half years on Tuesday after gastroenterologists at Medicover Hospitals, HITEC City, slit the tight valve of his food-pipe from inside his mouth.

Elhaj had dropped 25 kg because every mouthful either shot back through his nose or lodged in his 7-cm-wide, food-filled gullet. Medicover's senior GI consultant Dr Moka Praneeth diagnosed end-stage achalasia cardia and, instead of open surgery, carried out a 90-minute Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM) via a 3 mm endoscope inserted through the patient's teeth.

ANDHRA PRADESH 2025:
A Year of Economic Renaissance and Welfare Milestones Under NDA Governance

As the sun sets on 2025, Andhra Pradesh stands at a pivotal juncture in its history, marking the completion of a transformative year under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition government. Following a historic mandate in 2024, the administration led by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has spent the past twelve months executing a dual strategy: stabilizing a fragile economy while simultaneously launching aggressive development initiatives.

The year 2025 will likely be recorded in the state's administrative history as a period of correction and acceleration. The calendar year 2025 demonstrated tangible results, with the state recording an impressive economic growth rate of 11.28%. By balancing immediate welfare needs with long-term capital expenditure, the government has sought to reposition Andhra Pradesh as a progressive powerhouse in Southern India.

The Welfare Shield: 'Super Six' Implementation

At the heart of the government's 2025 agenda was the fulfillment of election promises, specifically the 'Super Six' guarantees. Unlike typical populist measures, these schemes were rolled out with a focus on targeted delivery, ensuring that the benefits reached the intended demographics without leakage.

Record-Breaking Social Security

The administration achieved a significant milestone in social welfare by revamping the pension system. In 2025, the government successfully completed the distribution of Rs.50,000 crore in pensions. This financial umbrella covered a vast spectrum of society, extending support to the elderly, widows, the differently-abled, and other vulnerable groups across 31 distinct categories. This massive infusion of cash into the rural economy not only provided a safety net but also stimulated grassroots consumption.

Empowering Education: Talliki Vandana

Recognizing that human capital is the state's greatest asset, the government launched the Talliki Vandana scheme to incentivize education, aimed at reducing dropout rates and supporting families financially. The state deposited Rs.10,000 crore directly into the bank accounts of mothers. The scheme covered 67.27 lakh mothers, ensuring that financial con-

straints did not hinder a child's access to schooling. Uniquely, the scheme was designed to be inclusive, applicable to all eligible children in a family regardless of their number, ensuring no child was left behind.

Mahila Shakti: Mobility for Women

On August 15, 2025, the state took a major step toward women's empowerment with the launch of the 'Mahila Shakti' scheme, offering free travel for women in APSRTC buses. Since its inception, women have utilized this facility for over 3.25 crore trips. While this initiative placed a financial burden of Rs.1,144 crore on the state exchequer, the social impact—increased mobility for education, work, and commerce—has been profound. The benefit was also extended to the differently-abled, further widening the social safety net.

Agrarian Support and Energy Security

Farmers, the backbone of the state's economy, received substantial support through the 'Annadada Sukhibhava' program. The government transferred Rs.6,310 crore to the accounts of 46 lakh farmers. This state-level aid was provided as a top-up to central government assistance, offering a critical buffer against input costs. Simultaneously, the Deepam-2 scheme addressed domestic energy needs. To mitigate the impact of fuel inflation on poor households, the government initiated the distribution of three free LPG cylinders per year. With an expenditure of Rs.2,684 crore, approximately 2 crore cylinders were distributed, significantly easing the monthly budget of millions of low-income families.

Targeted Sectoral Assistance

Beyond the flagship schemes, 2025 saw a flurry of targeted welfare measures. The Matsyakara Bharosa' provided Rs.250 crore to 1.25 lakh fishermen during the lean season, while auto-rickshaw drivers received Rs.430 crore in financial assistance. The government also revised honorariums for religious service providers, increasing payments for pastors, imams, Nayee Brahmins and priests. Junior lawyers were granted a stipend of Rs.10,000 to sustain them during their early practice. Furthermore, the revival of 204 Anna Canteens provided affordable nutrition to the urban poor, serving over 4 crore meals throughout

Employment and Human Capital: The Youth Agenda

Addressing the critical issue of unemployment, the government moved swiftly in 2025 to operationalize the Chief Minister's first signature on the job calendar.

The Mega DSC and Police Recruitment

Overcoming legal and procedural hurdles, the state conducted a 'Mega DSC' recruitment drive, ensuring transparency and meritocracy. This massive exercise culminated in the appointment of 15,491 teachers, addressing chronic staff shortages in government schools. Simultaneously, the long-stalled police recruitment process was finalized, with 5,757 constables receiving appointment letters.

In a move to boost morale, the stipend for trainee constables was nearly tripled, rising from Rs.4,500 to Rs.12,500 per month. Additionally, the government extended gratuity benefits to Anganwadi and ASHA workers, providing them with post-retirement financial security for the first time.

Skill Census and Innovation

Looking beyond government jobs, the administration focused on employability. A comprehensive 'Skill Census' was conducted to assess the skill levels of 3.5 crore citizens, creating a database to match talent with industry needs. The establishment of the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub in Amaravati, along with regional centers in five other cities, marked a strategic shift toward fostering a startup ecosystem.

Industrial Resurgence: Chasing the Trillion-Dollar Dream

2025 has been described by economic analysts as a "Golden Year" for Andhra Pradesh's industrial sector. Under the guidance of IT and Electronics Minister Nara Lokesh, the state aggressively courted global capital, setting an ambitious target of attracting \$1 trillion in investments by 2029.

Global Giants Arrive

The year witnessed landmark commitments from global conglomerates. Google announced a massive \$15 billion data center project, while steel giant ArcelorMittal committed \$17 billion for a new steel plant. These megaprojects signaled to the global investment community that Andhra Pradesh was open for business. The efforts of Minister Lokesh in securing

these deals were noted internationally, with Reuters highlighting the state's aggressive pitch for foreign direct investment.

CII Summit and Policy Reforms

The CII Partnership Summit held in Visakhapatnam served as a major catalyst, resulting in 610 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). These agreements projected an investment flow of Rs.13.25 lakh crore, with the potential to create 16.13 lakh jobs. The State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB) backed these commitments by approving investments worth Rs.8.55 lakh crore across 13 meetings.

To facilitate this growth, the government introduced 23 new industrial policies. A key reform was the introduction of 'Escrow Accounts' for industrial incentives—a first in India—guaranteeing that promised subsidies would be paid on time, thereby building investor trust.

Decentralized Development

Moving away from a capital-centric industrial model, the government rolled out the 'One Constituency-One Industrial Park' policy. Land parcels of 100 acres were identified in 140 constituencies to spur local manufacturing. A Rs.500 crore credit guarantee fund was established to support local entrepreneurs in these MSME parks. Furthermore, the arid region of Rayalaseema was positioned as a future tech hub, with a Drone City launched over 300 acres in Orvakkal, Kurnool, expected to generate 40,000 jobs. Recognition for these reforms came at the highest level, with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu receiving the Business Reformer of the Year 2025 award from The Economic Times, acknowledging the state's strides in improving the 'Speed of Doing Business.'

Infrastructure: Rebuilding the Capital and Beyond

One of the most visible changes in 2025 was the resurrection of Amaravati. After five years of neglect, the capital region saw a massive resumption of construction activity.

Amaravati and Regional Balance

The capital city project, which had been stalled, roared back to life with the construction of the Legislative Assembly, Secretariat, High Court, and residential quarters for officials. The government also laid the groundwork for a future-ready economy in

the capital by initiating a 'Quantum Valley' for quantum computing and semiconductor research. Balancing the narrative, the administration pursued a three-region development strategy: Visakhapatnam as the legislative and executive hub, Amaravati as the knowledge hub, and Tirupati as an electronics and tourism cluster. The iconic Visakhapatnam Railway Zone also saw its headquarters construction commence, fulfilling a long-standing bifurcation promise.

Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

Under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, the Panchayat Raj department initiated a rural overhaul. The 'Palle Panduga' (Village Festival) program facilitated the laying of 4,000 km of cement roads. In a display of grassroots democracy, 13,326 Gram Sabhas were held on a single day to approve development works.

Tribal areas received special attention through the 'Adavi Talli Bata' program, focusing on road connectivity to remote hamlets and establishing 4G networks in border villages. The 'Amarajeevi Jaladhar' project was conceptualized to provide tap water connections to every household with an outlay of Rs.3,050 crore. On the macro level, the 'Swarnandhra Swachhanda' initiative focused on repairing the state's dilapidated road network. With an allocation of Rs.1,000 crore for repairs and Rs.3,000 crore for new roads, the transport infrastructure saw significant improvement.

Governance 2.0: Technology Meets Administration

In 2025, Andhra Pradesh reassessed its reputation as a pioneer in e-governance. The launch of 'Mana Mitra' (WhatsApp Governance) in January revolutionized service delivery.

Through 'Mana Mitra', citizens could access over 700 government services directly from their smartphones, ranging from bill payments to downloading student hall tickets. This initiative was lauded at the 28th National e-Governance Conference, with central officials announcing plans to replicate the AP model nationwide. Complementing this was the 'P4' (Public-Private-People Partnership) model. Launched on Ugadi, this social experiment encouraged wealthy citizens to adopt poor families. The objective was not just charity, but empowerment through skilling and employment.

Rajnath highlights Lord Ram's values in modern India

Ayodhya, Dec 31: Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday drew parallels between the principles of Lord Ram and India's approach to national security, asserting that values and restraint must guide action even in times of conflict. Speaking on the second anniversary of the consecration of Lord Ram at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple during Pratishtha Dwadashi celebrations, Singh said Operation 'Sindoor' exemplified modern India upholding these ideals.

"Lord Ram's mission was not merely to defeat Ravana but to eradicate unrighteousness. Similarly, Operation 'Sindoor' aimed to dismantle the terror ecosystem, not escalate violence. Our response was measured, controlled, and purposeful," Singh said, emphasizing that India acted with discipline while remaining sensitive to



innocent lives. The Defence Minister described Lord Ram as a symbol of humility, virtue, and compassion, yet a formidable force against injustice. "Ram is embedded in our consciousness; his dignity is our identity. Modern India mirrors this — firm against terrorism but rooted in righteousness and restraint," he added.

Singh also highlighted the broader moral significance of Ram, calling him a guide for decision-making, governance, and upholding dignity. "Where power risks turning reckless, Ram defines restraint; where

rights are debated, Ram reminds us of duty. He represents truth, resolve, and the moral compass of humanity," he said. On the development of Ayodhya, Singh said the city has transformed into a global center of religious tourism following the construction of the Ram Temple, with improved infrastructure including roads, housing, green spaces, airports, and railways contributing to a safe and modern urban environment.

He praised the government's efforts in balancing faith, heritage, and world-class infrastructure, calling the Ram Temple movement a centuries-long struggle rooted in societal consciousness, patience, and faith. "Every street of Ayodhya resonates with Ram, inspiring devotion not just locally but across India and the world," Singh said, adding that the temple's consecration marked

a renaissance of national consciousness and a celebration of "strength in dignity and dignity in power."

Earlier, Singh and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Hanuman Garhi, offering prayers to Lord Hanuman, before proceeding to the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi complex. They performed rituals at the Ram Lalla temple and Ram Darbar, including aarti, circumambulation, and hoisting the religious flag atop Maa Annapurna temple, praying for peace, prosperity, and national welfare. Singh was received at Maharishi Valmiki International Airport by CM Adityanath and accompanied him throughout the ceremonial visits. The celebrations were marked by Vedic chants and devotional fervor as leaders and devotees commemorated the enduring legacy of Lord Ram.

P.V. Narasimha Rao's economic legacy remembered at memorial lecture in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, December 31: The 21st death anniversary of former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna P.V. Narasimha Rao was observed with solemn reflection at a memorial lecture organised by EMESCO Books in association with the P.V. Narasimha Rao Memorial Lecture Committee at a city hotel on Tuesday.

Eminent economist and former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Prof. Montek Singh Ahluwalia delivered the keynote address, recalling the historic economic reforms initiated



during Narasimha Rao's tenure as Prime Minister between 1991 and 1996. Speakers described the

period as a defining phase that transformed India's economic trajectory through liberalisation and global integration.

Addressing the gathering, P.V. Prabhakar Rao, son of the former Prime Minister, termed his father's tenure a "golden era" that rescued India from a severe balance-of-payments crisis. He described Narasimha Rao as a "Karma Yogi" who remained detached from power while taking bold and politically difficult decisions in the national interest.

Prof. Ahluwalia highlighted the crucial part-

nership between Narasimha Rao and Dr. Manmohan Singh, noting that their political will and clarity of purpose dismantled the licence-permit raj and laid the foundation for India's current economic ambitions. He observed that many of today's growth aspirations trace back to reforms of the early 1990s.

Several speakers underlined Narasimha Rao's scholarship, global vision, and lasting contribution to nation-building, calling for greater efforts to preserve and popularise his legacy among younger generations.

65 injured as Loco trains collide inside THDC tunnel

Pipalkoti, Dec 31: At least 65 workers were injured late Tuesday night after two loco trains collided inside a tunnel at the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation (THDC) hydroelectric project site in the Pipalkoti area of Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, officials said.

The accident occurred around 8.30 pm inside the 4.5-km-long tunnel when a loco train transporting workers and construction material rammed into another train that was stationary on the same track during a shift change. Around 108 workers

were travelling on the two trains at the time of the incident. Two coaches derailed following the collision, triggering panic inside the tunnel. Describing the incident, a source close to the rescue operations said the sound of the crash was deafening and caused confusion and fear among the workers trapped inside the tunnel.

District Magistrate Gaurav Kumar and Superintendent of Police Surjeet Singh Panwar rushed to the district hospital in Gopeshwar to oversee medical arrangements. Officials confirmed that all the injured workers are in stable condition.

Delivery services may be hit in NCR as gig workers call New Year's Eve strike



mates, India's gig workforce crossed one crore in 2024-25.

Delivery workers have raised concerns about the risks associated with ultra-fast deliveries and an opaque wage structure. Several workers said incentives are withdrawn even for minor delays, forcing them to take risks on the road. Others complained of longer delivery distances, increased minimum working hours and reduced earnings.

"Workers are paid based on

tasks, not hours, and this does not account for waiting time, traffic, bad weather or low demand. Platforms change pay structures without notice, so workers are unsure of their daily earnings," said Nitesh Kumar Das of the Gig Workers Association.

Restaurant owners across NCR expressed concern over food wastage and business losses. Pranav Rungta, Vice-President of the National Restaurants Association of

India, said restaurants were in touch with delivery platforms and were awaiting clarity. He noted that the December 25 strike had significantly impacted businesses, especially in Gurgaon. At the same time, several delivery partners said they could not afford to join the strike due to fear of income loss or termination of their IDs. Many said that after expenses such as fuel, food and rent, daily earnings leave them with very little to support their families.

An internal communication to Zomato riders reportedly stated that no partner would be stopped from making deliveries and that alternative arrangements had been made. Even so, some customers and restaurants pre-emptively placed bulk orders or arranged self-delivery, anticipating disruptions. With New Year's Eve being one of the busiest days for food delivery, industry stakeholders said any prolonged disruption could lead to significant losses, even as workers insisted the strike was necessary to highlight safety and livelihood concerns.

Punjab assembly slams Centre's move to replace MGNREGA

Chandigarh, Dec 31: The Punjab Assembly on Tuesday unanimously passed a resolution opposing the Centre's move to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with the Viksit Bharat—Guarantees for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin), alleging that the new law undermines a legally guaranteed right to work and shifts the financial burden onto states. The resolution was moved by Rural Development and Panchayats Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sond during a special session of the Assembly. It stated that the proposed law weakens guaranteed wages and employment for poor labourers, women and lakhs of job card holders by turning a demand-driven scheme into a norm-based programme dependent on budgetary allocations and fixed plans.

Reacting sharply, Union agriculture and rural development minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the special session itself was against the federal spirit of the Constitution. Speaking in Bhopal, he said it was inappropriate for a state legislature to move against a law passed by Parliament and accused opposition parties of indulging in "blind politics."

Chouhan also alleged large-scale corruption in Punjab's MGNREGA implementation, claiming social audits had exposed several irregularities without corrective action.

Explaining the resolution, Sond said the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed in September 2005 and implemented in Punjab in 2008-09, before being renamed MGNREGA in 2009. He said the Act ensured a mandatory 100 days of wage employment annually to rural households willing to undertake unskilled work.

While the IMD is yet to formally announce the withdrawal of the northeast monsoon, officials said it could extend into the second week of January. However, any rainfall after that window will not be included in the seasonal assessment.

According to police, the

Ten Hindu Raksha Dal members held for sword distribution in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad, Dec 31: Ten members of the Hindu Raksha Dal (HRD) have been arrested for allegedly distributing swords from the organisation's office in Shalimar Garden, Ghaziabad, police said on Tuesday. Eight swords were also recovered during the operation.

Police said a case was registered against 40 persons, including 30 unidentified individuals, at the Shalimar Garden police station after a video showing the distribution of swords went viral on social media.

According to police,

information was received on December 29 that HRD national president Pinky Chaudhary, along with his associates, was distributing swords at the outfit's office in Shalimar Garden X-2. "The video showed several people holding swords, raising slogans and engaging in aggressive demonstrations," police said in a statement. The arrested accused were identified as Kapil Kumar, Shyam Prasad, Arun Jain, Rampal, Amit Singh, Amit Kumar, Amit Arora, Mohit Kumar, Devendra Baghel and Ujala Singh. It stated that the

BJP slams Mamata Banerjee for alleged threats against home minister Amit Shah

Bhubaneswar, Dec 31: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, accusing her of using inflammatory rhetoric and issuing veiled threats against union home minister Amit Shah during his recent visit to the state.



is deliberately facilitating infiltration to alter the state's demographic composition. Patra further criticized Banerjee for opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, asserting that she has threatened mass protests and riots to prevent the exercise, which ensures that only Indian citizens are eligible to vote.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is attempting to protect her political base by inciting violence. Under her rule, jihadis and rioters are safer than common citizens," Patra asserted. He also referenced post-poll violence in the state, alleging that over 300 BJP workers have been killed under the Trinamool Congress regime and accused the government of effectively condoning such acts.

The BJP also alleged that the West Bengal government has obstructed efforts to secure the India-Bangladesh border by refusing to provide land for fencing, claiming that the Trinamool Congress



Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Dr. L. Murugan launching the Government of India's Calendar 2026 on the theme "Bharat@2026: Seva, Sushasan aur Samridhi" at the National Media Center in New Delhi

Northeast monsoon ends with marginal deficit in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry

Chennai, Dec 31: The northeast monsoon, a vital source of rainfall for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, has concluded on a muted note this year, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) reporting an overall shortfall across the region.

Official figures show that Tamil Nadu and Puducherry together received 42.8 cm of rainfall during the October to December period, slightly below the normal average of 44.2 cm, reflecting a deficit of around 3 per cent. This outcome contrasts with early seasonal forecasts that had indicated the likelihood of above-normal rainfall.

While the IMD is yet to formally announce the withdrawal of the northeast monsoon, officials said it could extend into the second week of January. However, any rainfall after that window will not be included in the seasonal assessment.

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E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.		
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Co-Corporate / Mortgagor / Mortgagors that the immovable assets mentioned in the Secured Credit, the Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Protium Finance Ltd. the same shall be referred herein after as Protium Finance Ltd. The immovable assets mentioned in the notice shall be sold on "As is where is", "As what is", and "Whatever there is" basis through E-Auction.		
It is hereby informed to General public that we are going to conduct public E-Auction through website http://bankauctuions.in/		
1. Account Number 1. GS045EL1227291 2. Name of the Proprietor/ Company/ Firm/ Enterprise Through It's Proprietor/Borrower, Co-Borrower/ Co-Corporate/ Mortgagor/ Mortgagors Zohab Hussain Mohammad S/o Mohammad Abid Hussain (B) Zohab Hussain Mohammad S/o Mohammad Abid Hussain (C) Abid Hussain S/o Ahmad Hussain (D) Majeed Ummi Begum (E) Md. Shohid Hussain (F) Md. Shohid Hussain (G) Md. Shohid Hussain (H) Md. Shohid Hussain (I) Md. Shohid Hussain (J) Md. Shohid Hussain (K) Md. Shohid Hussain (L) Md. Shohid Hussain (M) Md. Shohid Hussain (N) Md. Shohid Hussain (O) Md. Shohid Hussain (P) Md. Shohid Hussain (Q) Md. Shohid Hussain (R) Md. Shohid Hussain (S) Md. Shohid Hussain (T) Md. Shohid Hussain (U) Md. Shohid Hussain (V) Md. Shohid Hussain (W) Md. Shohid Hussain (X) Md. Shohid Hussain (Y) Md. Shohid Hussain (Z) Md. Shohid Hussain (AA) Md. Shohid Hussain (BB) Md. Shohid Hussain (CC) Md. Shohid Hussain (DD) Md. Shohid Hussain (EE) Md. Shohid Hussain (FF) Md. Shohid Hussain (GG) Md. 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EDITORIAL

Bangladesh To Pak, An Embattled India Steps Into 2026

As 2025 draws to a close, India finds itself navigating a turbulent regional environment. The year has been marked by Pakistan's uneasy economic stabilisation and Bangladesh's dramatic political transition, both of which carry profound implications for India's security, diplomacy, and economic outreach in New Delhi's backyard. India's "Neighbourhood First" policy is facing its most gruelling stress test in decades. For years, New Delhi's regional strategy relied on a binary of "stable friends" and "managed foes". Today, that binary has collapsed into a kaleidoscopic mess of volatility. From the collapse of a pro-India regime in Dhaka to a near-kinetic escalatory cycle with Islamabad, the year-end report card for India's periphery reads like a geopolitical cautionary tale. The most seismic shift of 2025 remains the structural transformation of Bangladesh. After fifteen years of a "Golden Era" for India under Sheikh Hasina, India now faces a Dhaka that is ideologically fluid and strategically aloof.

An Increasingly Pak-Friendly Bangladesh

The interim government, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, has spent the year trying to balance the revolutionary zeal of student leaders against the institutional vacuum left by the Awami League's collapse. For India, the implications are stark. The "security-first" pillar, where Dhaka actively suppressed anti-India insurgents from the Northeast, is no longer guaranteed; if anything, the opposite, with militants gaining sanctuary in Bangladesh, is a real risk, as is the prospect of Pakistan's ISI fishing in troubled waters around India's "soft underbelly" there. Following the assassination of a student leader, preposterously blamed by some on India (which has no interest whatsoever in promoting instability in Bangladesh), student leaders have increasingly used provocative rhetoric, with some openly threatening to provide refuge to separatist elements in India's "Seven Sisters" states, and one even brashly claiming that his country knows how to separate India from its Northeast.

The resurgence of Islamist forces, notably the Jamaat-e-Islami, has added a layer of communal anxiety. Tensions surrounding the death sentence on the ousted Sheikh Hasina and Dhaka's demand for her extradition will continue to mount if New Delhi continues to host her, which it has little choice but to do. Throughout 2025, reports of violence against minorities and the targeting of Indian cultural assets have soured the "people-to-people" connect that was once the bedrock of the relationship. The recent lynching of a Hindu worker, Dipu Chandra Das, has inflamed passions on both sides, with protests engulfing diplomatic establishments in both countries. Meanwhile, Bangladesh grapples with energy shortages, inflationary pressures, and declining investor confidence. India's ambitious plans for regional connectivity through ports, rail, and energy grids depend heavily on stability in Bangladesh.

Look Beyond Sentiment

As we enter 2026, India must transition from a "legacy-based" diplomacy to a "transactional-plus" engagement. The emotional bond of 1971 is no longer enough to anchor ties with Bangladesh; New Delhi needs a new narrative that appeals to the "Gen Z" of Dhaka who did not live through the Liberation War. As the country heads toward elections in early 2026, India finds itself in an unfamiliar position: a bystander watching its influence being challenged by a younger, more nationalistic generation that views New Delhi's past support for the previous regime as an affront to their sovereignty. Questions loom over whether, with the lawlessness and intimidation in the streets, the forthcoming elections in Bangladesh would be free and fair - or whether they would even take place as scheduled.

While the East is a puzzle of political transition, the West remains a theatre of hard-nosed military posturing. The year 2025 saw the most significant military confrontation between India and Pakistan since 2019. The "Operation Sindo" strikes in May, India's justified response to a major terror attack in Pahalgam, signalled that the Modi government's threshold for "strategic patience" has lowered further. However, Pakistan's response was not merely conventional: it involved a spate of missiles and drones, guided by real-time intelligence from Chinese satellites hovering over India. Islamabad's establishment of a new Army Rocket Force Command (ARFC) and its pursuit of hypersonic technologies suggest a shift toward "asymmetric deterrence".

How The Tripura Student Killing Holds A Tragic Mirror To Society

The brutal stabbing and subsequent death of 24-year-old MBA student Anjel Chakma in Dehradun, after he objected to racial slurs hurled at him and his brother, is more than an isolated crime. When an ordinary life ends in violence over identity in one's own country, while fetching groceries far away from home, it compels the nation to ask tough questions about prejudice, belonging and citizenship in modern India.

It is a stark reminder of deep-seated inequalities in Indian society.

On December 9, Anjel and his younger brother were shopping in Dehradun's Selaqui area when they were reportedly confronted by a group of men, allegedly intoxicated, who hurled racial slurs such as 'Chinese', 'chinki' and 'momo' - derogatory taunts aimed explicitly at the appearance and ethnic background of Chakma. The confrontation escalated within minutes, culminating in a fatal stabbing that left Anjel fighting for his life for more than two weeks before he succumbed to his injuries. His haunting last words, "We are not Chinese, we are Indian. What certificate do we need to show?", echo far beyond Dehradun, capturing the heartbreak of many Indians whose belonging is questioned without evidence or justification.

Violence As A Pattern, Not An Exception

Like people from other states, residents of the northeastern states migrate across India for education and employment. Many pursue professional courses in educational institutions, while others seek opportunities in government services. Thousands of civil services aspirants from the northeast enrol in coaching centres in metros and Tier 2 and 3 cities. Similarly, many move to large cities for jobs in multinational companies, the hospitality sector, and other industries. Yet, the Dehradun tragedy is not an anomaly. For years, people from northeast India have faced discrimination and harassment in other parts of the country. Government-linked surveys and academic studies have repeatedly documented how this manifests in daily life, scar-



ring victims psychologically forever. A study commissioned by the Indian Council of Social Science Research on racial discrimination and hate crimes against people from the northeastern states, published in 2021, found that "northeast India seamlessly fits (into a mainland) Indian's imagination of a Chinese person". It revealed that around 78% of respondents from the northeast believed physical appearance was the primary reason for prejudice against them in major Indian cities. A significant number reported experiences of offensive language, social exclusion and mistreatment - experiences severe enough to alienate patriotic citizens of northeast India.

Earlier data from the government's M.P. Bezbarua Committee - constituted after a similar racist killing in 2014 - showed that about 86% of people from the northeastern states living in Delhi had faced some form of racial discrimination. These figures point to persistent structural problem, not sporadic incidents. Cases of racial taunting, refusal of service, verbal abuse and physical assault have been reported repeatedly across Indian cities. Yet, despite these documented experiences and recommendations, legal recognition and enforcement of protections against racial discrimination remain limited. The Bezbarua Committee had recommended legal and institutional reforms, including amendments to

the Indian Penal Code to criminalise racial insults and hate crimes, but progress has been slow.

The Rot Within

The killing of Anjel Chakma exposes several uncomfortable truths about India's social fabric.

Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, many Indians continue to assign "otherness" based on appearance, language or region. People from the northeast are often stereotyped as 'foreigners' or 'Chinese', even when they are Indian by birth and upbringing. This undermines the very idea of Indian citizenship and unity. Anjel's plea - a simple declaration of national identity - should never have been necessary. Worse, it was met with violence.

A recurring theme in surveys and interviews with migrants from the northeast is the lack of awareness among mainland Indians about the country's cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Misidentifications - from being called 'Chinese' to caricatures about food or language - are not merely insensitive; they reveal ignorance of India's pluralism. From the perspective of a civilised society, killing someone for being perceived as 'Chinese' is equally abhorrent. This incident also highlights the wider landscape of everyday prejudice based on caste, class, religion and regional identity in India. The same social hierarchies and mindsets that fuel discrimination against Dalits, reli-

gious minorities and linguistic groups also enable bias against those who look different. When such prejudice goes unchecked, it can erupt into violence. Daily slurs and insults, if unchallenged, normalise exclusion and can escalate rapidly into deadly encounters.

The Cost Of Silence

The societal costs of ignoring racial prejudice are immense. They extend beyond individual tragedies to affect national cohesion and India's image as a diverse democracy. When students feel unsafe in institutions far from home, educational mobility suffers. When people face constant discrimination in the cities where they live and work, it erodes their sense of security and belonging. Such incidents also reverberate back to the regions the victims come from, fuelling resentment and alienation, with potential political consequences that deepen regional divides. The killing of a young student in Dehradun demands action. Conversations about race, identity and unity must move beyond social media to the mainstream, incorporating voices from all regions of the country. Alongside implementing laws that explicitly criminalise racial discrimination and violence, schools, colleges, law enforcement agencies, employers and communities must be trained to recognise and respond to racial bias and hate crimes effectively.

What Is Amit Shah's 'Mission Bengal'?

Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Bengal for a three-day visit. This is not a tour marked by public rallies; instead, the focus is firmly on strategy. What exactly is Amit Shah's 'Mission Bengal'?

THE KEY FOCUS AREAS OF AMIT SHAH'S VISIT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Organisational Stocktaking

Amit Shah is concentrating on the party's organisational strengths and weaknesses. Taking stock of the BJP's organisational activities in West Bengal is a central objective of this visit. Shah is meeting organisational leaders at multiple levels, listening to opinions and complaints, and directly receiving feedback from district-level units and other entities, in addition to office bearers. He places a high priority on strengthening the party's campaign machinery.

2. The Matuas

Shah is placing particular emphasis on the Matua community. The SIR has created considerable confusion around Matua votes, with the Trinamool Congress running a campaign suggesting that the community feels insecure because of it. At a press conference, Shah sought to



counter this narrative, stating that there is no insecurity or fear among the Matuas. He even mockingly remarked that Mamata Banerjee has failed to win Matua support despite her efforts. This narrative is especially significant given the rivalry between Union Minister Shantanu Thakur and TMC leader Mamata Bala Thakur in Matua-dominated areas, where political competition and internal tensions run high.

3. Core Themes

What will be the BJP's principal campaign focus? Issues such as Hindu identity, alleged Muslim appeasement, the BJP's Hindutva agenda, and Mamata Banerjee's use of religious symbolism and temple-building are likely to dominate this election season.

4. Infiltration and the SIR
Infiltration is a central concern linked to the SIR process, but it also forms part of a broader, ongoing narrative. For the BJP, infiltration is not a new issue. Since the RSS's inception, it has been projected as a major concern. The party hopes to use the SIR to communicate its vision of a West Bengal free of infiltrators. The challenge is how to turn this into a major electoral issue beyond the administrative question of voter lists.

5. Coordination With RSS
Amit Shah is also meeting Bengali RSS leaders to improve coordination. He is expected to visit the RSS headquarters in Bengal, Keshab Bhavan, signalling close cooperation between the RSS and the BJP. The aim is to demonstrate that there are no coordination

gaps.

6. Religious and Cultural Outreach

Shah is visiting ISKCON and Sister Nivedita's house, locations that Mamata Banerjee has also visited recently. Banerjee has worked closely with ISKCON, including supporting the Jagannath Temple in Digha. On December 5, she visited Sister Nivedita's house and addressed several site-related issues. Against this backdrop, Shah has prioritised these visits alongside Belur Math and Swamiji's ancestral home.

7. Leadership and Organisational Challenges

Amit Shah faces a significant challenge in what can be described as a leadership crisis within the Bengal BJP, alongside broader organisa-

tional weaknesses. Resolving these issues may require deeper public engagement.

8. Solving Internal Friction

The party is also marked by internal splits, miscommunication, and rivalry among leaders and organisational units. Shah has personally stepped in to address these problems, aiming to unify the party so it can move forward collectively.

9. Corruption as a Campaign

Corruption is another major focus. During a detailed press conference in Kolkata, Shah repeatedly raised the issue, naming TMC ministers, MLAs, MPs, and leaders who have been jailed on corruption charges. He urged the state BJP unit to turn corruption into a central campaign issue.

10. Projecting a 'New Bengal'

The BJP seeks to project a vision of a peaceful, development-oriented West Bengal free from corruption. Shah advised state leaders on countering Mamata Banerjee's claims regarding land acquisition and the BSF's role. He argued that border management issues persist because the state government has failed to provide land.

Trump-Xi Meet To G20 In Florida, What India Is Looking Forward To In 2026



The past year was one of the most momentous in recent times, made so by the arrival of a US president who is bent on transforming the world to his own image. The year not only saw a short India-Pakistan aerial war, but also an unexpected dent in the growing strategic ties between India and the US. The geopolitical result of this was a somewhat unexpected revival of the India-Russia friendship, which made a routine Putin-Modi summit stand out. Meanwhile, the Israel-Hamas war has wound down to a shaky ceasefire, even as peace negotiations continue to end the longer war between Ukraine and Russia. This was the year China successfully displayed its strength vis-à-vis the United States, and also the one country where renewables have surpassed coal as a source of electricity worldwide. It will begin its ambitious 14th Five Year Plan in 2026 to consolidate its technical-industrial might. As for Pakistan, there will be little change in the country, which is living within illusions of its own creation. The year 2025 saw the terrible terrorist strike at the Baisaran meadow in Pahalgam, which led to Op Sindo and the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty by India. When we look ahead to 2026, we can see the predictable sequence of annual meetings, visits and summits. You can be sure that the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the US will be directed by Trump himself and have his unpredictable trademarks. The G-20 summit, hosted by Donald Trump in Florida, will be a standout. But there will be equally important meetings of BRICS in New Delhi, the G7 summit in France, the ASEAN sum-

mits in the Philippines, the APEC summit in Shenzhen, and the COP 31 summit in Turkey. Note that Trump has already excluded South Africa from the G-20 and has declared that BRICS is an adversary grouping as far as the US is concerned. In terms of bilateral relations, without doubt, the most important will be the planned exchange of visits by Trump and Xi Jinping to each other's country, something that will have major consequences for global geopolitics. As of now, the only confirmed planned visit of Prime Minister Modi is to Italy, though no doubt he will participate in many of the multilateral summits and hold meetings with top leaders on their sidelines. New Delhi also hopes to finish its long-running negotiation with the US on its bilateral trade agreement by March 2026.

10-yr B'luru girl enters India Book of Records as youngest author

Bengaluru, 31 Dec 2025: Parinita B., a Class-5 student of NET Public School, Basavanagudi, has become the youngest person listed in the India Book of Records after publishing her illustrated story collection, "Tales by Pari", through Subbu Publications.

The 10-year-old wrote the 40-page book during summer vacation, drawing characters from her everyday observations and grandmother's folk tales.

"I just wanted to share my stories with friends; I didn't know it could break a record," said Parinita, who received her certificate at a small school ceremony on Monday. Parents K. Balaji and Dr. Anusha R. Gupta, both engineers, say they first noticed her passion when she began narrating bedtime sequels to the Panchatantra at age six. The school's literary club later gave her a dedicated notebook and weekly feedback sessions that helped shape the manuscript.

Principal M. Shailaja believes the feat will spur "every child to see writing as a real, reachable goal". The India Book of Records confirmed Parinita's entry under the "youngest published author (female)" category after verifying her age, ISBN and print run of

House distribution on Jan 2

Bengaluru: In the wake of the eviction of illegal houses in Yelahanka Kogilu Layout, the BBMP and Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation are continuing to review the documents regarding providing alternative permanent housing to the eligible victims.

The government's intention in this matter is to provide housing only to the eligible ones. Therefore, the Chief Minister has instructed to conduct a comprehensive document review without any haste, and officials of the Revenue, BBMP are busy with that work.

In this context, the distribution of houses that was scheduled for January 1 has been postponed to January 2, Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan said in a Press statement.

Set up NIPER in the State: M.B. Patil writes to Minister Nadda

Bengaluru: Stating that Karnataka is at the forefront of science and pharmaceutical research, Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil has urged the Union government to establish a unit of the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) in the State. In a letter addressed to Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda, Mr. Patil assured that the State government would swiftly provide the necessary land, infrastructure, support, and opportunities for collaboration. In his letter, Mr. Patil recalled that the Union government had earlier considered setting up the institute in Karnataka, though the proposal did not materialise at the time. He urged the Centre to revive the plan, keeping in view the State's strong ecosystem of scientific research institutions and biotechnology (BT) companies.

Blinkhit-Blinkit row turns criminal: trademark transfer stayed, FIR lodged for forgery.

New Delhi / Chennai / Bengaluru: Serious allegations of fraud, forgery, and violations of corporate law have come to light in connection with the illegal transfer of the registered "BLINKHIT" trademark. The matter has escalated into a significant legal dispute involving the original promoters of BLINKHIT and individuals associated with the Blinkit brand. According to Mr. Paramesh Hulyurudurga Krishnegowda, Co-Founder and Director of BLINKHIT, he and his partner Mr. Harish Srinivasa Shetty legally incorporated the company in 2016 and duly adopted and registered the trademarks "BLINKHIT" and "IBLINKHIT" in the company's name. Since then, the company has been operating in full compliance with applicable laws. Recently, Grofers.com, owned by Mr. Albiner Singh Dhindsa, commenced business under the name "BLINKIT", which, according to Mr. Paramesh, is deceptively similar to the registered BLINKHIT and IBLINKHIT trademarks and is likely to cause confusion. The dispute is currently under judicial consideration in OS No. 3994/2022, wherein the Hon'ble Court has passed appropriate orders after taking into account the rights of the legitimate trademark owners. Following these orders, representatives of Blinkit are stated to have entered into discussions regarding the purchase of the BLINKHIT and IBLINKHIT trademarks. However, while the civil trademark suit was still pending before the court, it is alleged that taking advantage of Mr. Paramesh's absence, his partner Mr. Harish Srinivasa Shetty, in collusion with Blink Commerce Private Limited and other external individuals, forged his signature and illegally transferred the BLINKHIT and IBLINKHIT trademarks. These actions were allegedly carried out in violation of the Companies Act, Registrar of Companies (ROC) regulations, and other applicable laws. Following the exposure of these illegal transactions, key accused persons are reportedly absconding, according to sources. Based on these allegations, an FIR has been registered in Bengaluru under multiple sections relating to forgery, cheating, criminal conspiracy, and criminal breach of trust, under Section 173 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Samhita (Crime No. 0537/2025). The concerned police and investigating authorities are currently conducting a detailed investigation into the matter. Parallelly, the Trademark Registry, Government of India (Chennai Office) has taken cognizance of the violations of legal process and has stayed the transfer of the BLINKHIT and IBLINKHIT trademarks. The matter is presently under regulatory and legal scrutiny. Mr. Paramesh stated that this case raises serious concerns regarding transparency in trademark transactions, corporate governance, and adherence to the rule of law.

Kerala (TSIT): Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday told the 93rd Sivagiri pilgrimage that the shrine is "India's original anti-communal project" and urged the country to turn its annual gathering into a nationwide movement for equality. Addressing thousands of devotees at the hill-top mutt, the Karnataka leader said the event's theme—"The Role of the Sivagiri Pilgrimage in Modern Nation-Building"—was chosen because "dialogue, equality and ethics are under siege". He praised Sri Narayana Guru for turning reli-

gion into a tool of social justice by proclaiming "One Caste, One Religion, One God" and for building schools and temples that taught self-respect instead of hierarchy.

"Narayana Guru did not beg for reform; he dismantled injustice at the root," Siddaramaiah said, citing the Guru's mirror-in-shrine experiment to show divinity rests in every person.

He noted that coastal Karnataka's Billava, Ediga and Mogaveera communities adopted the Guru's message to resist caste and communal forces, and linked the 12th-century reform-

er Basavanna's "Kayaka" ideal to Guru's stress on education and dignified labour.

The Chief Minister listed Karnataka's steps to embed the Guru's legacy: a state holiday on Narayana Guru Jayanti since 2016, Kannada translations of his works and Rs.3 crore in grants to the Brahmashri Narayana Guru Study Centre at Mangalore University.

"Birth must never decide destiny," he said, calling on pilgrims to convert the annual trek into everyday action for a casteless, fearless India.

Ramalinga Reddy: MEI is a proud PSU, must raise output and profit further.



Bengaluru: Minister for Transport and Muzrai Department, Ramalinga Reddy

As MEI has earned a profit of more than Rs.20 crore in the financial year 2024-25, He also stated that celebrating Kannada Rajyotsava in government institutions helps everyone understand and spread the importance of the Kannada language, history, and culture.

He called upon everyone to work together with a commitment towards Kannada and Karnataka and contribute to the development of the state.

In view of the organisation being in profit, he suggested that more employment opportunities should be created by recruiting additional staff, thereby helping to reduce unemployment.

The programme was attended by the Chairman of the organisation, S. Manohar; Managing Director, Smt. Anita C. K., KAS; and senior officers of the institution.

BESCOM launches mobile app to monitor preventive maintenance of TCs

Bengaluru: To ensure quality and uninterrupted power supply to its consumers, BESCOM has developed a mobile application, Distribution Transformer Life Cycle Management System (DTLMS). The app will help monitor and systematically carry out preventive maintenance of more than 5 lakh distribution transformers across 8 districts under BESCOM's jurisdiction.

Through the mobile application, officials can continuously monitor the operation, preventive maintenance, repairs, and efficiency of distribution transformers (DTs). Field officers can enter all transformer maintenance details directly



into the app by downloading the same from the Google Play Store for Android phones.

Under DTLMS, a Distribution Transformer Centre (DTC) maintenance module has been developed. This module is expected

to play a key role in improving the efficiency, reliability, and continuity of the power distribution system.

Using this module, BESCOM field officers will carry out quarterly maintenance of all transformers in their respective

areas. This will help prevent power leakage, reduce losses, and ensure a quality power supply to consumers.

As per the directions of Energy Minister K. J. George, BESCOM developed this app to closely monitor transformer maintenance and to regularly service faulty transformers that disrupt uninterrupted power supply. The DTLMS app was recently launched by the Minister.

The initiative is seen as an important step towards using information technology to improve power services and ensure a reliable electricity supply to consumers.

KSS State President Kannalli Krishnappa urges to provide basic facilities

Bengaluru: KSS State President Kannalli Krishnappa has demanded that the government should immediately provide basic facilities such as drinking water, electricity, sewage system, roads, transportation and many other facilities in Kembhattahalli village of Bangalore South taluk. Speaking after holding a protest in this regard, he said that as a result of the struggle of Karnataka Janandolana Sanghatana, President K. Mariyappa and Siddalingappa, Ratnammal and several



other leaders of the organisation, the then BBMP had issued an order to allocate land in the name of the organization, but now some miscreants and vested interests who tolerated this have come here and are threatening the beneficiaries by not allowing them to build houses, and the organization is opposing this.

As a result of the struggle of the last 20 years, today 8 acres 10 guntes of land have been found in Kembhattahalli village of Bangalore South taluk for providing shelter to the poor. The land, which was about 20 to 30 feet deep, has been leveled with a JCB

machine and allotted to more than 380 beneficiaries, he said, and now the beneficiaries have decided to build houses on the land they have allocated with their own money. However, some of the community members who are not in the struggle have come to this land and are claiming their rights. Today, they are throwing stones while cooking and eating and setting fire to the crops when they are harvested. If you need any information, please talk to them and then resolve the matter.

Veteran BHEL engineer Dr R. Jayaram bags Pride of K'taka Award for co-op service.

Bengaluru, 31 Dec 2025: Dr R. Jayaram, who retired as engineer after 39 years with BHEL and has led the Renco House-Building Co-operative Society since 1994, was presented the Pride of Karnataka Award at the

decade volunteer career. "Members have kept re-electing me—first as president, now vice-president—because we built 1,200 homes without profit motive," he told the gathering, becoming emotional.

Press Club here on Monday.

Accepting the trophy from Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader and four state ministers, the 69-year-old said the cooperative ideal of "service through cooperation" had guided his three-

Jayaram's mantle already includes the Bharat Jyoti Excellence Award-2025, an honorary doctorate from Cedar Brook University, USA, and the Pride of Nation Award from Sri Lanka. He plans to use the latest honour to promote youth cooperatives across Karnataka.

gion into a tool of social justice by proclaiming "One Caste, One Religion, One God" and for building schools and temples that taught self-respect instead of hierarchy.

"Narayana Guru did not beg for reform; he dismantled injustice at the root," Siddaramaiah said, citing the Guru's mirror-in-shrine experiment to show divinity rests in every person.

He noted that coastal Karnataka's Billava, Ediga and Mogaveera communities adopted the Guru's message to resist caste and communal forces, and linked the 12th-century reform-

Surprise raid at district prison; mobile phone, SIM card seized

Mangaluru, Dec 30: Officials and staff, led by the district prison superintendent, conducted a surprise inspection at the city's district prison late on Monday night and seized prohibited items. During the inspection, two mobile phones, one SIM card and one wireless charger were found in the possession of inmates and were seized by the authorities. As the use of mobile phones is prohibited inside the prison, a case has been registered at the Mangaluru Barke police station.

District prison superintendent Sharan Basappa said that Karnataka prisons and correctional services director general of police Alok Kumar has been informed about the incident.

As the use of mobile phones is prohibited inside the prison, a case has been registered at the Mangaluru Barke police station. District prison superintendent Sharan Basappa said that Karnataka prisons and correctional services director general of police Alok Kumar has been informed about the incident.

"Satellite images taken a year ago show only open land; today there are 250-odd concrete sheds with illegal power lines but no meters," Ashoka told reporters after walking through the freshly cleared Fakir Layout. "When I asked residents for ID cards, most produced ration cards issued elsewhere or nothing at all."

The BJP leader alleged that a local Congress worker, Waseem, had "parcelled out" plots and that ministers Zameer Ahmed Khan and D.K. Shivakumar were "rushing to protect the

encroachers because elections are due". He claimed some occupants admitted they arrived only six months ago, yet BESCOM had laid overhead cables without installing meters—something 400,000 legal city residents still wait for.

Ashoka said the mix of undocumented migrants from Andhra Pradesh, and NIA vetting,

Bengaluru, 31 Dec 2025: Opposition leader R. Ashoka on Wednesday asked the Karnataka government to verify the citizenship of people who have built huts on 15 acres of government land at Kogilu Cross and, if documents are found dubious, hand the cases to the National Investigation Agency.

"Satellite images taken a year ago show only open land; today there are 250-odd concrete sheds with illegal power lines but no meters," Ashoka told reporters after walking through the freshly cleared Fakir Layout. "When I asked residents for ID cards, most produced ration cards issued elsewhere or nothing at all."

The BJP leader alleged that a local Congress worker, Waseem, had "parcelled out" plots and that ministers Zameer Ahmed Khan and D.K. Shivakumar were "rushing to protect the

encroachers because elections are due". He claimed some occupants admitted they arrived only six months ago, yet BESCOM had laid overhead cables without installing meters—something 400,000 legal city residents still wait for.

Ashoka said the mix of undocumented migrants from Andhra Pradesh, and NIA vetting,

Siddaramaiah: Sivagiri shows spirituality must fight inequality, not politics



er Basavanna's "Kayaka" ideal to Guru's stress on education and dignified labour.

The Chief Minister listed Karnataka's steps to embed the Guru's legacy: a state holiday on Narayana Guru Jayanti since 2016, Kannada translations of his works and Rs.3 crore in grants to the Brahmashri Narayana Guru Study Centre at Mangalore University. "Birth must never decide destiny," he said, calling on pilgrims to convert the annual trek into everyday action for a casteless, fearless India.

TN Cabinet to meet on Jan 6 ahead of Assembly session; key decisions expected

The meeting is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the government's legislative agenda and policy direction for the upcoming session.

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Cabinet will meet on January 6 at the Secretariat in Chennai under the chairmanship of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, ahead of the commencement of the State Legislative Assembly session scheduled to begin on January 20.

The meeting is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the government's legislative agenda and policy direction for the upcoming session.

A major focus of the Cabinet meeting will be the preparation of the Governor's address, which traditionally outlines the government's priorities, achievements and policy roadmap for the year ahead. Ministers are expected to deliberate on key themes, welfare initiatives and developmental programmes to be highlighted in the address to the House.

The meeting is also



likely to take up long-pending demands raised by government employees, including teachers and nurses, who have been staging protests seeking resolution of service-related issues.

In addition to employee welfare issues, the Cabinet is expected to consider approvals for various industrial and infrastructure projects. These proposals align with the State government's broader push to attract investments,

strengthen industrial growth and generate employment opportunities. The January 6 Cabinet meeting assumes added significance as it comes just weeks before the Assembly session, during which the government is expected to face opposition scrutiny on governance, economic performance and welfare delivery.

Decisions taken at the meeting are likely to shape the tone and content of the forthcoming Assembly session and signal the government's policy priorities for the year ahead.

With expectations running high among government employees, industry stakeholders and the public, the outcomes of the Cabinet deliberations are being closely watched as an indicator of the government's policy direction in the months to come.

PG assistantships rise by 50% in TN government engineering colleges

CHENNAI: The number of postgraduate assistantships offered to students in government engineering colleges under the Higher Education Department has increased by nearly 50% in the past 4 years.

The financial support is provided to non GATE students admitted to ME and MTech programmes

in State-owned engineering colleges through the single window counselling process conducted by Anna University and the Directorate of Technical Education.

A senior official in the department said, "The number of beneficiaries had increased from 666 in 2022 to 986 in 2025. The assistance is remitted every month directly into the students' Aadhaar-linked nationalised bank accounts through ECS. The number of beneficiaries is expected to exceed 1,000 in 2026."

OPS flays DMK over 'brutal assault' on migrant Odisha worker in TN's Tiruttani



Panneerselvam said the shocking incident, in which a group of teenage boys allegedly assaulted a man with sickles, had shaken the conscience of the public.

CHENNAI: Contract nurses, recruited through the Medical Services Recruitment Board (MRB) in Tamil Nadu, have called off their prolonged protest after the state government assured them of permanent appointments and other long-pending benefits. The agitation, which continued for several days across the state, culminated in a breakthrough following talks with senior government officials and Health Minister Ma Subramanian.

of nurses working in government hospitals and primary health centres had been staging continuous protests, demanding regularisation of their services. The protesters, largely appointed on a temporary basis through the MRB, had been seeking permanent status for several years.

On December 18, hundreds of nurses gathered in Chennai, staging a major demonstration near Chepauk, asserting that despite years of service, their demands remained

TN contract nurses end protest after govt assures permanent appointments



Thousands of nurses working in government hospitals and primary health centres had been staging continuous protests, demanding regularisation of their services.

unaddressed. According to the Tamil Nadu Nurses Development Association, the issue dates back nearly a decade. Between 2014 and 2015, the MRB recruited nurses on a temporary basis, assuring them that they would be regularised after two years of service.

Since then, around 15,300 nurses have been appointed

through this route. While nearly 7,000 of them have since been absorbed into permanent posts, around 8,300 continue to work on a contractual basis. The protesting nurses pointed out that the DMK, while in opposition, had promised in its 2021 Assembly election manifesto to regularise all temporary nurses.

Clause 356 of the manifesto specifically assured the filling up of vacant posts in government hospitals and the regularisation of contract-based doctors and nurses. However, as the government nears the end of its term, the nurses alleged that the promise remained unfulfilled.

Vande Bharat sleeper train clears 180 kmph high-speed trial

NEW DELHI: Indian Railways on Wednesday successfully completed the final high-speed trial of the indigenously developed Vande Bharat Sleeper Train — marking a major step forward in India's push for modern and self-reliant rail technology. The trial was conducted under the supervision of the Commissioner of Railway Safety on the Kota-Nagda section, where the train achieved a top



speed of 180 kmph. According to the ministry, the train performed well across all safety and technical parameters, and the trial was declared successful. During the high-speed run, detailed checks were carried out on ride stability, vibration and oscillation behaviour, braking systems, emergency braking response, and other critical safety features.

Road map for socially relevant medical education in Tamil Nadu



A patient walks into a Primary Health Centre in Tamil Nadu at midnight with chest pain. Another is brought after a road traffic accident. Will the young MBBS doctor on duty be confident and competent to manage these emergencies safely? This question at the heart of the debate on medical education reforms in India today.

Tamil Nadu's public health system is well recognised, with low maternal and infant mortality, extensive primary care, and a functioning referral network. Medical education in Tamil Nadu has long aligned with this vision, producing doctors for government facilities. Yet, current national reforms raise concerns that this alignment is being eroded. Two policies have reshaped medical education over the last decade: The introduction of Competency Based Medical Education (CBME) in 2019 and the centralised National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for undergraduate and postgraduate admissions.

These have been introduced to improve quality and transparency, but their unintended consequences challenge Tamil Nadu's focus on social accountability. Indian medical education, guided by the Bhore Committee's vision of a 'basic doctor' who can address community health needs, has aligned closely with Tamil Nadu's vision of equitable health care.

CBME has, however, shifted focus to producing market-oriented 'world-class' doctors. While intended to ensure minimum competence, the numerous and prescriptive competencies, documentation, and reporting requirements have fragmented teaching and assessment, rather

than strengthening clinical training. Faculty spend an increasing amount of time to complete paperwork instead of bedside teaching. The autonomy of teachers and institutions to prioritise local health needs has diminished, and the focus on clinical training and community exposure has reduced. As a result, the "hidden curriculum" of mentoring, role-modelling, instilling ethics, and promoting good clinical practice has weakened. Students report rising stress, declining engagement with clinical learning, and a growing perception that undergraduate education is no longer oriented towards a functional basic doctor. Faculty surveys echo these concerns, highlighting excessive checklists, assessment burdens, and declining clinical preparedness of graduating interns.

Reports from internship postings are particularly worrying. Many interns lack confidence in handling basic emergencies or performing common procedures such as intravenous cannulation, catheterisation, wound suturing, or initial resuscitation. These gaps will directly affect patient safety, especially in

peripheral health facilities where young doctors are the first point of care.

The introduction of NEET has further distorted educational priorities. It has fuelled a massive coaching industry, with many MBBS students enrolling for postgraduate NEET coaching from their first year itself, devoting substantial time to training in MCQs rather than focusing on clinical experience and developing clinical skills.

This undermines their clinical preparedness for independent practice and discourages graduates from working in the health system after their MBBS training. These developments have serious implications for public health in Tamil Nadu, which relies on MBBS graduates to ensure staffing in the system.

It is imperative to recapture the original spirit of the CBME and align it with the health needs of Tamil Nadu and across India. Towards this, we suggest the following steps:

First, competence must be made practical and meaningful. Rather than ticking off numerous competencies, every graduate should be able to perform a clearly defined set of observable

tasks aligned to the common health problems, such as fever, breathlessness, and chest pain; initiating basic resuscitation; performing common procedures; prescribing safely; and communicating with patients.

Second, clinical training must be strengthened. Adequate bedside exposure, participation in patient care, mentoring by senior clinicians and assessment in clinical settings should be ensured. Community-based training in primary and secondary care settings should be an essential requirement.

Third, the internship should be restored as a true supervised pre-licensure year. Uniform rotations, involvement in clinical care and graded responsibility, structured feedback, assessment of important skills, and validated logbooks can ensure that the internship fulfils its role. Fourthly, greater weightage should be given to structured assessments in the workplace during clinical training. NEET and NEET should give importance to clinical skills and work-based performance during internship.

Fifth, CBME should serve as a guiding framework, rather than a rigid set of rules. Teachers should be encouraged to develop innovative education to meet the needs of students, patients and local communities. Colleges with strong track records of innovation should be allowed flexibility to tailor their education in line with their social mission and local health needs.

Finally, the impact of CBME and NEET must be systematically studied. Colleges should be encouraged to identify the difficulties that students and teachers face and evolve mechanisms to address these.

When the best New Year's plans are no New Year's plans

Alexandria Drake, 24, a lifestyle and travel publicist who lives in New York, said this will be the first time in her adult life she will stay home for New Year's Eve

Abigail Tufts can't wait for New Year's Eve. In years past, Tufts, 36, who lives in New York City and runs her own public relations company, did "the glitter and makeup and bachelorette," she said.

But this year, a trying one both professionally and personally, she's skipping celebrations altogether to watch the Season 5 finale of "Stranger Things" at a movie theater alone.

No reflections on the past year or resolutions for her. "I cannot wait to turn off my phone," she said.

There has always been a camp of people who relish in skipping the revelry associated with New Year's Eve — a night Michael Frago, a 35-year-old New Yorker and skipper, called "amateur hour" — opting instead to stay home or do something low-key or entirely unrelated.

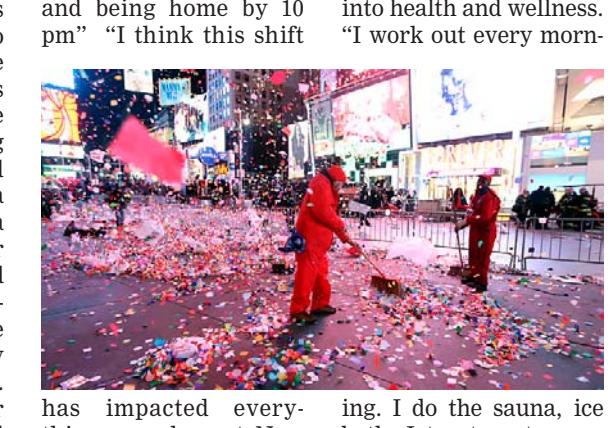
And this year — a year in which Paris and Tokyo are among the cities to cancel public celebrations because of security and other concerns — that camp will see new converts.

Alexandria Drake, 24, a lifestyle and travel publicist who lives in New York, said this will be the first time in her adult life she will stay home for New Year's Eve. Last year she went out in East Hampton, New York, with a group of girlfriends, an experience she found stressful. "Just thinking through

what am I going to wear, where am I going to go, who am I going to kiss," she said. This year, "I am going to do it solo," she said, with a bottle of wine and a vision board.

She said she feels this change is part of a larger lifestyle shift happening within her generation. "We've turned away from going out until the bar closes," she said, "and instead just having two drinks at dinner with a friend and being home by 10 pm." "I think this shift

plan for 2026 is "to be laissez-faire," starting with its eve, for which she plans to stay home in New York with her partner, a good bottle of wine and a pizza. Philip Scheinfeld, 35, who works in real estate and splits his time between Miami and New York City, used to have big blowout celebrations. Not anymore. "I have a lot of friends who are sober now," he said, adding that they are more into health and wellness. "I work out every morn-



ing. I do the sauna, ice bath. I try to eat super healthy. I have a great therapist."

All of which means the new year doesn't provide a chance to "improve myself anymore," he said. "It's just another day." Doug Melville, 47, a corporate strategist who lives in New York City, has spent his last five New Year's Eve celebrations on trips to far-flung places like Sri Lanka; Málaga, Spain; Rome; Fiji; and Costa Rica. But this year he has committed to staying home with his girlfriend.

This year, she has a different feeling. "Eh." She expanded: "I just feel a little beat down in terms of news," adding that "the year never goes as planned, not remotely." "So her only

Rupee slumps 5pc in 2025, closes at 89.88 as foreign funds exit

Mumbai: The rupee slumped 5 per cent in 2025 as persistent capital outflows from foreign investors, alongside heightened dollar demand from importers, making it one of the worst-performing Asian currencies. On the last trading session of 2025, the rupee depreciated 13 paise to close at 89.88 against the US dollar as month-end demand and FPIs' dollar buying kept it lower. The domestic currency has exhibited a negative bias throughout the year, making it Asia's worst-performing currency in 2025, with foreign portfolio investors pulling out USD 16.5 billion from equities this year, further denting investor sentiments, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 89.89 against the dollar and touched an intra-day low of 89.95 and a high of 89.84 against the American currency. At the end of Wednesday's trading session, the rupee was quoted at 89.88 against the greenback, registering a fall of 13 paise over its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee rose 23 paise to close at 89.75 against the greenback. On a year-on-year



basis, the rupee has plunged 4.95 per cent. It was quoted at 85.64 on December 31, 2024. Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said, "The rupee resumed its downward trajectory following Tuesday's pause, weighed down by a rebounding US dollar against major currencies. For the year 2025, the rupee emerged as the regional laggard, with spot prices whipsawed by tightening dollar liquidity, surging trade deficit, relatively high US Tariff and capital flows." Since the Trump Administration took over, the rupee has been the worst performing currency, underpinned by robust

domestic demand, benign inflation, and prudent macroeconomic policies despite an uncertain and challenging global economic backdrop. "The domestic financial system remains robust and resilient, bolstered by strong balance sheets, easy financial conditions, and low financial market volatility. Nonetheless, there are near-term risks from external uncertainties — geopolitical and trade-related," it said. Bhansali further said that "consistent outflows by FPIs and stake sales by investors, demand from defence, oil and gold have all impacted the rupee as it fell to its lowest at 91.08

before reined in to control it and bring it up to current levels". Parmar added, "We anticipate a period of range-bound consolidation for USD/INR, anchored between the 89.40 support and 90.26 resistance levels." Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.10 per cent higher at 98.33. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.13 per cent higher at USD 61.41 per barrel in futures trade. Forex traders said the USD/INR pair is trading under pressure due to multiple factors, including a shift toward risk aversion, driven by persistent capital withdrawals from foreign investors ahead of the holiday break, alongside heightened greenback demand from importers. On the domestic equity market front, benchmark-sensitive indices ended 2025 on a high, with the Sensex jumping 545.52 points to settle at 85,220.60, while the Nifty surged 190.75 points to 26,129.60. Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 3,597.38 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Economy growing at robust pace, banking sector remains sound: RBI

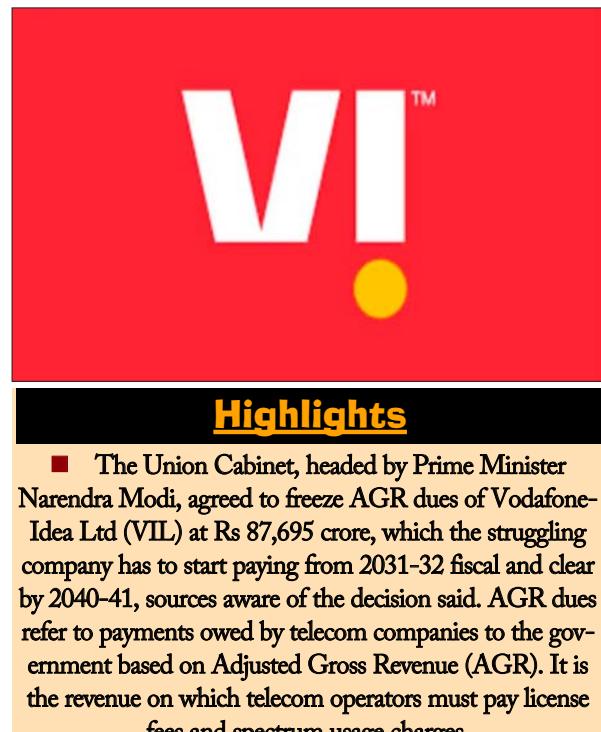
Mumbai: The Indian economy is growing at a robust pace, driven by strong domestic demand, low inflation, and the healthy balance sheets of banks, said a Reserve Bank report released on Wednesday. The domestic financial system remains robust and resilient, bolstered by strong balance sheets, easy financial conditions, and low financial market volatility, said the December 2025 edition of the Financial Stability Report (FSR). "Nonetheless, there are near-term risks from external uncertainties — geopolitical and trade-related," said the report, which reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on the resilience of the Indian financial system and risks to financial stability. It further said the health of the scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) remains sound with strong capital and liquidity buffers, improved asset quality and robust profitability. "Macro stress test results affirm the resilience of SCBs to withstand losses under hypothetical adverse scenarios and maintain capital buffers well above the regulatory minimum. From a capital buffers per-



spective, the report said, the capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) remained strong as of September, with state-owned banks at 16 per cent and private sector banks at 18.1 per cent. Banks will be able to withstand adverse economic shocks, the report said, listing out how the capital buffers will be impacted in adverse events. On the economy, the report noted that the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth surprised on the upside in both Q1 2025-26 and Q2 2025-26 at 7.8 per cent and 8.2 per cent, respectively, supported by strong private consumption and public investment. "Growth outlook remains positive, aided by low inflation, easy financial conditions, above normal monsoon, direct and indirect tax reforms.

Centre approves 5-year moratorium on Vodafone Idea's AGR dues

New Delhi: The Union government on Wednesday, December 31, approved a major relief package for Vodafone Idea, freezing its outstanding dues and approving a five-year moratorium on payments, providing a critical lifeline to the debt-laden telecom operator. The Union Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, agreed to freeze AGR dues of Vodafone-Idea Ltd (VIL) at Rs 87,695 crore, which the struggling company has to start paying from 2031-32 fiscal and clear by 2040-41, sources aware of the decision said. AGR dues refer to payments owed by telecom companies to the government based on Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). It is the revenue on which telecom operators must pay license fees and spectrum usage charges. It is defined to include all revenues, even non-telecom income (like interest, rent, asset sales). Besides these outstanding, the AGR dues for FY2017-18 and FY 2018-19, which were finalised based



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on the Supreme Court order of September 2020, will now have to be paid over 2025-26 to 2030-31 fiscal without any change, they said. Vodafone Idea has been battling a prolonged financial crisis, driven by intense price competition, high debt, and massive AGR liabilities that arose from a change in the definition of AGR. The company has struggled with persistent losses, a shrinking subscriber base, and limited ability to invest in network

expansion, even as rivals accelerated 4G and 5G rollouts. Repeated rounds of government relief and equity conversion of dues have kept the company afloat, but its long-term viability continues to hinge on sustained policy support, fresh capital infusion, and a turnaround in operating performance. Some had expected that the Cabinet would waive a part, if not all, of the AGR dues. But instead, it decided to give a moratorium, which would allow the company to recover. The dues that have been frozen will be reassessed by a committee based on audit reports, sources said, adding the outcome shall be binding on both parties. Sources said the decisions taken by the Cabinet were to protect the interests of the government, which now has a 49 per cent stake in VIL. It will also enable orderly payment of dues to the government, ensure competition in the sector and protect the interests of 20 crore consumers of the company.

■ The public issue of E to E Transportation Infrastructure Limited — the rail engineering and system integration specialist — closed on December 30, 2025, after a highly subscribed bidding period that began on December 26, 2025. The IPO, aggregating Rs 84.22 crore, attracted strong participation from all categories of investors, underscoring robust market sentiment toward the company's growth prospects in the railway infrastructure segment.

E2E Transportation Infrastructure IPO Draws Overwhelming Response, Subscribed 525.25x

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December 30, 2025
Allotment Finalisation: December 31, 2025
Listing Date: January 2, 2026 (on NSE SME)
E to E Transportation Infrastructure Limited plans to use the proceeds primarily for working capital requirements and general corporate purposes.
Company Overview & Business Highlights
Incorporated in 2010, E2E Transportation Infrastructure Limited is an ISO 9001:2015 certified company engaged as a system integrator of Signalling and Telecommunication (S&T) systems for the railway sector. The Company provides end-to-end solutions, including

ing design, engineering, procurement, installation, testing, and commissioning, across mainline railways, metro rail projects, and private sidings. As disclosed in the Red Herring Prospectus, the Company has executed projects aligned with Kavach 4.0, India's indigenous automatic train protection system, reflecting its capabilities in safety-critical signalling infrastructure. The Company has also collaborated with Tata Elxsi on select technology-led initiatives, as detailed in the RHP. The promoter group includes Sourajit Mukherjee and Vinay Rao, associated with Ventureast, and Zephyr Mantra, a US-based fund. The Company's shareholding structure also includes Mukul Mahavir Agarwal, Ashwini Agarwal, and Himanshu Modi, among other investors, in accordance with disclosures made in the RHP. The Company has undertaken projects involving CBTC signalling for metro networks, railway electrification, signalling and telecom modernisation, and integrated infrastructure solutions for industrial and logistics clients. As of September 30, 2025, the Company's order book stood at 20,110.37 lakh. For the financial year ended March 31, 2025, the Company reported operating revenue of 2250.80 crore and net profit after tax of 214.37 crore, as disclosed in the offer documents.

PNB Secunderabad Circle Opens 69th Branch at Pragathinagar



Punjab National Bank 2nd largest Bank has opened its 69th Branch in Pragathinagar under Circle Office Secunderabad. Branch Inaugurated by 1. Smt. Vandana Pandey, Zonal Manager, Hyderabad 2. Sh. Sujee Kumar Jha, Circle Head, Secunderabad 3. Sh. Aravind Kalra, Circle Head, Hyderabad 4. Sh. Suresh Manduva, Branch Manager, Pragathinagar And other officials, union leaders from Hyderabad, and Secunderabad Circle attended

Big Bullion Theory: Gold, silver retain sparkle in shaky geopolitical sands

New Delhi: Outsmarting all asset classes globally in 2025, gold and silver with massive returns and repeated record-breaking rallies redefined the precious metal market dynamics amid intensifying global political challenges, unstable tariff policies and persistent supply-chain disruptions. Marking one of the strongest performances for bullion in decades, silver prices surged more than 169 per cent during the year, while gold rallied over 76 per cent, reaffirming the role of precious metals as an anchor investment class in an extremely volatile world. In the domestic market, gold touched a lifetime high of Rs 1,42,300 per 10 grams on December 26, while silver scaled a record of Rs 2,41,000 per kg on December 30. Globally, spot gold began the year at around USD 2,657.16 per ounce and rallied to a peak of USD 4,550.11 per ounce on December 26, registering gains of up to 71.24 per cent. Spot silver, meanwhile, started the year at about USD 29.57 per ounce and soared to a peak of USD 83.63 per ounce on December 29, clocking robust returns of 182.82 per cent. The rally was initially triggered by the Fed's policy easing, but it gathered pace as President Donald Trump's return to the White House, with tariff rhetoric to

fuels uncertainty, central banks doubled down on bullion reserves, and supply constraints across metal markets. Gold and silver surged over the past year on the back of a powerful mix of macro factors, such as structural demand and physical supply tightness, Naveen Damani, Head of Research, Commodities, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd (MOFSL), told PTI. US Federal Reserve's Pivot Marks Inflection Point: The early momentum in bullion's remarkable rally in 2025 came from the US Federal Reserve's (Fed) policy easing, with the central bank delivering three cautious 25-



basis-point rate cuts amid signs of cooling inflation, putting pressure on the US dollar, lending support for the bullion prices. 2025 marked a clear inflection point for the Fed, with three cautious 25-basis-point cuts delivered amid divided voting and visible political pressure.

...with Chair Jerome Powell's term ending in May 2026 and a potentially more dovish successor in the wings. Bullion is likely to react ahead of policy, keeping the bias constructive despite brief corrective phases, Damani said. Silver outshines due to the supply crunch: Silver has emerged as an all-out performer of 2025, driven by strong industrial demand, amid constrained mine supply, and rising production costs. Silver has been facing shortages for five years due to mine shutdowns and China-led supply constraints, with a sixth straight shortfall likely in 2026 amid rising costs and firm demand. "Silver is entering 2026 with a fundamentally tighter setup than gold. With recent mine shutdowns and fresh supply constraints from China and elsewhere, next year is likely to mark a sixth straight deficit. This is no longer just a demand story; it is a structural supply squeeze," Damani of MOFSL said. Trump's tariff rhetoric fuels uncertainty, lifts safe-haven assets: The demand for safe-haven assets increased after Trump returned to power, a resurgence of trade uncertainties and tariff-related tremors globally. "Supply chains remain fragile, with tariffs and trade re-shoring creating hidden inflation pockets even as growth slows," Damani said, adding that "In this tug of war between inflation and growth, gold benefits as a balance-sheet hedge, while silver sits at the crossroads of industrial demand and physical scarcity, making both metals strategic rather than speculative assets in 2026."

Heavy police presence in Sydney for New Year's celebrations after Bondi attack



Thousands of heavily armed police officers are patrolling the streets of Sydney as people mark the new year - a rare and stark sight in Australia, following the Bondi Beach mass shooting. Some officers were authorised to carry high-grade weapons as part of heightened security measures. The attack on 14 December targeted Australia's Jewish community and killed 15 people at a Hanukkah festival. New South Wales (NSW) Police said more than 2,500 officers would be on duty across the city. Official New Year's Eve parties were paused at 23:00 local

time (12:00 GMT) for a minute's silence to commemorate the victims of the attack, while the Sydney Harbour Bridge was lit up by a white light to symbolise peace. Pictures from Sydney Harbour - where huge crowds gather every year to watch the city's famous fireworks display - show officers patrolling the crowds with longarm weapons. In the lead up to the event, Premier Chris Minns had warned that some people may find the sight "confronting", with police "carrying firearms and weapons that you haven't seen before".



Mali and Burkina Faso impose travel ban on US citizens in tit-for-tat move



Mali and Burkina Faso say they will bar US citizens from entering their countries in response to a similar move by the Trump administration. The two West African states were recently placed under full entry restrictions under US President Donald Trump's expanded travel ban. In separate statements, they said they would apply the same measures on US nationals. Burkina Faso's foreign affairs minister Karamoko Jean-Marie Traoré said his government was acting on the "principle of reciprocity", while Mali's foreign ministry called for "mutual respect and sovereign equality". The latter said it regretted the US's move, adding that "such an important decision was made without any prior consultation". Mali and Burkina Faso's decision comes days after Niger's state news agency reported that Niger had imposed a similar travel ban on US citizens, though no official statement has been issued by its foreign ministry to confirm this. The three countries are ruled by military juntas which seized power in coups. They have formed their own regional bloc, and have pivoted towards Russia after relations with other West African states and Western powers became strained. Earlier this month, the White House said that full-entry restrictions would be imposed on people from the three countries, as well as South Sudan, Syria and Palestinian Authority passport holders. The decision would come into effect on 1 January, and was intended to "protect the security" of the US, it said. The administration also moved Laos and Sierra Leone, which were previously subject to partial restrictions, to the full ban list, and put partial restrictions on 15 other countries, including Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The White House said the restrictions would remain in place until affected countries show "credible improvements" in identity management, information-sharing and cooperation with US immigration authorities.

Jailed HK tycoon's 'teeth rotting and fingernails falling off', daughter tells

The daughter of Jimmy Lai, the pro-democracy tycoon jailed in Hong Kong, has expressed concerns about her father's deteriorating health in prison, saying that his fingernails "sometimes fall off" and his teeth are rotting. Lai, 78, has been detained since December 2020 and faces life in prison. This month he was convicted of colluding with foreign forces under the city's controversial national security law (NSL). Hong Kong and Chinese authorities have denied that Lai has been mistreated in prison, saying he is in "good health". The BBC has seen a letter written by Lai's family urging UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer to call for Lai's release when he meets Chinese President



Xi Jinping next month. His daughter Claire Lai, who is in exile in London, told the BBC that she fears she "may never see him again". "Of course I worry that my father is going to be a martyr, and I don't want him to be a martyr. But I would not be here today, I would not be speaking out if I didn't think this was his best chance of reuniting with our family." She described her father as an "extremely robust and strong man" when he went to prison.

Russian claims of Ukrainian attack on government sites 'unfounded', EU's top diplomat says



Since Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov first shared the claims, Russian state media and politicians have discussed the alleged attack in increasingly incendiary tones. "The attack is a strike on the heart of Russia," said Andrei Kartapolov, head of the Russian parliament's defence committee. "After what [Ukraine] has done, there can be no forgiveness." Although the Kremlin ini-

tially said it saw no point in sharing proof of the alleged attack, on Wednesday the Russian army released what it said was evidence of the attempted strike. It included a map allegedly showing that the drones were launched from the Sumy and Chernihiv regions of Ukraine and a video of a downed drone lying in snowy woodland. The BBC hasn't been able to verify the

MACHU PICCHU TRAIN CRASH LEAVES ONE DEAD AND DOZENS INJURED



A train driver has died and at least 40 people have been injured in a head-on rail collision near Peru's most popular tourist attraction, Machu Picchu. Two trains collided on the single track leading to the ancient Inca town on Tuesday, according to a statement from the local government. It said that 20 ambulances had attended the scene and that injured people had been transferred to medical facilities in the nearby city of Cusco. The US embassy in Peru said that US citizens were injured in the crash, while the UK Foreign Office said it was "supporting a number of British nationals involved". Local media outlet Peru21

reports that hundreds of tourists remain at the scene awaiting evacuation, which has been hampered by difficult terrain around the crash site. At least 20 of the injured are in a serious condition, a health official told the Reuters news agency. The collision occurred on

"We deeply regret what has happened," PeruRail said in a statement, adding that its staff had "immediately" provided first aid to the train driver, the train conductor and the passengers involved in the incident. The cause of the accident has not yet been made clear. The crash comes amid an ongoing dispute between providers of transport to the Unesco world heritage site, with local communities unhappy with what they say is an insufficiently open bidding process. The trains and buses that take tourists to the ancient town have steep ticket prices and can be highly lucrative due to its limited accessibility.

the track linking Ollantaytambo Station and Aguas Calientes, the closest town to Machu Picchu. The journey between the two stations usually takes around 90 minutes. The two trains involved in the accident were operated by PeruRail and Inca Rail respectively.

Eurostar services return to normal after major Channel Tunnel disruption



Eurostar and Le Shuttle services between the UK and France have resumed through the Channel Tunnel after major travel disruption on Tuesday. Thousands of passengers faced hours of delays after Eurostar cancelled most of its London to Europe services due to overhead power supply problem and a failed Le Shuttle train which blocked all routes. Repair work took place overnight and rail services through the tunnel in both directions resumed on Wednesday morning. But Eurostar urged passengers to check before travelling as it warned for possible knock-on delays and last-minute cancellations. Most of Eurostar's Wednesday morning services in and out of London St Pancras have departed. Only three - one towards Paris Gare du Nord; another destined for Brussels Midi and the other bound for Amsterdam Centraal - have been cancelled, according to Eurostar's

HUGE CROWDS MOURN BANGLADESH'S FIRST FEMALE PM AT STATE FUNERAL

Hundreds of thousands of people travelled from across Bangladesh to the capital Dhaka on Wednesday to pay their final respects to former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. Zia, who was the country's first female prime minister, died on Tuesday from a prolonged illness. She was 80. The mourners held out their hands in prayer and carried flags printed with her photographs as a motorcade carrying Zia's body - including the hearse wrapped with the national flag - drove on streets near the parliament house. Flags were flown at half-mast and thousands of security officers were deployed. "I have come this far just to see goodbye. I know I won't be able to see



her face, but at least I could see the [vehicle] carrying her for the last rites," Setara Sultana, an activist from Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), told the BBC. Sharmina Siraj, a mother of two, called Zia "an inspiration", noting that stipends introduced by the former leader to improve women's education made a "huge impact" on her daughters. "It is difficult to imagine women in leadership positions anytime soon," she told AFP news agency. India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, the Speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadig and Bhutan's Foreign Minister Lyonpo DN Dhungyel were among those

who attended the funeral. Earlier in the day, Zia's body was taken to the house of her son Tarique Rahman, who was seen reciting the Quran beside his mother's office. The state funeral marks the end of Zia's extraordinary journey, from a homemaker to the first female prime minister of Bangladesh. Zia was be buried next to her husband Ziaur Rahman, who was assassinated in 1981 while serving as president - an incident that thrust Zia into the political limelight. She went on to lead the BNP in the country's first elections in 20 years. She was dubbed an "uncompromising leader"

after refusing to participate in a controversial election under military ruler General Hussain Muhammad Ershad in the 1980s. For several years, along with her bitter political rival Sheikh Hasina, she fought for democracy and against military dictatorship, enduring arrests. There was talk among Bangladesh's rulers at the time to keep the two "battling begums" - Zia and Hasina - out of politics in what was then known as the "minus two formula". But Zia eventually became prime minister, first in 1991 and again in 2001. During the time of the military-backed caretaker government in 2007, she was kept



Not Rehman Dakait, Pakistan Star Called 'Chacha Dakait' After Celebrating Win With Dhurandhar's FA9LA Dance

Akshaye Khanna's dance steps on the track 'FA9LA' from the movie Dhurandhar have slowly reached iconic status. From Instagram Reels to YouTube Shorts, the song has become a viral pop-culture favourite. FA9LA is originally a Bahraini hip-hop song written and performed by Flipperachi and Daffy, with DJ Outlaw composing the music. The song already existed before the makers of Dhurandhar discovered it. Now, Pakistani cricketer Iftikhar Ahmed, whose nickname is Chacha, danced to the track after Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) clinched the President's Cup Grade-I.

In the movie Dhurandhar, the character of Rehman Dakait, played by Akshaye Khanna, dances to the track. After the dance, Iftikhar is now being called 'Chacha Dakait'. Rehman Dakait, born Abdul Rehman in 1976, grew up in Lyari, one of



Karachi's oldest and poorest neighbourhoods—an area long synonymous with crime, gang wars, and a deep-rooted crime-police nexus. According to a report, he was the son of Dad Mohammad and his second wife, Khadija. His family was already entrenched in the

underworld. Rehman Dakait's descent into crime began shockingly early. At just 13, he stabbed and injured a man who stopped him from bursting crackers in Lyari. Two years later, he escalated from violence to murder, killing two rival drug peddlers after a dispute.

The most disturbing chapter of his life unfolded in 1995. Months after escaping police custody, Rehman shot dead his own mother, Khadija, inside their home. He told the police that he killed her because "she became a police informant." However, it is widely

believed that he suspected her of having a relationship with a rival gang member—a detail that Dhurandhar does not shy away from depicting. In 1995, Rehman was arrested for possession of weapons and drugs. He spent around two and a half years in jail before pulling off a dramatic escape while being transported from Karachi jail to court. He fled to Balochistan, where he began rebuilding his criminal empire with renewed ferocity. By the early 2000s, Rehman Dakait had emerged as one of Lyari's most powerful ganglords.

By 2006, he had amassed immense wealth, properties, and political influence. He married three times and fathered 13 children. Reports also claimed that he owned property not just in Karachi and Balochistan, but even in Iran. Rehman Dakait's reign continued until 2009, when the Lyari Task Force tracked him using phone data.

Rishabh Pant was not included in India's T20 World Cup 2026 squad and media reports claimed that he will not be included in the ODI series squad as well. It has been a tough period for the wicket-keeper batter who had his struggles with injury and has seen KL Rahul emerge as the top-choice wicket-keeper in ODIs. On the other hand, Dhruv Jurel and Ishan Kishan have also made their intentions clear with brilliant performances in domestic cricket. Former India cricketer Deep Dasgupta believes that Pant needs to understand his role in T20 cricket and even wondered whether he sees himself as a top-order hitter, a middle-order option, or a finisher in the format. "In T20 cricket, is he a top-three batter? Or is he a middle-order batter or is he a finisher? What's he? He needs to answer these questions," Dasgupta told India Today. "As far as I am concerned, he



is a top-three batter in T20I cricket. In ODIs, he is a good No.4 or No.5," he added. Dasgupta added that Pant needs to concentrate on his batting and keep scoring runs in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy in order to make his case for a return to the national team. "I think he just needs to bat, and bat. He got a excellent 70-odd for Delhi. He just needs to keep scoring runs, playing white-ball cricket wherever he gets the opportunity—domestic or otherwise—and learn his trade, learn what suits him," he added. Rishabh Pant is

Sara Tendulkar, Daughter Of Sachin Tendulkar, Targetted Over Video With Friends In Goa. Gets Support

Sara Tendulkar, who is an entrepreneur and the daughter of cricket great Sachin Tendulkar, is facing intense trolling on social media. The reason: a video of her with friends on the streets of Goa. While it cannot be confirmed when the video was shot, some social media users claimed it was filmed close to New Year's Eve. In the video, Sara can be seen strolling on the road along with her friends. Some social media users, however, made unsavoury comments as she was holding a bottle, which they claimed was a beer bottle. Some social media users even named-dropped Sachin Tendulkar in their comments. Sara, however, received support from a section of social media too. "What kind of



brain-dead mentality is this? How is Sara having a beer equivalent to Tendulkar promoting alcohol? And can't a daughter have a drink?" wrote one user. "There is nothing worth trolling here," wrote another user. In August, Sara revealed the reason behind not pursuing following in his footsteps. "Never. It's been my brother's forte. I have played gully cricket, but never thought about it,"

cricketer and plays at the domestic level for Goa as an all-rounder. However, Sara said that while she has countless favourite memories of her father's iconic knocks, the 27-year-old never thought about following in his footsteps. "Never. It's been my brother's forte. I have played gully cricket, but never thought about it,"

Sara told India Today in an interview. On the professional front, Sara officially stepped into India's wellness landscape with the launch of Pilates Academy X Sara Tendulkar in Andheri, Mumbai. The studio, which opened its doors to the public on August 21, 2025, is the fourth branch of the popular Dubai-based Pilates Academy franchise. In an exclusive interview with NDTV, Sara Tendulkar shared: "Pilates has played a huge role in my fitness journey. My background in clinical nutrition and public health makes me view wellness as much more than just workouts or diets. It's about balance—the kind that lets you care for your health while still enjoying the little things you love."

New Zealand Star Glenn Phillips Turns To Left-Handed Batting Mid-Match, Result Stuns All

A video of New Zealand wicketkeeper-batter Glenn Phillips from a Super Smash 2025-26 match is going viral on social media. Right-handed batter Phillips, who represents Otago in the tournament, turned left-handed mid-match against Central Districts spinner Jayden Lennox during the action on December 30. The left-arm orthodox Lennox tried to go with a fuller ball away from Phillips. He bowled it around the tramline, but the batter still smashed it away for a six over extra cover, surprising the fans as well as the commentators. Phillips ended up



scoring an unbeaten 90 off 48 balls, with the help of seven fours and four sixes. His innings had a strike rate of 187.50. He eventually earned the Player of the Match award as Otago won the game by 41 runs. Reacting to the switch in his batting stance,

Phillips told TVNZ, "I have done it for a little while in the nets, but never quite brought it out. Obviously it is a little bit of an interesting thing, the switch-around in a game of professional cricket... the other day I was stroking it better in the nets when I was left-

handed than when I was right-handed. "So it sort of made sense to at least try and bring it out when there was nothing left to lose."

In the Indian Premier League (IPL), Phillips is part of the Gujarat Titans squad. He played three matches for Rajasthan Royals in 2021, which happened to be his first season in the tournament.

Two years later, Phillips represented Sunrisers Hyderabad in five matches.

The player was then picked by GT for Rs 2 crore ahead of IPL 2025, and got retained by the franchise for the upcoming season.

Sarfraz Khan Slams 157 Off 75 Balls In Vijay Hazare Trophy, Sends Big Message To BCCI Selectors



Vijay Hazare Trophy 2025: Sarfraz Khan sent a stark reminder to the selectors ahead of the New Zealand ODI series, slamming 157 off just 75 deliveries during Mumbai's Vijay Hazare Trophy encounter against Goa on Wednesday. The 28-year-old was in blistering form, clearing the ropes 14 times and hitting 9 fours during his stay at the crease. After Goa opted to bowl first, Vasuki Koushik gave them an early breakthrough by dismissing Angkrish Raghuvanshi. However, Yashavni Jaiswal and Musheer Khan steadied the ship before Sarfraz dismantled the opposition with his explosive hitting. Having enjoyed a sensational run in domestic cricket, this knock came at the perfect time to stake his claim for the ODI series against New Zealand, which begins on January 11. In their last match, Shardul Thakur ticked all the boxes, right from winning the toss to blowing the Chhattisgarh top order with a match win-

England Will Win Ashes In Four Years In Australia With This Bowler Being The 'Player Of The Series'



Tufnell's comments come after Josh Tongue produced a man-of-the-match performance in the recently concluded Australia vs England Boxing Day Test of the ongoing Ashes series, helping the Three

Lions win their first match on the tour Down Under. Coming into the match 3-0, the Ben Stokes-led England defeated Australia by four wickets at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) to rule out the

possibility of a clean sweep. Josh Tongue claimed a five-wicket haul in the first innings of the Boxing Day Test and followed it up with a two-wicket haul in the second innings, taking seven wickets in the match. He became the first England bowler to be named Player of the Match in an Ashes Test in Australia since Dean Headley in 1998. Tongue also earned a surprise call-up, as the Three Lions have included him in their T20 World Cup 2026 squad despite him never having played a limited-overs match for England. Along with the T20 World Cup squad, Tongue has also been included in Sri Lanka's tour squad.

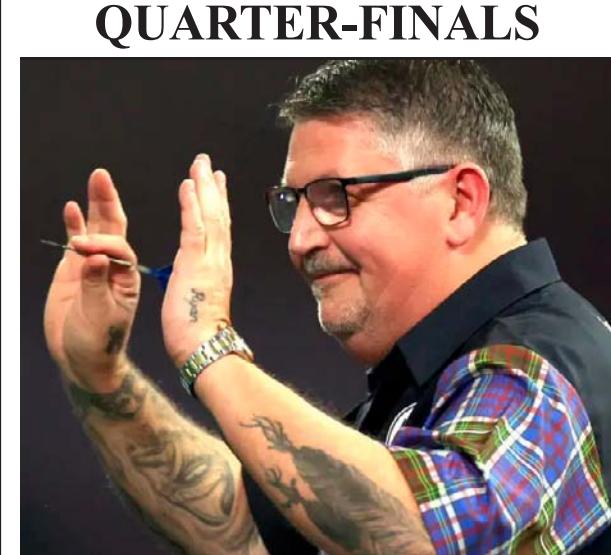
Uganda Forced To Use 3 Goalkeepers During AFCON Match. This Is The Reason



The Africa Cup of Nations match between Uganda and Nigeria saw a bizarre incident as Uganda ended up using three different goalkeepers in the same game. With Uganda trailing in the second half, their 40-year-old first-choice goalkeeper Denis Onyango was forced to leave the pitch after suffering an ankle injury. He was replaced by Salim Jamal Magoola, but just 11 minutes later he was sent off for handling the ball outside the penalty area in an attempt to stop a shot from Victor Osimhen. As a result, Uganda had to introduce their third-choice goalkeeper, Nafian Alionzi. He played the remainder of the match, but Nigeria went on to win 3-1. Meanwhile, Senegal and Congo served notice of their intent with convincing wins at the

Taifa Stars to the last 16 as one of the six groups' best third-place finishers. Angola, which finished third in Group B, had been hoping for a favor from Tunisia to beat Tanzania and another from Nigeria, which complied by defeating Uganda 3-1. But Tanzania's goal proved the difference. Both Tanzania and Angola finished with two points and a goal difference of minus 1. Salum's goal meant the Taifa Stars had scored more in the group stage (Tanzania's three goals vs. Angola's two), meaning they go through to the next round. "I hope this will be a reminder to these players and the next generation of players on the potential of Tanzanian football," Taifa Stars coach Miguel Gharbi's penalty, sent the

ANDERSON BEATS VAN GERWEN TO REACH QUARTER-FINALS



Scotland's Gary Anderson got the better of long-standing rival Michael van Gerwen to reach the PDC World Championship quarter-finals. Having been part of the sport's elite for more than a decade, the pair's fourth-round tie was much anticipated and both players averaged more than 99 overall. Anderson, who lifted back-to-back world titles in 2015 and 2016, won the first two sets against 36-year-old Dutchman Van Gerwen himself a three-time former champion and the third seed at this year's event. Although last year's runner-up pulled a set back, 55-year-old Anderson recovered to seal a 4-1 success and move into the last eight of the World Championship for the first time in four years. He will next face popular English debutant Justin Hood, who produced a finishing masterclass to eliminate Ismael Gharbi's penalty, sent the

the afternoon session. Meanwhile, world number two Luke Humphries and Dutch 10th seed Gian van Veen set up a blockbuster quarter-final on Thursday by winning their respective last-16 matches by a 4-1 scoreline. Unseeded Dutchman Kevin Doets averaged more than 111 to win the first set against England's Humphries, but was unable to maintain his exceptional start. The 2024 champion won 12 of the next 14 legs as he coasted to a comfortable victory with an overall average of 103.07. Humphries told Sky Sports: "I've felt like I've played well but I feel like that there's another level in me, which is important. If you're going to win this tournament, you have to have another level in you because that won't win you the World Championship. "Gian is a classy player. He's changed a lot, he's worked on his game and now he's a top player."

