OM NAMO
VENKATESAYA

18-01-2026
Total pilgrims: 84,058
Tonsures: 22,512
Hundi kanukalu: 4.21 CR
Waiting Compartments...31
Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens).. 12 H

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026 | P-8 | ₹.5/- | PRGI No.KARENG/2012/43253
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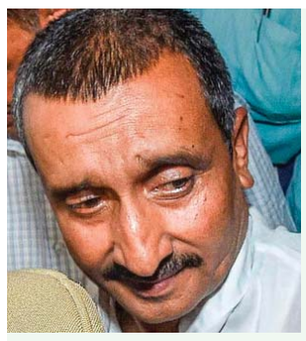


NATION | NEWS

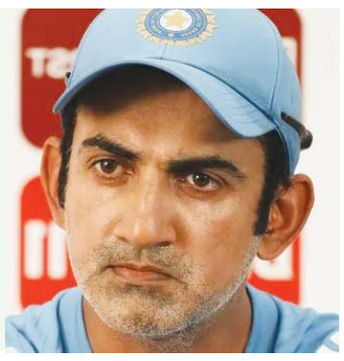
Delhi HC dismisses Sengar's plea to suspend sentence in death case of survivor's father

WORLD | NEWS

Japan PM Takaichi calls snap election three months after taking office

SPORTS | NEWS

Gautam Gambhir faces social media flak as New Zealand stun India at home



INBRIFS

India imposes 30 per cent import duty on yellow peas imported from the US

New Delhi (TSIT) Seen as a reciprocal measure, India has imposed a 30 per cent import duty on yellow peas imported from the US, causing concern among some US lawmakers.The 30 per cent import duty comes after the US imposed a 50 per cent tariff against India and threatened to raise it to 500 per cent for buying Russian oil.The increase in import duty has drawn concern from US senators from major pulse-producing states like North Dakota and Montana. They said it places American farmers at a significant competitive disadvantage and urged the Trump administration to negotiate its removal.

Special Forces soldier killed in fierce gunfight in J&K's Kishtwar

Jammu (TSIT): A soldier of the Special Forces was killed in a fierce gun battle in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir, the Army here said on Monday.The White Knight Corps said on X "The GOC, White Knight Corps, and all ranks pay solemn tribute to Havildar Gajendra Singh of the Special Forces, who made the supreme sacrifice while gallantly executing a Counter Terrorism operation in the Singpura area during the ongoing Operation TRASHI-I on the night of Jan 19, 2026.""We honour his indomitable courage, valour and selfless devotion to duty and stand firmly with the bereaved family in this hour of

IMF raises India's 2025 growth to 7.3 pc

Washington (TSIT): The International Monetary Fund on Monday raised India's economic growth projection for 2025 by a sharp 0.7 percentage point to 7.3 per cent, citing stronger-than-expected performance in the second half of the year, even as it expects growth to moderate in the coming years.In its World Economic Outlook Update, the IMF said the upward revision reflects a "better-than-expected outturn in the third quarter of the year and strong momentum in the fourth quarter," underscoring India's position as one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world.The IMF projected that India's growth would ease to 6.4 per cent in 2026 and 2027 as cyclical and temporary factors wane.

DCM Bhatti Vikramarka Launches Solar Model Village Programme in Telangana

- Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka inaugurated the Solar Model Village programme in Ravinuthala, aiming to transform every household and agricultural pump into a power generation unit, with the State Government bearing full installation costs.
- The scheme enables families to save on electricity bills and earn extra income by selling surplus power, while promoting women's empowerment, sustainable farming, and the use of solar energy in schools, offices, and agricultural fields across Telangana.

Hyderabad (TSIT): Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday inaugurated the Solar Model Village programme at Ravinuthala village in Bonakal Mandal, calling it a revolutionary initiative not only for India but globally. The programme aims to transform every household and agricultural pump set into a power generation unit.

Addressing a public meeting, Bhatti Vikramarka explained that the State Government will bear the full cost of installing solar power plants. Families and farmers can use the electricity for personal consumption and sell surplus power to the State electricity department, creating an additional income source. Under the pilot project, 81 villages across Telangana are covered, with Kodangal and Bonakal mandals being comprehensively included. In Bonakal Mandal alone, Rs.306 crore is allocated for 22 villages, while Ravinuthala village receives Rs.24 crore.

The Deputy Chief Minister highlighted that households could save up to Rs.14,000 annually on electricity bills. Selling 1,086 surplus solar units per year at Rs.2.57 per unit can generate an extra Rs.4,000–5,000 per family. He credited Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and the Cabinet for the scheme's design and stressed women's empowerment, noting that women can use solar income for education and healthcare.

Bhatti Vikramarka also encouraged farmers to adopt solar power on agricultural pump sets, explaining that solar energy generation continues throughout the year, providing income even during non-cultivation periods. Solar sheds in fields can serve multiple purposes, including power generation, cattle shelter, storage, and resting spaces.

The government is also considering installing solar plants on all schools and government offices. Bhatti Vikramarka urged farmers to avoid burning crop residue, warning of the severe health and environmental hazards.Prior to the public meeting, he inspected a solar plant in Ravinuthala village alongside officials from NPDCL, REDCO, and the district administration. Senior officials including NPDCL CMD Varun Reddy, REDCO MD Aneela, and District Collector Anudeep Durishetty attended the event.

Naidu Seeks Swiss Investments in Andhra Pradesh at WEF Meet

At WEF Zurich, Chandrababu Naidu seeks Swiss investments in pharma, AI and skill development sectors

Zurich (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu appealed to the Indian Ambassador to Switzerland Mridul Kumar to extend cooperation for investments of Swiss companies in Andhra Pradesh.

The Chief Minister arrived in Zurich on Monday to participate in the World Economic Forum meetings. An official release here on Monday said that Chief Minister ChndrababuNaidu met the Indian ambassador for Switzerland Mridul Kumar, after reaching Zurich on day one of his four-day visit to participate in World Economic Forum sessions. Ministers Nara Lokesh and TG Venkatesh were also present.

The Chief Minister discussed with the Indian ambassador the possibilities of Swiss investments in Andhra Pradesh in various sectors. When the Indian ambassador stated that Switzerland is ahead in Pharma, medical equipment, heavy machinery, hardware, electronics, rail components, textiles and research wings, the Chief Minister explained to him the opportunities in Andhra Pradesh for investments in Pharma and Medical equipment production.

The Chief Minister explained that Andhra Pradesh brought forward 25 new policies for industrial development, adding that the Andhra Pradesh government has been giving priority to Artificial Intelligence and

Quantum Technologies. He said special attention has been paid for skill development among youth keeping in view the global demand for skilled workforce. Indian Ambassador Mridul Kumar told the Chief Minister thatAndhra Pradesh has attracted investments to THE tune of Rs Two lakh crore with the initiative of Chandrababu Naidu during last year's Davos WEF session.

"A small country in Europe Liechtenstein, achieved rapid growth using Artificial Intelligence technology and a delegation from that country also participatedin the WEF session," he noted. The Chief Minister said that he is going to discuss with the delegation of Liechtenstein during the session.

Minister for HR and Skill Development Nara Lokesh explained to Indian ambassador Mridul Kumar over the initiative for skill development programme in Andhra Pradesh. He sought the cooperation of the Indian ambassador forinvestments of Swiss companies in Andhra Pradesh. He asserted that Andhra Pradesh is ready with manpower and the drone sector also improved in a big way witha capacity of 100 KG carrying capacity.

Modi Hosts UAE President, USD 200 Billion Trade Target Set, LNG Deal Signed

New Delhi (TSIT): Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Monday, during which both sides set an ambitious target of USD 200 billion in annual trade by 2032. The leaders also signed a long-term LNG supply agreement and agreed to boost cooperation in defence, energy, space, civil nuclear technologies, and emerging sectors like Artificial Intelligence.

Modi welcomed Al Nahyan at the Delhi airport, and the leaders held talks in restricted and delegation-level formats at the Prime Minister's residence.

The discussions focused on expanding bilateral trade, strategic defence collaboration, and partnerships in advanced nuclear technology, including large reactors, small modular reactors, and nuclear plant operations.

Under the energy pact, the UAE will supply 0.5 million metric tonnes of LNG annually to India, making it a key energy partner.

Both countries also agreed to collaborate on AI initiatives, including establishing a supercomputing cluster and expanding data centre capacities in India.A letter of intent was signed for a strategic defence partnership, while another was signed for joint development of space infrastructure, covering satellite fabrication, launch complexes, joint missions, and training facilities.

Stalin lays foundation for Mamallan reservoir in Chennai

Chennai (TSIT) In an initiative aimed at augmenting the drinking water source for Chennai city, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday laid the foundation stone for a new reservoir, named "Mamallan" near Thiruporur to be built at a cost of Rs 342.60 crore in the Kovalam basin.

Mr Stalin, pointing out the historical significance in naming at as 'Mamallan', said since the new water resource was situated at Mamallapuram ruled by Pallava King Narasimhavarman-I (known as Mamallan--great wrestler) from 630 to 668, the new reservoir was christened as Mamallan as the UNESCO Heritage site of Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) was founded by him named in his honour.

This will the Chennai's sixth reservoir adding to drinking water sources of Poondi, Chembarambakkam, Puzhal, Sholavaram and Veernam reservoirs.Mamallan will be the State's first freshwater reservoir along the coast at Vada Nemmeli, on East Coast Road in the Kovakam basin covering the land parcel between Thiruvidanthai and Kokilamedu.The project, spread over 5,161,27 acres with a storage capacity of 1.65 thousand million cubic feet. would be implemented by the Water Resources Department (WRD) and the reservoir would have an annual storage capacity of 2.25 tmcft when filled twice and a potential to supply 170 million litres a day (mld) to Chennai.

There is also a proposal to restore the 15-km long Buckingham canal between Thiruvidanthai and Mamallapuram across 311 acres,as part of the project, and this would improve the livelihood of fishermen dependent on brackish water fishing. Fish ing licences would also be issued to fishermen in neighbouring localities, Mr.Stalin said in his address.

Denying as baseless and defamatory the allegations that the DMK government had failed to construct water storage facilities,Mr. Stalin listed out the names of 43 dams built between 1967 and 2011, besides reeling out the various initiatives taken by theState government to strengthen water resources management.

BRS demands CBI probe into Naini coal block tenders

Hyderabad (TSIT): Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader and former minister T. Harish Rao has called for a CBI investigation into the Naini coal block tenders, following allegations of corruption and favoritism.

The demand comes a day after Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka directed Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) to cancel the tenders and re-auction the Naini coal blocks in Odisha. Bhatti Vikramarka had refuted claims that the 'site visit' condition in the tender was meant to favour certain companies.Speaking at a press conference on Monday, Harish Rao urged Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy to order a CBI probe.

He alleged that the Revanth Reddy government introduced the 'site visit certificate' policy, with the first beneficiary being the Chief Minister's brother-in-law, Sujan Reddy, whose firm, Shodha Constructions, secured the first tender under this rule. Rao claimed subsequent tenders were allegedly awarded at inflated rates of plus 7–10%, compared to previous discounts of 10–20%.He further alleged that contractors were intimidated, as they could not submit online bids and had to visit the site for certificates, allowing tenders to be selectively awarded to favoured companies.

Siddaramaiah responds to three crore unmapped voters in Karnataka

Belagavi (TSIT) Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said that the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise must be carried out with utmost care to ensure that genuine voters are not excluded from the electoral rolls.

He was responding to information that nearly three crore voters in Karnataka have reportedly not been mapped under the (SIR) process. Speaking to reporters here, Sidaramaiah said the Congress would never politicise the SIR process undertaken by the Election Commission. "Our only concern is that genuine voters should not be left out of the voters' list," he said.

Siddaramaiah said the process needs to be implemented cautiously. He said Booth Level Officers (BLOs) have been instructed to work carefully and ensure that no voter is subjected to injustice during the revision process.On allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards women involving DGP Ramachandra Rao, the Chief Minister said an inquiry would be conducted into the matter and disciplinary action would be taken. "No senior officer is above the law," he said.

Responding to allegations by MLA Janardhan Reddy that the Chief Minister and ministers are looting the state, Siddaramaiah said Reddy himself had looted the state's wealth and gone to jail, and the case is still pending before the Supreme Court. "He (Reddy) has no moral authority to make such allegations," he said, adding that opposition parties are indulging in false accusations and misleading the people.He said the Legislative Assembly session would begin on January 22 and advised the Opposition to raise issues and engage in discussions during the session.

Cong slams BJP over Shankaracharya 'mistreatment' at Magh Mela

New Delhi (TSIT) : The Congress on Monday launched a sharp attack on the BJP-led governments at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh over the alleged mistreatment of Swami Avimukteshwaranand at the Prayagraj Magh Mela, accusing the ruling party of "insulting Hindu saints" while using religion as a tool to retain political power.

Addressing a press conference here, Congress spokesperson and chairman of the party's Media and Publicity Department, Pawan Khera, condemned the reported denial of permission to the Shankaracharya to undertake the traditional Rajasi Snan (royal bath) on Mauni Amavasya, calling it a grave violation of centuries-old religious customs."The BJP has always used religion to gain power, but today it stands exposed for insulting Hindu saints themselves," Khera said. "A tradition that survived Mughal rule and British rule has been disrupted under the present government. This shows the BJP's sheer hypocrisy."

Khera alleged that the Shankaracharya was not allowed to proceed in a palanquin for the royal bath, an unbroken religious practice, and that his disciples were assaulted during a confrontation with the police. Playing a video of the clash at the press conference, Khera said the incident amounted to a "betrayal of faith.""This government is biting the very hand that feeds it," he remarked, adding that the BJP was "neither for work nor for Ram," but driven solely by "power and money."

The Congress leader further alleged that the Shankaracharya was being targeted for raising uncomfortable questions for the government, including the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya before its completion, alleged mismanagement during the Mahakumbh, and the sight of bodies floating in the Ganga during the COVID-19 pandemic.Drawing a sharp comparison, Khera questioned the differential treatment meted out to religious figures. "Why does RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat enjoy Z-plus security while the Shankaracharya and his followers are stopped, restrained and allegedly assaulted?" he asked. "Does the BJP consider Bhagwat to be a bigger religious leader than a Shankaracharya?"

Reacting to reports that the Shankaracharya had publicly expressed fear for his safety and apprehended a possible conspiracy under the guise of a stampede, Khera said it was "deeply alarming" that a senior Hindu seer felt unsafe in Uttar Pradesh, which is governed by what he termed a "triple-engine government."

NCC REPUBLIC DAY CAMP 2026

The Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi visits NCC Republic Day Camp 2026, in New Delhi.....

UNNAO RAPE:

Delhi HC dismisses Sengar's plea to suspend sentence in death case of survivor's father

The judge observed that while Sengar has undergone prolonged incarceration of about seven-and-a-half years, relief could not be granted on the ground of delay alone, as the appellant had repeatedly moved applications for interim suspension, extension of bail and regular suspension of sentence.

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to suspend the 10-year jail term of expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the custodial death case of the Unnao rape survivor's father on the grounds of delay in trial, saying it was partly caused by the multiple applications he had filed in the matter.

"The application seeking suspension of sentence is dismissed," said Justice Ravinder Dudeja.

The judge observed that while Sengar has undergone prolonged incarceration of about seven-and-a-half years, relief could not be granted on the ground of delay alone, as the appellant had repeatedly moved applications for interim suspension, extension of bail and regular suspension of sentence.

"Purpose would be served if the appeal were heard on merit in an expeditious manner," Justice Dudeja said. "In the facts and circumstances and after considering the statutory framework, the judicial principles governing suspension, the antecedents of the appellant and the absence of any new circumstance that has emerged, the court finds no ground to grant relief," the court opined.

The court listed the appeal for hearing on February 3. Talking to PTI over the phone from Delhi, the rape survivor expressed satisfaction with the court's verdict, saying the decision had brought her a sense of solace. "I am very happy with the court's decision. Today, my father's soul has found some peace. I have not even performed my father's thirteenth-day rituals yet. Until his killers are sentenced to death, his soul will not find true peace," she said.

Reiterating her resolve to fight for justice, she said those responsible for her sexual assault and her father's death must face the strictest punishment.

"Kuldeep Singh Sengar, his brother Atul Singh Sengar, and everyone involved in this conspiracy must be awarded the death penalty," she said.

"This is not just my battle... it is a fight for justice and truth, and I will continue it till my last breath," she added. On March 13, 2020, Sengar was sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment by a trial court, besides imposition of a fine of Rs 10 lakh, in the case. The trial court had said "no leniency" could be shown for killing a family's "sole bread earner".

It had also awarded a 10-year jail term to Sengar's brother, Atul Singh Sengar, and five others for their role in the custodial killing of the rape survivor's father.

The father was arrested at the behest of Sengar under the Arms Act and died in custody on April 9, 2018, owing to police brutalities. Sengar had kidnapped the minor and raped her in 2017.

The trial court, which did not hold the accused guilty of murder under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in the father's case, awarded the maximum sentence for the offence of culpable homicide not amounting to murder to convicts under Section 304 of the IPC after holding that there was no intention to kill. Sengar's appeals in the main rape case against the December 2019 judgement convicting him and sentencing him to imprisonment for the remainder of his life, as well as the father's case, are pending in the high court.

His sentence was suspended by the high court on December 23, 2025, till the pendency of his appeal challenging his conviction and sentence in the rape case. The suspension was stayed by the Supreme Court on December 29, 2025.

Trump invites PM Modi to join 'Board of Peace' for Gaza transition

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump on Sunday invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to be part of the "Board of Peace" that will work towards bringing lasting peace to Gaza and embark on a "bold new approach" to resolve "global conflict".Trump sent a letter to Modi that was shared on social media by the US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor.

The president said it was his great honour to invite the prime minister to join him in a "critically historic and magnificent effort to solidify peace" in the Middle East and, at the same time, to embark on a "bold new approach to resolving Global Conflict". The US president unveiled the board as part of the second phase of a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.In October, Israel and militant group Hamas agreed to Trump's peace plan. Trump has sent similar letters to several global leaders.Trump's "Board of Peace" is being projected by Washington as a new international body to usher in peace and stability in Gaza and beyond, triggering speculations that it may respond to other global conflicts as well.

The US president unveiled the board as part of the second phase of a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Originally, the new body was to be tasked to oversee governance and coordinate funding for Gaza's redevelopment as the strip was devastated during the two years of Israeli military offensive. In a post on X, Gor said he was honoured to convey Trump's invitation to Modi to participate in the Board of Peace, which will "bring lasting peace to Gaza". "The Board will support effective governance to achieve stability and prosperity," the envoy said. In his letter to Modi, Trump mentioned his September 29 announcement about a comprehensive plan to end the Gaza conflict, as well as his 20-point roadmap to bring peace to the Middle East.

The US president noted that the United Nations Security Council overwhelmingly adopted Resolution 2803, welcoming and endorsing "this vision"."Now it is time to turn all of these Dreams into reality. At the heart of the Plan is The Board of Peace, the most impressive and consequential Board ever assembled, which will be established as a new International Organization and Transitional Governing Administration," Trump wrote.

Bail before conviction should be matter of right: Ex-CJI Chandrachud

JAIPUR: Former chief justice of India DY Chandrachud on Sunday said bail before conviction should be a matter of right, but asserted that it is a court's duty to examine a case in depth where national security is involved before granting such a relief. He made the remarks at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival in response to a question from senior journalist Vir Sanghvi, who raised the issue of the Supreme Court recently denying the bail plea of activist Umar Khalid in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case.

Khalid and fellow activist Sharjeel Imam have been incarcerated since 2020. Denying bail to both, the top court on January 5 observed that they were involved in the "planning, mobilisation and strategic direction" of the northeast Delhi riots.Faced with the question from Sanghvi during a session titled 'Ideas of Justice', Justice Chandrachud (retired) said, "Bail before conviction should be a matter of right. Our law is based on a presumption, and that presumption is that everyone is innocent until proven guilty." Because, if someone remains an undertrial prisoner for five or seven years and is finally proven innocent, how will you compensate for the time lost?

DY Chandrachud

Giving examples from various cases, the former chief justice of India said that bail can be denied if there is a possibility of the accused returning to society and committing the crime again, tampering with evidence, or using the benefit of bail to escape the clutches of the law. "If these three grounds are not present, then bail must be granted. I think that where national security is involved, it is the court's duty to examine the case in depth.

SC junks PIL on judicial reforms, terms it 'publicity interest litigation'

NEW DELHI: Taking strong note of a PIL seeking sweeping judicial reforms, the Supreme Court on Monday expressed displeasure over what it termed a "publicity interest litigation" and junked the plea, saying the court should not be used as a platform to address cameras stationed outside.

The petitioner had sought a mandate that every court in India must decide a case within a one-year timeframe. A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalya Bagchi questioned how it could issue a direction mandating that all cases be decided within one year.The PIL was filed by one

Kamlesh Tripathi, who appeared and argued in person. During the proceedings, Tripathi requested to argue his case in Hindi. Responding to his plea for "bringing change to the country," the CJI said a formal petition was not the appropriate vehicle for such aspirations.

"Aap desh me badlaav chahte haina? Aapko aisa petition daalne ki zaroorat nahi hai, aap ek patra likh kar mujhe bhej dijiye (You want to change the country, right? You don't need to file such a petition, you can simply write a letter and send it to me)," the CJI said.The bench was particularly critical of the motive behind the filings of the "publicity interest litigations"."Aap log sirf jo bahar cameraman khade hai unke saamne bolne ke liye petition mat daaliye (Do not file petitions just so you can speak in front of the cameras outside)," the CJI said. Questioning the practicality of the demand made by the petitioner, the CJI asked.

7 arrested for gang-rape of teenage girl in Bengal's Purulia

KOLKATA: Seven people have been arrested in connection with the abduction and gang-rape of a teenage girl in West Bengal's Purulia district, senior police officers said on Monday. The police have registered a case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO).

According to police and family sources, the teenage girl is from Purulia town. On Friday evening, the 17-year-old girl left her home to go to a friend's house. When she did not return home even after nightfall, the family started to worry about her.

, the girl's father filed a kidnapping complaint at the Purulia Sadar police station. Upon receiving the complaint, the police immediately launched an investigation. The girl was rescued later that night.

During questioning, the minor girl narrated her horrific ordeal and mentioned that she was abducted and subjected to sexual assault. The girl told the police that she was walking down the road at night when seven or eight young men stopped her. She was forcibly taken from the road to a field near the railway tracks, where she said that she was gang-raped.

JUSTICE

Kuki groups demand justice for woman who died 2 years after being gang-raped in Manipur violence

CHURACHANDPUR: Several organisations demanded justice for a Kuki woman from Manipur, who died recently from illness allegedly linked to the trauma she suffered after being gang-raped during the early phase of the ethnic violence in the state in 2023.

The Kuki organisations based in Manipur's Churachandpur and Delhi claimed that she was kidnapped in Imphal and gang-raped in May 2023. She, however, escaped from the kidnappers, but never fully recovered from the shock and injuries and died on January 10 while undergoing treatment in Guwahati.

The groups also demanded a separate administration for the Kukis, claiming that it was not possible for them to live together with the Meitei community. At least 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in the ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and hills-based Kuki-Zo groups in Manipur since May 2023. The state has been under President's Rule since February last year.

In a statement, the Kuki group Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) said, "Her death is yet another painful testimony to the ruthless manner in which the Kuki-Zo people have been targeted." The Kuki-Zo people "now have no other option but to demand a separate administration for our safety, dignity, and survival", said the ITLF.The Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO), Delhi & NCR, alleged that despite the seriousness of the crime and repeated appeals by civil society organisations, no meaningful action was taken against the perpetrators."We categorically assert that her death must be officially recognised as resulting from the violence committed against her in 2023.

Any attempt to treat it otherwise would amount to a denial of justice and an erasure of responsibility," the KSO Delhi & NCR said.The organisation called upon the Centre to expedite the process of creating a separate administration for the tribals, which is "both necessary and unavoidable". A woman's group of the Kuki tribe said that the victim would be remembered not only for the injustice she suffered but also for her resilience and courage in the face of unimaginable brutality."For nearly three years, she carried pain that no human being should ever have to bear," the Kuki-Zo Women's Forum, Delhi & NCR, said in a statement.

All 140 MLAs, including CM, support me: DK Shivakumar

Bengaluru : Stating that all 140 MLAs including the CM were in support of him, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said he would not like to disclose the discussions with his leaders in public.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "All 140 MLAs are my supporters. Even CM Siddaramaiah is in support of me. Do you (media) know what Siddaramaiah and I have discussed? Only we know what we have discussed and what we have discussed with Rahul Gandhi. Can I disclose those details in front of you? Time will answer all your questions." Media has published my photo with Rahul Gandhi, but reported that I didn't meet him

Asked about Delhi visit, he said, "We go to Delhi for political, party and government work. I discussed Karnataka, Assam elections and other political matters with our leaders. But media has reported that I did not meet Rahul Gandhi. One day you published my photo discussing with Rahul Gandhi and on another day, you have reported that I did not meet him. I have made it clear that time will answer all your questions and I won't discuss it any further."

There is no confusion about leadership. You (media) are creating confusion. We have discussed it and the High Command will take a final decision. And all of us will abide by that decision. Both CM and I have clarified this matter many times, hence don't create any more confusion. Congress party is together, the High Command will take a suitable decision at an appropriate time. I have met Rahul Gandhi. Siddaramaiah has also mentioned that he will comply by any decision of the High command. We will go by the directions of Sonia Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge."

CM and I are in agreement with High Command decision Asked what happened to his meetings during Delhi visit, he said, "CM and I have reached an agreement that we will abide by the decision of the High command. You are worried about your TRP."

When pointed to MLAs discussing the leadership issue, he said, "MLAs will have their desires, there is nothing wrong in it. Can't say it is wrong. We would have whispered somethings to their ears and they would be waiting eagerly." When a reporter pointed out that he has worked hard for the party, he said, "It is not that only I have worked hard for the party. Party workers have burnt midnight oil in all the 224 constituencies. We have to especially remember the efforts of our party workers during Covid. The people, media, BJP and JDS are all praying for me while some are criticizing me."

MGNREGA SESSIONS

"We have called for a special session on MGNREGA. It is an important scheme for Karnataka as about Rs 6,000 crore was spent on it every year. We will discuss about the scheme in the special session," he added. Asked about his brother's statement that High command would give good news, he said, "My brother, our party workers and even media are saying so. Getting together is good news and discussing is also good news." Asked if good news would come by April, he said, "Why discuss now, let's see."Thinking of conducting all local body elections together Asked when the GBA elections may be held in view of the draft voter list being released today, he said, "The Court has given its order. Our government has decided to conduct zilla and taluk panchayat elections.

Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner reviews inter-departmental coordination works

Bengaluru: A coordination meeting of various departments under the jurisdiction of the Bengaluru North City Corporation was held at the conference hall of the Commissioner's office, chaired by Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar.

Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner directed BWSSB officials to pay special attention to the ongoing works on Sanjaynagar Main Road and to extend necessary cooperation for works being carried out by B-SMILE on Lazar Road and Mosque Road. He instructed authorities to act on the City Corporation's request to disconnect electricity connections to unauthorised buildings and to submit details of connections already disconnected. BWSSB officials were also asked to share information regarding rules and conditions for drilling borewells within city limits.

The Commissioner reviewed works being undertaken by the National Highways Authority on Kempegowda International Airport Road and directed officials to gather details of BMRCL works on roads under North City Corporation limits to ensure proper coordination. He instructed that footpaths be identified for the Walkaluru programme and that applications seeking permission for road cutting be disposed of at the earliest. He also sought action on issues related to water supply disconnection and pending dues of Indira Canteens.

Emphasising the need to expedite city beautification, the Commissioner instructed that the tender process for vehicle towing be completed quickly. He directed identification of five locations under flyovers from GBA and five locations under metro lines for beautification works in coordination with BMRCL.

Stressing the need to avoid inconvenience to Indira Canteens, he instructed officials to maintain cleanliness and ensure uninterrupted drainage, water, and electricity supply, while clearing pending bills through coordination with BESCOM and BWSSB, including one-time settlement options if required. He also directed that white-topping road works be completed at the earliest with strict quality control.

Taking a serious view of illegal borewells, the Commissioner instructed that all complaints received through phone, WhatsApp, or in person be immediately registered on the Sahaaya 2.0 portal and acted upon in coordination with BWSSB, citing groundwater depletion concerns ahead of summer.He further directed that electricity connections should not be provided to buildings constructed illegally or in violation of approved plans, and that existing connections to such buildings be disconnected immediately in coordination with BESCOM using the designated software system.

The Commissioner expressed displeasure over officials who attended the meeting with incomplete information or failed to attend. The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioners Smt. Latha and Shri Amaresh, Joint Commissioners Shri Mohammed Naem Momin and Smt. Pallavi, and officials from BDA, BWSSB, BESCOM, BMRCL, National Highways Authority, KIDB, Forest Department, and other departments, along with North City Corporation officials.

88.91 lakh voters listed in draft rolls of five city corporations

Opportunity to submit claims and objections from January 20 to February 3, 2026

Bengaluru: In connection with the conduct of elections under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the draft electoral rolls were published. Citizens are advised to verify whether their names are included in the draft electoral rolls and, if not found, to immediately submit applications in the prescribed forms to get their names included. All citizens aged 18 years and above should ensure that their names are included in the electoral rolls, stated State Election Commissioner G.S. Sangreshi during a joint press conference held at GBA Head Office.

The ward-wise draft electoral rolls of the five City Corporations under the jurisdiction of the Greater Bengaluru Authority include a total of 8,891,411 voters, informed State Election Commissioner G.S. Sangreshi.

Speaking to the media after releasing the draft electoral rolls, he stated that elections will be conducted under the GBA jurisdiction covering five City Corporations — Bengaluru Central, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru East, and Bengaluru West — comprising a total of 369 wards.

The draft electoral rolls have been prepared with October 1, 2025 as the qualifying date. The rolls include 45,69,193 male voters, 43,20,583 female voters, and 1,635 other voters, totaling 88,91,411 voters, he explained.

From January 20, 2026 to February 3, 2026, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will visit households for verification. During this period, citizens will have the opportunity to submit claims and objections, he said. The disposal of claims and objections will be carried out from February 4 to February 18, 2026, and the final electoral rolls will be published on March 16, 2026, he added.

Among all wards, Ward No. 23 of Bengaluru West City Corporation has the highest number of voters with 49,530, while Ward No. 16 of Bengaluru East City Corporation has the lowest number of voters with 10,926. A total of 8,044 polling stations will be set up across the 369 wards, he informed.

ELECTORAL ROLLS ON WEBSITE

The ward-wise draft electoral rolls will be published in PDF format on the official GBA website: https://gba.karnataka.gov.in/home

. Citizens can verify and confirm the inclusion of their names in the electoral rolls. On this occasion, GBA Special Commissioner (Election) Ramachandran, City Corporation Commissioners Rajendra Cholan, Shri Pommala Sunil Kumar, Shri Ramesh D.S., Dr. Rajendra K.V., Special Officer (Elections) Shri Selvamani, Additional Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners (Elections), Tahsildars and other concerned officials were present.

Happiest Minds Run 2026
Run Miles bring Smiles

Bangalore : Bengaluru witnessed an early morning surge of energy and enthusiasm as Happiest Minds Technologies successfully concluded the 6th edition of the Happiest Minds Run on 18th January 2026 at St. Joseph Indian High School, opposite UB City. The event saw the participation of over 2000 people, coming together for a morning centered on fitness, purpose, and collective action. This year's run carried a deeper purpose, with proceeds directed toward supporting children living with Type 1 Diabetes through Idhayangal Charitable Trust. By combining movement with meaning, the Happiest Minds Run reinforced the idea that community action can create real, lasting impact.

Joseph Anantharaju, CEO & Co-Chairman of Happiest Minds, said, "The sixth edition of Happiest Minds' run reflects our belief that collective action, driven by empathy, can change lives. Seeing 2000 plus people come together for a cause that supports children and families is truly inspiring. The run today stands as a powerful expression of commitment toward health, consistency, and community impact."Following the Bengaluru edition, the Happiest Minds Run will continue across multiple cities, with events scheduled on February 7, 2026, in Bhubaneshwar; February 8, 2026, in Pune and Madurai; and February 15, 2026, in Noida and Hyderabad, extending the initiative's focus on health, inclusion, and social impact nationwide.The Happiest Minds Run was proudly supported by AON, RBL Bank, ICICI Bank, Federal Bank, Decathlon, Happiest Health, Sakra, TATA Soulful, DKMS, and Happiest Physio.

Special Fortnightly Vaccination Campaign for Measles-Rubella -2026

Bengaluru : With the objective of protecting children from measles and rubella, the Measles–Rubella vaccine is being administered under the Universal Immunization Programme, with the first dose given at 9 to 11 months of age and the second dose at 16 to 24 months of age.

The Government of India is committed to the complete elimination of measles and rubella by the end of 2026, and the role of the State is extremely crucial in achieving this important goal. In this context, the Greater Bengaluru Authority has given special emphasis to the effective implementation of the Measles–Rubella elimination programme.

In view of the likelihood of widespread transmission of measles from October to December and the possibility of a higher number of cases being reported from January to March, a Measles–Rubella fortnightly vaccination campaign has been organized through sessions from 19/01/2026 to 31/01/2026 at Urban Primary Health Centres and outreach areas of the five city corporations under the jurisdiction of the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

Parents of children aged 0 to 5 years who have, for any reason, experienced a delay in vaccination or whose children have not been vaccinated are requested to visit the nearest Primary Health Centre and ensure that their children receive the required vaccines, as per a notification issued by the GBA (Health Department). Vaccinate your children and keep them healthy.

An action plan has been formulated for the Measles–Rubella fortnightly vaccination programme covering 145 project units under the Greater Bengaluru Authority. Under the special Measles–Rubella fortnightly vaccination campaign, a total of 1,114 vaccination centres have been planned across 3,005 migratory sites, through which 267 children will receive the MR-1 vaccine, 246 children will receive the MR-2 vaccine, 178 children will receive the Penta-1 vaccine, and 183 children will receive the DPT second booster dose vaccine.

MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LTD.
MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE PVT LTD
CIN : U65923KL2010PLC039179
Regd Office: 8/596 A, Padmaprabha Building, Near Sreerama Swami Temple, Cherppu - Thriprayar Road, Thriprayar, Thrissur, Kerala 680567 | **Phone No.:** 0487-3520504, **Website:** www.manappuramhomefin.com

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of **Manappuram Home Finance Ltd ("MAHOFIN")** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest *[Act], 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **Demand Notice** calling upon the borrowers and co-borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice and Interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic** possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said *[Act] read with rule 9 of the said rules. The borrower 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 Manappuram Home Finance Ltd as mentioned below for each of the respective properties:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower and Co-borrower / Loan account number/ Branch	Description Of Secured Asset In Respect Of Which Interest Has Been Created	Date of Demand Notice sent & Outstanding Amount	Date of Possession
1	Kannan K, Sumathi I, Suneesh K, /NHL00300030127/ Palakkad	All The Part And Parcel of Property And Improvements In Palakkad District, Palakkad Sub District, Palakkad Taluk, Elappully I Village, Elappully Amsom And Desom, Comprised In Old. Sy. No. 432/2, Re-Sy. No. 271/4/1, Having An Extend of 0.0142 Hector, Kerala- 678622. East-Property of Rajan And Kamalakshi, West-3 Meter Pathway, South-Panchayath Road., North-Property of Aiitha	14-10-2025 & Rs.512170/-	13-01-2026

Date: 20th January 2026 | Place: KERALA Sd/- Authorised Officer Manappuram Home Finance Ltd

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Sr. No.	Name of Borrower and Co-borrower / Loan account number/ Branch	Description Of Secured Asset In Respect Of Which Interest Has Been Created	Date of Demand Notice sent & Outstanding Amount	Date of Possession
1	Gopakumar B, Suma Gopakumar, Archana S, /NLAP0015018444/ Kottayam	All That Is Part And Parcel of Property Having An Extent 2.43 Ares of Land In Sy No.3684, Block No.19, Re.sy. No.299/6-4, Situate At Village: Kandallur, Taluk: Karthikapally, District: Alappuzha, Kerala - 690531. East-Rajendran And Lekha, West-Panchayath Road, South-Property of Sahadevan, North- Property of Rajendran And Lekha	14-10-2025 & Rs. 1538527/-	17-01-2026
2	Animol Sathyapalan, Sathyapalan K, /MHL01140000848/ Kottayam	All That Is Part And Parcel of Property Having An Extent 1.22 Ares of Land In Sy. No. 6/1D-1, 6/1D-2 & 5/1-3, Re. Sy. Block No.13, Re. Sy. No. 20/6-4-10 Situate At Village: Ambalappuzha North, Taluk: Ambalappuzha, District: Alappuzha, Kerala-688005. East-Vazhy, West-Property of Pavithran, South-Property of Mani Varghese., North- Property of Dental Collage.	14-10-2025 & Rs. 355830/-	17-01-2026

Date: 20th January 2026 | Place: KERALA Sd/- Authorised Officer Manappuram Home Finance Ltd

BharathCloud appoints JLL as advisory partner for USD 100 million AI-ready sovereign cloud investment

BENGALURU : BharathCloud has appointed JLL as an advisory partner to facilitate build of AI-ready sovereign cloud infrastructure across major cities in India and select international locations.

BharathCloud intends to invest up to USD 100 million over the next five years, subject to board approvals, financing arrangements, regulatory clearances, and prevailing market conditions. As part of this arrangement, JLL will serve as exclusive advisory partner, supporting BharathCloud in colocation site identification, design consultancy, and portfolio optimization. Together, the companies aim to deliver world-class edge cloud infrastructure in cities such as Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi NCR, Kolkata, and Pune, as well as Tier-II and Tier-III locations including Vizag, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Coimbatore, Kochi, Chandigarh, and Bhopal.

As India accelerates its 5G, IoT, and AI-ready cloud infrastructure to enable digital governance and private sector collaboration, BharathCloud is taking significant strides. Building on its previous partnership with DE-CIX India, a leading global interconnection platform, BharathCloud is now strengthening its alliance with JLL for cloud centre development. This collaboration aims to establish a robust distributed cloud ecosystem, positioning BharathCloud as a key orchestrator enabling seamless integration of AI, IoT, and 5G technologies for enterprise edge computing.

This strategic move marks the creation of a fully functional Digital Triangle in India for the first time, unlocking unprecedented value.

By integrating DE-CIX's globally recognized interconnection ecosystem with BharathCloud's secure, sovereign cloud infrastructure, this alliance empowers businesses to scale efficiently while actively shaping the future of digital connectivity in India. Padma Reddy Sama, Co-Founder, BharathCloud, said, "This strategic partnership with JLL is a key milestone in advancing India-first, enterprise-grade AI cloud infrastructure. Together, we will roll out sovereign, AI-powered cloud centres starting with at least two in every metro and expanding into Tier-II and Tier-III cities while ensuring top-tier security, scalability, operational efficiency, and compliance with India's data sovereignty requirements."

ICICI Home Finance | Corporate Office: ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ICICI HFC Tower, Andheri - Kurla Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400059, India
Branch Office: 1st Floor, Sundar Tower, 24/868(3), Opp. Nissan Pinnacle , Kunnathurmedu Post, Palakkadu 678013

[See proviso to rule 8(6)] Notice for sale of immovable assets

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

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Legal Heirs. Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price / Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction	One Day Before Auction Date	SARFAESI Stage
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)
1.	Vishnuraj C R (Borrower) Sneha K, Control Yes LLP (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LHPGT00001397603	Re Sy 209/22 23 Vadakkanchery 2 Village Alathur Taluk Vadakkanchery 2 Village Alathur Taluk Palakkad Kerala- 678683	Rs. 20,49, 226.00/- January 16, 2026	Rs. 21,09, 240/- / Rs.2,10, 924/-	January 30, 2026 11:00 AM-03:00 PM	February 06, 2026 02:00 PM-03:00 PM	February 05, 2026 Before 05:00 PM	Symbolic Possession

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency ValueTrust Capital Services Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till February 05, 2026 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.
The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before February 05, 2026 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit signed copy of Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before February 05, 2026 before 05.00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd. – Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Home Finance Company Limited on 9920807300.
The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit https://www.icicihfc.com/

Date: January 20, 2026
Place: Palakkad

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

EDITORIAL

Europe Has The Weapons For Trump's Greenland Tariff War

The Cold War satirical novel The Mouse That Roared imagined a tiny European statelet declaring war on the US in the hopes of being lavished with American aid after its inevitable defeat. It's a title that came immediately to mind when European nations sent three dozen soldiers to Greenland in response to Donald Trump's threats to wrest the island from Danish control. The idea seems to have been: Support Denmark, yes, but don't antagonise the White House when Ukrainian security is also on the line.

Whatever the intent, it hasn't worked. Trump's contemptuous delight in beating up US allies was given free rein over the weekend as he raised the ante over the Arctic territory. It's time for Europe to fight tariff fire with fire.

The president threatened a 10 per cent duty from February on US imports from the countries sending troops: France, Germany, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark and non-European Union members UK and Norway. That would increase to 25 per cent in June until a deal is reached for his government to buy Greenland. In a grim flashback to last year's EU-US trade deal when the bloc had to swallow a 15 per cent tariff on its transatlantic exports, the underbelly of Europe's trade-dependent, soft-power regime is fully exposed.

The cost of such extra tariffs would be high. Bloomberg Economics estimates they could cut these countries' US exports by up to 50 per cent. Germany, Sweden and Denmark look especially vulnerable. But another timid acquiescence from the Europeans would be disastrous. This is textbook economic bullying, driven by a leader who recently said the only limitation on his global powers was "(his) own mind." If last year's tariff deal is already being rewritten on the fly by the Americans, where will it stop? There has to be a point when even mice do more than squeak apologetically and submit to worse trade terms than China.So even as Germany appears to be shipping its dozen or so soldiers back home – job done, apparently – European leaders must be ready to play hardball if these levies materialise. The starting point is bolstering the European Parliament's threat to hold back approval of last year's trade agreement, which was hailed by Trump's administration as providing "unprecedented levels of market access" for American products. The deal has not stopped the US from trying to strongarm Brussels into going easy on the tech barons of Silicon Valley and Seattle over regulations and antitrust. It is time, too, to unbox the EU's "bazooka" for the fight ahead: The bloc's Anti-Coercion Instrument is explicitly designed to defend member states put under tariff pressure by foreign powers. It allows retaliation beyond customs duties, and can potentially restrict market access for titans like Google owner Alphabet Inc. That's a much bigger stick than the usual clobbering of more niche US companies, such as Harley-Davidson motorcycles with higher import taxes.

French President Emmanuel Macron, still nursing his wounds after failing to stop an EU trade deal with Latin America hated by French farmers, favors this trade weapon - and he's been backed by German industrial association VDMA. "Europe must not allow itself to be blackmailed," its president wrote over the weekend.

Then comes the longer-term question of whether Europe can get by on defence and security without American backing – in Ukraine first and foremost - the answer to which was a resounding no last year when the EU had to accept the 15 per cent levy. But just as those transatlantic trade terms have barely survived the New Year, last year's rush to declare the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as being back and better than ever under "Daddy" Trump looks wildly premature.

Denmark is right to say that a hostile takeover of Greenland would be the end of the alliance as we know it. Trump's new threats go beyond the NATO "brain death" that Macron spoke of a few years back, and toward something like the forced obedience of the Soviet bloc's Warsaw Pact. To avoid this miserable fate, the rearming of Europe is ever more urgent.

Pawars, Thackerays, Congress: One By One, Maharashtra Is Moving On

Maharashtra politics is set to change irrevocably with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) consolidating its position as the dominant force in the just concluded elections to local bodies. Its victories across regions (it won 23 of the 29 corporations), including the country's plum municipality, the cash-rich Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), shows how deeply it has dug roots in a state once synonymous with the Congress, the Pawars and the Thackerays. The implications are huge. With Maharashtra in the bag, the BJP now controls not only the biggest economic powerhouse, home to the nation's financial capital and top corporate houses, but also the second most politically influential state after Uttar Pradesh, with 48 seats in the Lok Sabha. A Grand Reset The eclipse of traditional players and the rise of new ones means a reset of equations across the board. Because it is a work in progress, it is difficult to predict the political, social and financial texture of the emerging new Maharashtra. However, some trends can be gauged from the results of the recent polls. One is the rise of a Brahmin as the face of Maharashtra politics, displacing the Marathas who have had a stranglehold on the reins of power for decades. This is a state that was once led by strong Maratha leaders like YB Chavan, Vasantdada Patil and, of course, Sharad Pawar. Now it's over to Brahmin chief minister Devendra Fadnavis. He is the new star. Much of the credit for the BJP's victory goes to him. His canny political skills, his relentless campaign and his outreach to non-Maratha communities, particularly the OBCs, put the BJP on top. His triumph puts him in the line of succession along with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the top position in the post-Modi era. An Orphaned NCP A second significant development is the impact of the verdict on the politics of the state's influential sugar belt in western Maharashtra, which gave the Marathas their power. The wipeout of both factions of the NCP, the one led by the grand old man of Maharashtra Sharad Pawar and the other led by his nephew once touted as his heir apparent Ajit Pawar, in their erstwhile impregnable fortresses of Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, has left the community orphaned and leaderless. Powered by the support of the OBCs who seem to have bought into the appeal of Hindutva, the BJP has succeeded in dividing and thereby weakening the Marathas. The party has had its eyes for a long time on the wealth and power of the sugar and banking cooperatives controlled by the community. The fall of the Pawars with no successor in sight in the immediate future presents the BJP with the opportunity it has been seeking to restructure a sector that has been the lifeline of Maratha power and change the face of the sugar belt, which has played a key role in state politics. The Pawar Play Sharad Pawar is in the winter of his life. However, Ajit Pawar is not. Unfortunately, he has taken a huge hit and endangered his position as Deputy Chief Minister in the Fadnavis-led NDA state government. He jumped ship to ally with his uncle's faction, hoping that a reunited family would retain their hold in the sugar belt. He miscalculated badly, leaving him stuck in nowhere land. Ajit Pawar was never popular with either the BJP or the RSS. He was accommodated in the NDA only to weaken Sharad Pawar. There are already reports that ED probes against him will resume. No politician should ever be written off. However, currently, Ajit Pawar's future looks uncertain. Mumbai Still A Challenge A third area to watch out for is Mumbai. The politics of the capital city has always been different from the rest of Maharashtra. While the BJP can bask in the glow of ousting the Thackerays from the BMC, which the family-run Shiv Sena has controlled for nearly three decades, there are caveats that the party must be acutely aware of and which will impact future developments in the city. The BJP won just three seats more in the BMC than what it garnered in the last election in 2017. Yes, it does have a majority in the corporation, but only in alliance with Eknath Shinde's faction of the Shiv Sena. The BJP had hoped to decimate Uddhav Thackeray and his faction of the Shiv Sena the way it wiped out the Pawars in western Maharashtra. It failed. Uddhav Thackeray held on to his stronghold of the Marathi sections of Mumbai and has emerged as a strong opposition. In fact, it is being said that if he had aligned with the Congress instead of reuniting with his cousin, Raj Thackeray, the alliance may have given the BJP a run for its money. Mumbai politics is up in the air. Shinde is already playing games with the BJP on the choice of the next mayor. And Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena is having a field day attacking the man who broke the party and brought down its government in 2021. It's not going to be easy for the BJP to control and dominate Mumbai the way it has managed to capture the hinterland. Watch The AIMIM The fourth development that could impact future politics in Maharashtra is the emergence of Assaduddin Oawaisi's AIMIM as a magnet for the Muslim community. The AIMIM posted a stunning performance in the local polls by winning 121 seats across corporations, including eight in Mumbai. It swept virtually all the Muslim-dominated belts, displacing the Congress as the first choice of the community and Samajwadi Party as the second choice. The AIMIM's presence is likely to grow in Maharashtra, particularly if the BJP pursues its Hindutva agenda blatantly. It will be interesting to see how the AIMIM plays the game outside of its traditional base of Hyderabad. Clearly, Maharashtra politics will continue to churn in the coming months as the BJP prepares to consolidate its gains in the runup to the 2029 Lok Sabha and assembly elections.

INDIA IS TRULY MAKING ITS OWN DECISIONS

- Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

For any democratic nation, strategic autonomy is not just the technical jargon of foreign policy, but a matter of survival. When major decisions are driven by external pressure, fear of sanctions, or concerns about global image building, the nation gradually becomes more of a "managed partner" than a policymaker. A truly strong India will be one that engages with the US, Russia, China, and Europe—all while taking the final decisions on its own interests. Applause, headlines, and photo-ops are momentary; but an independent stand in favor of national interest determines a country's long-term dignity. A nation's strength isn't measured by its military budget, speeches on international platforms, or photographs taken with foreign leaders. True strength lies in its ability to make decisions independently in accordance with its national interests. India today presents itself as a "strong nation," a "world leader," and an "emerging global power," but the fundamental question is: is India truly making its own decisions, or is it adjusting its actions to cues from global powers? Foreign policy is the clearest reflection of a nation's self-respect and sovereignty; it determines which countries it will befriend, which it will distance itself from, and on what terms it will participate in the global order. For decades, India, under the guise of non-alignment and later strategic autonomy, conveyed the message that it was not a permanent adherent of any power bloc, but an independent player seeking partnerships in accordance with its own interests. During the Cold War, India maintained ties with both the United States and the Soviet Union, yet maintained a distance from formal military alliances; this stance made it an ideological inspiration for newly independent Asian and African countries. In the new century, especially in recent years, this balance is under greater pressure than ever—whether it is the growing rivalry between the United States and China or the polarized world following the Russia-Ukraine War. Iran's Chabahar port was not just a trading base for India, but also a gateway for direct access to West Asia, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan and counterbalancing China's dominance of Gwadar and the Belt and Road Initiative. Following US sanctions and the subsequent lifting of the Chabahar waiver, India's commitment to the project steadily weakened; recent reports indicate that India has moved to limit its long-term presence at the port. The real question here is not technical, but political: did India take an independent stand in keeping with its long-term geostrategic interests, or did the fear of angering Washington force it to forgo viable options? For India, purchasing crude oil from Russia at a discounted rate is a matter of energy security and economic prudence, not merely diplomatic obstinacy. Despite Western sanctions, India initially signaled clearly that it would choose energy sources in accordance with its national interests, and this logic led to a sharp surge in oil imports from Russia. Over time, "moral preaching" and hints of indirect sanctions from the US and European countries created additional pressure; some large corporate importers reduced their purchases of Russian oil and shifted toward pro-Western alternatives, even though overall Russian oil imports remained high. A strong nation is one that is driven by the economic interests and energy security of its citizens, not by the "image management" or narratives of other countries—otherwise, "strategic autonomy" gives way to "strategic hesitation." The most dangerous trend is that applause and headlines on international platforms are becoming a substitute for decision-making autonomy. Speeches in foreign parliaments, laudatory headlines in the global media, or a "pat on the back" from a superpower are being presented as certificates of national honor, while recent history, such as Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan, is replete with examples of how quickly external support can change direction. Military and security decisions are the last line of sovereignty for any democracy; if concerns about "someone else's approval" or "global message" become dominant here, it is not just policy but independence that is at stake. At a time like this, the true test of a democratic society is whether it can provide space for debate without labeling those who ask critical questions about foreign policy and security strategy as unpatriotic. In a democracy, dissent is not a weakness, but a fundamental condition of public control; patriotism does not mean acquiescence to power, but the courage to speak the truth in the national interest. The true test of "self-reliant India" isn't how many mobile phones or cars are manufactured in the country, but how independent India can make decisions on its foreign policy, energy options, and strategic partnerships. India stands at a crossroads: one path could lead it to maintaining relations with the US, Russia, China, and Europe, yet bowing to none; the other could transform it into an influential but dependent ally, awaiting a response from Washington or another capital before every major decision. A strong nation is one that stands its ground rather than seeks applause; India's true test in the coming years will be whether it chooses to be a "managed ally" or truly stands as a sovereign, self-confident power.

Is Vijay's TVK Reacting Like A Fan Club Or A Political Party?

The conspicuous silence of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) over the Jana Nayagan controversy has triggered uneasy questions in Tamil Nadu's political circles. Is Vijay's party behaving like an extension of his fan club rather than a serious political outfit? Or is this silence a calculated move to keep its options open with the powers that be in Delhi? These questions have gained urgency as actor Vijay faces a second round of questioning by the CBI and his much-hyped film Jana Nayagan remains stuck between the courts and the CBFC. The coincidence of these developments has only sharpened scrutiny of TVK's response or the lack of it. There has been no strong statement questioning the delay in the film's release. No sharp attack on the CBFC. No protest over the non-release of what is projected to be Vijay's final film. Not a single TVK spokesperson has participated in television debates on the Jana Nayagan issue. The party's official stance has been one of studied restraint, explained away with a familiar refrain: "We trust the judicial process." Beyond routine attacks on the DMK and broad denunciations of communal politics, largely echoing Vijay's speeches, TVK has avoided press conferences, major political interventions, or demonstrations of strategic depth. Even in the immediate aftermath of the tragic Karur stampede, the party retreated into a cocoon. While the DMK set the initial narrative, squarely blaming Vijay and TVK for the tragedy that claimed 41 lives, no party spokesperson stepped forward to counter it. Eventually, TVK regrouped, pushed back legally, and went to the Supreme Court, forcing the DMK to respond. But in a political climate defined by power asymmetries, this recourse to Delhi also exposed TVK to the perception of vulnerability to the Centre and the BJP. This marks a shift. While Vijay's early rallies attacked the BJP's communal politics as forcefully as the DMK's dynasty and corruption, post-stampede his primary adversary appears to be the DMK. Though he continues to oppose the BJP ideologically, his tone towards the ruling party at the centre has softened perceptibly. Ironically, the DMK's ferocious response after the stampede may have backfired. Its relentless attacks on Vijay exposed its nervousness about his political potential and may have nudged him closer to Delhi's power corridors. Since then, subtle signals of support have emerged from both the Congress and the BJP, an unusual convergence that has not gone unnoticed. TVK has undeniably evolved in some respects. Senior leaders such as Sengottayan have joined from the AIADMK. Electoral strategy committees have been formed. Journalists have been brought in as spokespersons. Yet, when confronted with crises like Karur or Jana Nayagan, the party's instinct remains the same: political silence outside the courtroom. A narrative of Vijay being targeted by the Centre through the CBFC is steadily building, but it is the Congress that is articulating this argument, not TVK itself. For a party aspiring to power, this is a strange abdication of political space. Politics is about demonstrating power at the right moment. For a fledgling party in a state dominated by deeply entrenched Dravidian organisations, this is not optional, it is essential. Vijay has repeatedly demonstrated fan power. What his party has yet to demonstrate is political power: grassroots mobilisation, issue-based agitation, and consistent public engagement. This gap raises an uncomfortable question: does TVK lack a genuine grassroots structure? The difference between a fan base and an ideologically committed cadre is fundamental. A fan reacts to the star. A political worker reacts to issues, mobilises sentiment, and converts it into votes. Cadres understand local problems and work the ground. Fans do not.History offers clear lessons. MGR succeeded because he understood and embedded himself in Dravidian political ideology and organisation. Jayalalithaa strengthened that structure. NT Rama Rao rode on an anti-Congress wave and fan fervour to power in 1984, but the Telugu Desam Party learnt and built political structures after its defeat in 1989 and Chandrababu Naidu later built a durable organisation. In Tamil Nadu, Vijayakanth's DMDK proved to be a third political force with an 8 per cent vote share in its first election in 2006 because it had a strong organisational base, something other actors, including Kamal Hassan, could not achieve. On issues ranging from Thiruparankundram to broader governance debates, TVK has rarely taken categorical, aggressive positions. Its headquarters has yet to emerge as a fountainhead of ideas, strategy, or political direction. The party still revolves overwhelmingly around Vijay's star power, an unhealthy dependence on electoral politics. Even a respectable vote share may not translate into real impact without committed cadres on the ground. TVK has also been ambiguous on alliances. Smaller parties may join for a boost from Vijay's fan base, but that may strengthen the allies more than TVK itself. The party urgently needs to demonstrate grassroots mettle and political mobilisation, and it needs to do so soon. Otherwise, the question will linger: is Vijay's political project still a fan club struggling to evolve into a party? Whether TVK can make that transition before the elections may well determine not just its future politics, but the course Dravidian politics will take.

European Nations slam Trump's 10 percent tariff threat over Greenland

Berlin: The eight European countries targeted by US President Donald Trump for a 10 per cent tariff for opposing American control of Greenland blasted the move Sunday, January 18, warning that the American leader's threats "undermine transatlantic relations and risk a dangerous downward spiral." In an unusual and very strong joint statement coming from major US allies, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Finland on Sunday said troops sent to Greenland for the Danish military training exercise "Arctic Endurance" pose "no threat to anyone." Trump's Saturday announcement sets up a potentially dangerous test of US partnerships in Europe. The Republican president appeared to indicate that he was using the tariffs as leverage to force talks over the status of Greenland, a semiautonomous territory of NATO ally Denmark that he regards as critical to US national security. "We stand in full solidarity with the Kingdom of Denmark and the people of Greenland," the group said. "Building on the process begun last week, we stand ready to engage in a dialogue based on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity that we stand firmly behind. Tariff threats undermine transatlantic relations and risk a dangerous downward spiral." There are immediate questions about how the White House could try to implement the tariffs because the EU is a single economic zone in terms of trading. It was unclear, too, how Trump could act under US law, though he could cite emergency economic powers that are currently subject to a US Supreme Court challenge. European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said China and Russia will benefit from the divisions between the US and Europe. She added in a post on social media: "If Greenland's security is at risk, we can address this inside NATO. Tariffs risk making Europe and the United States poorer and undermine our shared prosperity." Trump's move was also panned domestically. US Sen. Mark Kelly, a former US Navy pilot and Democrat who represents Arizona, posted that Trump's threatened tariffs on US allies would make Americans "pay more to try to get territory we don't need." "Troops from European countries are arriving in Greenland to defend the territory from us. Let that sink in," he wrote on social media. "The damage this President is doing to our reputation and our relationships is growing, making us less safe. If something doesn't change we will be on our own with adversaries and enemies in every direction." 'These tariffs will hurt us' Six of the countries targeted are part of the 27-member EU, which operates as a single economic zone in terms of trading. It was not immediately clear if Trump's tariffs would impact the entire bloc. EU envoys scheduled emergency talks for Sunday evening to determine a potential response. The tariff announcement even drew blowback from Trump's populist allies in Europe. Italy's right-wing premier, Giorgia Meloni, considered one of Trump's closest allies on the continent, said Sunday she had spoken to him about the tariffs, which she described as "a mistake." The deployment to Greenland of small numbers of troops by some European countries was misunderstood by Washington, Meloni told reporters. She said the deployment was not a move against the US but aimed to provide security against "other actors" that she didn't name. French President Emmanuel Macron wrote on social media that "no intimidation or threats will influence us, whether in Ukraine, Greenland or anywhere else in the world when we are faced with such situations." He added that "tariff threats are unacceptable and have no place in this context." Jordan Bardella, president of Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally party in France and also a European Parliament lawmaker, posted that the EU should suspend last year's tariff deal with the US, describing Trump's threats as "commercial blackmail." Trump also achieved the rare feat of uniting Britain's main political parties — including the hard-right Reform UK party — all of whom criticised the tariff threat.

Tech Mahindra on WEF list of organisations making AI work in real world

Davos: Indian IT major Tech Mahindra on Monday made it to a list of organisations leading the real-world AI adoption, alongside global giants like AMD, Siemens and PepsiCo. Produced by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with Accenture, the report on MINDS (Meaningful, Intelligent, Novel Deployable Solutions) organisations listed 20 pioneers driving high-impact AI solutions in disease detection, energy optimization, supply-chain resilience and more. It analysed hundreds of cases in more than 30 countries and over 20 industries (including healthcare, energy and infrastructure). An independent Impact Council of leading executives and experts identified clear common patterns among the most promising cases. These included embedding AI into strategic decision-making, redesigning work to strengthen human-AI collaboration, strengthening data foundations, modernizing technology platforms and supporting all of this with responsible governance. Releasing the report during its annual meeting 2026, the WEF said it reveals successful AI stories that are already delivering measurable performance gains and how pioneering organizations are moving beyond experimentation to achieve impact at scale. As investment accelerates and expectations rise, the findings highlight a growing divide between companies that have built the capabilities to scale AI and those still struggling to deploy it effectively, showing how this gap can be bridged through lessons drawn from real-world use cases, it added. Tech Mahindra made the cut for its work in 'social and public good' area, with the WEF saying that the company scaled multilingual LLMs serving 3.8 million monthly queries with 92 per cent accuracy, enabling inclusive digital services across the Global South. The WEF listed AMD and Synopsys (USA), EXL Services (USA) and KPMG & SAP in the cohort for information technology category, while Chinese banking giant ICBC made it to the list in the financial services category. Hitachi Rail (Japan), Fujitsu (Japan), Lenovo (China) and Cambridge Industries (USA) were included in engineering, construction and infrastructure category.

SMALL CAP PORTFOLIO EXPOSURE TO MICROCAPS LIMITED TO ~2%

Mumbai, 19th January 2025: According to a study by Ventura, portfolio exposure of small cap funds beyond the market cap rank of 1000—or microcaps—remains limited to ~2%. As of November 2025, the small-cap fund category manages ~?3.7 lakh crore across 32 schemes. The analysis shows that approximately 83% of small-cap fund portfolios are invested within the top 750 stocks, with the core small-cap segment—comprising stocks ranking 251-750 by market cap—accounting for ~63%. Allocation to stocks ranked 751–1000 stands at ~7%, about 20% is allocated to large and mid-caps, and about ~6% is held in cash and debt for liquidity purposes.

Small cap but large growth

Interestingly, small-cap market capitalization has expanded sharply in the past five years. Companies in the lower deciles of the listed universe have especially exhibited the fastest compounding in median market capitalization. For instance, between June 2020 to June 2025, the 251st rank has increased in market capitalization by~4.4x, the 500th by ~6.1x, and 750th by ~7.3x. Access to niche sectors The study highlights that sectors in India, such as abrasives, business services, and media & entertainment are largely unavailable through large- or mid-cap stocks. For example, Computer Age Management Services Ltd. and Central

Depository Services (India) Ltd. sit within business services, while PVR Inox and Sun TV Network Ltd. represent media & entertainment.

Perception problem

Allocation to small-caps is also skewed by perception. "Many stocks perceived as large- and mid-cap are actually small-cap stocks for fund managers as per AMFI classification," says Juzer Gabajiwala, Director at Ventura. For example, familiar companies—including CDSL, Gillette, NBCC, PNB Housing Finance, Wockhardt, East India Hotels, Angel One, and Tata Chemicals—are officially classified as small caps even though investors often think of them as mid-cap–like.

Shift in investor behavior

As per the study, investor behaviour does not always follow short-term performance. Between December 2024 and November 2025, small-cap funds delivered negative returns of roughly –2.4 percent, yet the category saw net inflows of ?53,165 crore. Instead of pulling back, investors continued to allocate more. This suggests that flows are being driven by long-term conviction rather than short-term price movements. "By nature, smallcaps are volatile and at times risky. However, the category has evolved, portfolio construction has become more disciplined, and the opportunity set continues to broaden. Patience is the key for any portfolio investing and to create "alpha" one must have smallcaps in the portfolio," Gabajiwala concludes.

About Ventura :

Ventura is a leading omnichannel trading and investment platform with an extensive network of branches, sub-brokers, and digital channels. Established in 1994, Ventura is headquartered in Mumbai, India, and is a SEBI-registered financial service provider. As a member of various esteemed regulatory bodies including NSE, BSE, MCX, NCDEX, NSDL, and CDSL, Ventura offers a comprehensive range of services including online stock trading, derivatives trading, mutual funds, Demat accounts, portfolio management services, and customised investment planning support.

Award winning longitude 77 expands footprint with hyderabad launch

The globally recognized Indian single malt celebrates Hyderabad's rich cultural heritage through an exclusive unveiling in Taj Falaknuma Palace 19 January 2025: Longitude 77, the Indian single malt from Pernod Ricard India, successfully launched in Hyderabad, captivating Hyderabad's discerning connoisseurs with its rich blend of Indian craftsmanship and global expertise. The launch was celebrated through an exclusive event at The Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad, offering guests an unparalleled experience of authentic, contemporary Indian luxury. Globally recognized for its exceptional quality, Longitude 77 has earned prestigious accolades, including Gold at the London Spirits Competition, The Global Spirit Masters by The Spirits Business and Monde Selection along with a Bronze at The International Wine & Spirits Competition. These

awards reflect the brand's unwavering commitment to excellence and its growing stature among the world's finest whiskies. At the heart of Longitude 77 is a legacy of extraordinary craftsmanship. Brought to life by the master whisky makers behind iconic global names like Chivas, Glenlivet, and Jameson, Longitude 77 draws from over two centuries of whisky-making heritage, infusing generations of expertise, innovation, and artistry into every single bottle. In the words of renowned whisky expert Jim Murray, "Longitude 77 displays clarity, balance, and complexity with effortless finesse - a true reflection of refined craftsmanship. The liquid is of gold standard; I would have scored it 94 points in my Whisky Bible. It stands shoulder to shoulder with some of the finest Scotch blends and single malts I've ever tasted. The maturation in the foothills of Nashik, expertly timed and influenced by natural temperature shifts, has resulted in something remarkable. This whisky is a testament to India's emergence as a serious player in the global whisky landscape showcasing the country's ability to craft spirits of outstanding depth, quality, and distinction." Mahesh Patil, Master Blender of Longitude 77 expressed, "Crafting Longitude 77 has been a journey of passion and precision, drawing upon centuries of distilling expertise while celebrating India's unique terroir. Each batch represents our commitment to creating a world-class single malt that truly captures the essence of India. The cool, dry climate of Dindori Nashik, combined with our meticulous double maturation process in American Bourbon barrels and wine casks, creates the distinctive smoothness and complexity that defines Longitude 77.

MAKEMYTRIP INTRODUCES WOMEN-CENTRIC SAFETY AND ASSURANCE SIGNALS IN STAY AND BUS BOOKINGS

Gurugram, January 19, 2026: MakeMyTrip, India's leading online travel company, is leveraging technology and user-generated content to help women travellers make more confident choices across accommodation and intercity bus bookings. The approach is informed by behavioural signals observed on the platform, which indicate a more deliberate review journey among women travellers, including higher click-through on reviews, greater time spent on maps and street view, and deeper engagement with guest-uploaded photos before confirming a booking. These patterns are reinforced by booking behaviour. Women are booking 50 percent more stays at least 15 days in advance and show a 16 percent higher preference for premium and branded properties compared to men. This trend becomes more pronounced as women travellers move from Tier 1 to Tier 3 cities, where branded stays also function as a signal of assurance. On intercity bus routes, solo women travellers also tend to prefer seating arrangements that place them alongside other women rather than in mixed proximity. When the platform detects that a woman may be planning a stay, key cues surface more prominently. Ratings submitted by women are highlighted. AI led summaries bring forward cues such as staff behaviour and location safety during the stay search process. Additionally, women specific amenity indicators such as CCTV, door eye, door chains and full-length mirrors are surfaced more clearly to help travellers understand the safeguards in place at the property. Travellers can also use the Street View option already available on the platform to visually assess the surrounding roads and approach to the property before making a decision.

MagickHome Opens Its Largest Experience Hub in Bangalore; Inaugurated by Rukmini Vasanth

Bangalore, January 2026: MagickHome, a modular home interior brand unveiled its flagship Interiors Experience Hub in HSR Layout, Bangalore, inaugurated by acclaimed Kannada film actress Rukmini Vasanth. Spanning 6,200 sq ft across two floors, the hub is MagickHome's largest and most immersive destination, designed to completely reimagine how homeowners discover, experience, and choose interiors. Adding star power and strong cultural resonance to the occasion, Rukmini inaugurated the space, celebrating the growing intersection of design, lifestyle, and modern urban living in Bangalore. Walking into the Experience Hub feels like stepping into a real home. Visitors can explore a full-scale 2BHK mock-up, moving seamlessly from an award-winning island kitchen to a thoughtfully integrated living and study area, a guest bedroom with a sliding wardrobe and sofa bed, and a master bedroom lined with floor-to-ceiling wardrobes. The space also showcases MagickHome's patented, child-safe PU finishes, premium acrylics, and a wide range of laminations, opening up over 50,000 design permutations for personalised interiors. Elevating the experience

further is the Design Experience Zone, featuring the Pivoting Panel Matrix and Fabric Library, where customers can touch, compare, and visualise materials in real scale and lighting - turning complex choices into confident decisions. Speaking about the launch, Indrakumar Pathmanathan, Chairman, MagickHome, said, "MagickHome has always believed that great interiors begin with great understanding. This Experience Hub is a physical expression of that belief. It brings together design, materials, and real-life spaces under one roof, so customers can truly see, touch, and feel what their future home can be. Bangalore felt like the most natural city for this next chapter. It appreciates design, values quality, and is constantly evolving." On the customer experience and business vision, Ganesen Viswanathan, Vice President, MagickHome, added, "Today's customer does not want to be overwhelmed by choices. They want guidance, transparency, and an engaging process. This store is built to do exactly that. From our 2BHK mockup to the Design Experience Zone, every element is designed to simplify decision-making while elevating the experience. Bangalore is a mature, design-aware market, and this hub allows us to serve it at scale while setting the foundation for our future growth." Speaking about the hub, Rukmini Vasanth, Indian actress, said, "What I loved about this space is how real it feels. You're not just looking at samples and displays but actually walking through a home, understanding how the designs fit in everyday lives. It makes the process of planning your home feel simple, personal and very exciting" With this launch, MagickHome positions Bangalore not just as a market, but as a partner in its design journey. The hub blends thoughtful design, global quality standards, and a deeply human approach to home-making.

HIGH-SPEED TRAIN CRASH IN SPAIN KILLS AT LEAST 39

At least 39 people have died in a train collision in southern Spain and dozens more have been injured in the country's worst rail crash in more than a decade, Spain's Civil Guard has said. Carriages on a Madrid-bound train derailed and crossed over to the opposite tracks, colliding with an oncoming train in Adamuz on Sunday evening. Four hundred passengers and staff were onboard both trains, the rail networks said. Emergency services treated 122 people, with 43, including four children, still in hospital. Of those, 12 adults and one child are in intensive care. Spanish Transport Minister Óscar Puente said the death toll "is not yet final", as officials launched an investigation. Puente described the incident as "extremely strange". All the railway experts consulted by the government "are extremely baffled by the accident", he told reporters in Madrid. Follow live updates Rail network operator Adif said the collision happened at 19:45 local time (18:45 GMT), about an hour after the train left Málaga heading north to Madrid, when it derailed on a straight stretch of track near the city of Córdoba. The force of the crash pushed the carriages of the second train into an embankment, Puente said. He added that most of those killed and injured were in the front carriages of the second train, which was travelling south from Madrid to Huelva. The type of train involved in the crash was a Freccia 1000, which can reach top speeds of 400 km/h (250 mph), a spokesperson for the Italian rail company Ferrovie dello Stato told Reuters news agency. Rescue teams said the twisted wreckage of the trains made it difficult to recover people trapped inside the carriages. Córdoba fire chief Francisco Carmona told Spanish public broadcaster RTVE: "We have even had to remove a dead person to be able to reach someone alive. It is hard, tricky work." Salvador Jimenez, a journalist with RTVE who was on one of the trains, said the impact felt like an "earthquake". "I was in the first carriage. There was a moment when it felt like an earthquake and the train had indeed derailed," Jimenez said. Footage from the scene appears to show some train carriages had tipped over on their sides. Rescue workers can be seen scaling the train to pull people out of the lopsided train doors and windows. A Madrid-bound passenger, José, told public broadcaster Canal Sur: "There were people and screaming, calling for doctors." All rail services between Madrid and Andalusia were suspended following the accident and are expected to remain closed all day on Monday. Iryo, a private rail company that operated the journey from Málaga, said around 300 passengers were on board the train that first derailed, while the other train – operated by the state-funded firm Renfe – had around 100 passengers. The official cause is not yet known. An investigation is not expected to determine what happened for at least a month, according to the transport minister. Spain's Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, said the country will endure a "night of deep pain". The mayor of Adamuz, Rafael Moreno, was one of the first people on the scene of the accident, describing it as "a nightmare". King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia said they were following news of the disaster "with great concern". "We extend our most heartfelt condolences to the relatives and loved ones of the dead, as well as our love and wishes for a swift recovery to the injured," the royal palace said on X.

Ghana arrests Nigerians accused of running cyber-crime networks

Ghana's security forces have arrested nine Nigerians suspected of coordinating a host of cyber-crime activities from makeshift offices in and around the capital, Accra. Forty-four others, believed to be victims brought to Ghana from Nigeria under false pretences, have also been detained and handed over to the immigration authority. During the two-day intelligence-led operation, raids uncovered 62 laptops, 52 mobile phones and two pump-action guns, the authorities have said. There is a growing trend of foreigners being lured to Ghana under the pretext of lucrative work. They are then put in gated compounds, have their documents confiscated and are compelled to engage in cyber-crime. They often work on romance scams, where a victim is encouraged to send money to a fictitious partner who they believe is real, or business email compromise, where someone poses as an employer and gets people to sends funds or sensitive data.

Japan PM Takaichi calls snap election three months after taking office

Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi will dissolve parliament on Friday, paving the way for an early election on 8 February that she hopes will translate her strong public polling into a big majority in the lower house. It was an "extremely weighty decision" that would "determine Japan's course together with the people", Takaichi told a news conference in Tokyo. The country's first female leader and her cabinet have enjoyed high public support since taking office last October. But her party lags behind in polls and the move is risky. It's Japan's second general election in as many years and will test appetite for her plans to boost public spending when cost-of-living is top of voters' minds. Having been elected as prime minister by lawmakers on 21 October, Takaichi is now seeking a public mandate in the House of Representatives, the more powerful house in Japan. Since the day she took office, Takaichi said, she has been "constantly concerned that the Takaichi cabinet has not yet been tested in an election where the public chooses the government". "Is Sanae Takaichi fit to be prime minister? I wanted to ask the sovereign people to decide," she told the news conference. Campaigning for the vote to elect the 465 lower house MPs, who serve four-year terms, starts on 27 January. Her Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has governed Japan almost continuously since 1955. It currently has 199 seats - including three held by its independent partners - in the House of Representatives, the most of any party. The LDP's coalition with the Japan Innovation party gives it a fragile majority, with just enough seats to govern. A protege of former conservative PM Shinzo Abe and self-professed admirer of Margaret Thatcher, Takaichi is known as Japan's "Iron Lady". She came into office promising an economic upturn after years of stagnation.

Thirteen schoolchildren killed after bus collides with lorry in South Africa

Man seriously injured in Sydney's third shark attack in two days

Three shark attacks have been reported in Sydney in a little over 24 hours, leaving at least two people seriously injured, according to local authorities. A man was taken to hospital in critical condition after being injured at Manly beach on Monday evening, New South Wales Police said in a statement. Hours earlier, an 11-year-old surfer had to be assisted off Sydney's Dee Why Beach after a suspected shark bit his surfboard, with the local council urging swimmers and surfers to be cautious. The first incident saw a 12-year-old boy taken to hospital with critical injuries after he was attacked by a large shark while swimming in Sydney Harbour on Sunday afternoon, police said. The boy and his group of friends were jumping off a six-metre rock ledge at Shark Beach, in the Sydney suburb of Vaucluse, when the attack happened on Sunday. Despite its name, shark attacks are rare at Shark Beach, a popular swimming spot. The boy was pulled out of the water by his friends before rescuers arrived. Police said it was their actions that had given him a shot at survival, local media reported. He is currently in intensive care. "The actions of his mates... have been nothing but brave. [It was] a gallant recovery," said Joseph McNulty, who leads the state of New South Wales' marine area command. "Very confronting injuries for those boys to see, but I suppose that's mateship." Marine police arrived to a "horrendous scene", McNulty told reporters. They pulled the boy onto a police speedboat and used tourniquets to try and stop the bleeding from his legs. They also tried to resuscitate the boy as the boat made its way to an ambulance waiting by a wharf. Authorities believe the boy was attacked by a bull shark, an aggressive species found in warm, shallow waters. Many experts consider bull sharks among the most dangerous sharks in the world.

SWISS DEADLY FIRE BAR OWNERS' LAWYERS CONDEMN 'VINDICTIVENESS'

The lawyers of the owners of a Swiss bar where a deadly fire broke out on New Year's Eve killing 40 people and injuring 116 have broken their silence to criticise "lies" about their clients. Jessica and Jacques Moretti were "devastated", the lawyers told local media, but denied being aware of any dangers at their venue. "There is a sort of public vindictiveness directed against them," one of the three lawyers, Yaël Hayat, said. Initial findings from the investigation suggest the fire began as sparklers attached to champagne bottles ignited soundproof foaming that lined the ceiling of the basement of Le Constellation bar in the popular ski resort of Crans-Montana. Authorities have acknowledged that the bar had not undergone safety checks for five years. Most of the victims of the fire were young - eight were under the age of 16 - and many are being treated in hospital for severe burns. Many stories about the couple, the venue they managed, as well as their past have circulated in the local media since the fire, increasing pressure on the authorities as they investigate the accident and prosecute the owners. In an interview with Tribune de Geneve, the lawyers said the couple wanted to "restore the truth". Hayat said reports her client Jessica had left the burning building with cash from the register were a lie, telling BFMTV: "In no way did she leave the scene in a hurry; she stayed there to help and support the injured." Patrick Michod, representing Jacques Moretti, said: "When you run an establishment and a tragedy like this occurs, you feel responsible. Now, the major question in this case is the question of criminal responsibility, which is obviously not the same thing as the feelings one may have as the operator."

US believes its power matters more than international law

The US is acting with impunity and believes its power matters more than international law, the head of the UN has told the BBC. Speaking to BBC Radio 4's Today programme, António Guterres said Washington's "clear conviction" was that multilateral solutions were irrelevant. What mattered, he continued, was the "exercise of the power and influence of the United States and sometimes in this respect by the norms of international law". His comments come weeks after the US struck Venezuela and seized its president - and in the context of Donald Trump's repeated threats to annex Greenland. Guterres said he believed the founding principles of the UN - including the equality of member states - were now under threat. President Trump has previously been scathing in his criticism of the United Nations. He used his address at last September's General Assembly to question its very purpose, claiming he had "ended seven unendable wars" on his own and the UN "did not even try to help in any of them". "Later I realised that the UN wasn't there for us," he said. Presented with this damning assessment, Guterres admitted his organisation was struggling to make members abide by the international laws laid out in the UN Charter. The UN was "extremely engaged" in solving major global conflicts, he insisted. "But the UN has no leverage - the big powers have stronger leverage. He questioned whether that extra leverage was being used to produce real and enduring solutions to those conflicts, or just quick fixes. "There is a big difference between the two things," he noted. Guterres also said his organisation needed reform to tackle "dramatic problems and challenges" facing its 193 members. "There are those that believe the power of law should be replaced by the law of power," the UN chief said. "Indeed, when one sees the present policy of the United States, there is a clear conviction that multilateral solutions are not relevant and that what matters is the exercise of the power and the influence of the United States and sometimes in this respect by the norms of international law". He suggested the UN Security Council - designed to maintain international peace and security - no longer represented the world and was "ineffective".

Trump links Greenland dispute to not getting Nobel Peace Prize

US President Donald Trump has said he no longer feels obliged to think only of peace after he did not receive the Nobel Peace Prize, as he again repeated his demand for control of Greenland. In a message to Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, Trump blamed the country for not giving him the prize. In his reply to Trump, Støre explained that an independent committee, not the government of Norway, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October to Venezuela's opposition leader María Corina Machado. CBS News, the BBC's US partner, confirmed the message and its contents. "Considering your Country decided not to give me the Nobel Peace Prize for having stopped 8 Wars PLUS, I no longer feel an obligation to think purely of Peace, although it will always be predominant, but can now think about what is good and proper' for the US", Trump said in the message obtained by US media. "The World is not secure unless we have Complete and Total Control of Greenland," he added. Prime Minister Støre said he had received the text message on Sunday in response to a text he and Finland's president Alexander Stubb had sent to Trump. Støre said they had conveyed opposition to proposed tariff increases over the Greenland dispute, and pointed to the need to de-escalate, proposing a three-way phone call the same day. Trump has made no secret of his desire to be awarded the annual prize. He has increasingly insisted that the US needs to take over Greenland for national security reasons. The sparsely-populated but resource-rich Arctic island is well placed for early warning systems in the event of missile attacks and for monitoring vessels in the region. Trump has repeated that he wants the US to buy Greenland and has not ruled out using military force against a member of the Nato security alliance to take it. Over the weekend, he said he would impose a 10% tariff on goods from eight Nato allies starting in February if they oppose his proposed takeover, and threatened to raise it to 25% by June. In his message to Støre, Trump said Denmark cannot protect Greenland from Russia or China, and questioned "why do they have a "right of ownership" anyway? There are no written documents, it's only that a boat landed there hundreds of years ago, but we had boats landing there, also". "I have done more for NATO than any other person since its founding, and now, NATO should do something for the United States," he concluded. UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said on Monday that any decision about the future status of Greenland "belongs to the people of Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark alone", and called the use of tariffs against allies "wrong". Danish Defence Minister Troels Lund Poulsen and Greenlandic Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Motzfeldt are due to meet on Monday with Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte. Last week, the Danish and Greenlandic governments, together with Nato allies, decided to increase military presence and exercise activity in the Arctic and the North Atlantic. Several European states sent small numbers of military personnel to Greenland in a so-called reconnaissance mission. As Trump's recent message said, he has claimed to have ended eight wars since his second term as president began last year. The White House has previously listed these as conflicts between Israel and Hamas, Israel and Iran, Pakistan and India, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Thailand and Cambodia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Egypt and Ethiopia, and Serbia and Kosovo. BBC Verify has examined Trump's claim which include a number of "wars" which had lasted just days, although were the result of long-standing tensions, and in some cases – for example Egypt and Ethiopia - there was no fighting to end.

King's Out There: New Zealand Media Manager's Remark On Virat Kohli Goes Viral

Indian cricket team star batter Virat Kohli broke multiple records as he slammed a brilliant century during the 3rd ODI encounter against New Zealand in Indore on Sunday. Chasing a mammoth target of 338, India found themselves in deep trouble after losing 4 wickets before reaching the 100-run mark. However, Virat stitched together useful partnerships with NItish Kumar Reddy and Harshit Rana to keep the hosts in the game. While the target proved to be too much for India, renowned sports presenter Jatin Sapru revealed how Kohli's presence kept the New Zealand camp worried despite being in a great position. "Harshit Rana had just walked out to bat with Virat Kohli, when New Zealand's media manager, who is a good friend, I texted him saying 'Something special could be around the corner'. Guess his reply? 'King's out there in the middle. Not out of it yet.' Virat Kohli has a global reputation which he has earned over the last decade and a half. New Zealand was 160 runs ahead, needed just four wickets, but their supporters still aren't thinking about it because Virat was around," Sapru said Meanwhile, ormer India all-rounder Irfan Pathan lauded the star batter Virat Kohli after his 54th ODI century in the third and final ODI of the recently-concluded three-match series against New Zealand on Sunday at Indore's Holkar Stadium, and called Kohli India's best ODI batter. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Pathan praised Kohli's consistency and longevity, noting that for over a decade, from 2013 to 2026, he has consistently been regarded as India's best ODI batter. He highlighted that Kohli has scored runs under multiple captains, including MS Dhoni, himself, Rohit Sharma, and now Shubman Gill. "Virat Kohli once again showed why he is such a great player. Back in 2013, when I was also playing, people used to say Virat Kohli is the best batter in the Indian team currently. In 2016, people also used to call him the best batter in the Indian team. Now, 10 years later in 2026, people are still calling Virat Kohli the best batter in India's ODI side. There's no doubt about it. He scored runs under MS Dhoni's captaincy, under his own captaincy, under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, and now under young Shubman Gill's captaincy too," Pathan said. Pathan also praised Virat Kohli's enduring fitness and consistency, calling him a "Run Machine" and noting that he continues to score centuries."

GAUTAM GAMBHIR FACES SOCIAL MEDIA FLAK AS NEW ZEALAND STUN INDIA AT HOME

India head coach Gautam Gambhir once again became a subject of intense scrutiny on social media as Shubman Gill & Co suffered a 1-2 series defeat against New Zealand. In the deciding third ODI on Sunday, India were made to chase another gigantic target of 338, courtesy of Daryl Mitchell and Glenn Phillips' hundreds. Despite Virat Kohli scoring yet another hundred, India faltered in the chase. Though there remain many factors behind the series defeat, what happened against the Kiwis was an all-round collapse. Coach Gambhir, whose selection and strategic decisions have been questioned at various intervals since he took over the head coach's role from Rahul Dravid, became a subject of intense criticism on social media. Many fans even unleashed memes, trolling Gambhir. The ODI series loss against New Zealand at home isn't a one-off. For fans, this loss is not an isolated incident but part of a troubling trend under head coach Gambhir. Since the former opening batter took over in mid-2024, the national team has suffered several unprecedented setbacks: The 2024 Test Whitewash: New Zealand became the first team to sweep India 3-0 in a home Test series. ODI Slump in Sri Lanka: India lost an ODI series to Sri Lanka for the first time in 27 years shortly after Gambhir took over.

"Go To School And Learn Captaincy": Ex-Pakistan Star's Brutal Message To Shubman Gill

Former Pakistan cricket team star Basit Ali delivered a brutal verdict on Shubman Gill's captaincy after India suffered an ODI series loss against New Zealand on Sunday. During the 3rd ODI clash in Indore, New Zealand slammed 337/8 and despite Virat Kohli scoring a brilliant century, the hosts slumped to a 41-run loss. While Kohli looked in tremendous form, the likes of Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul failed to impress and despite late fireworks from Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy, the total proved to be a bit too much for Gill and co. Following criticism for not being 'proactive' on the field, Gill was targeted by Basit in his analysis as he said that the India captain failed to make effective decisions on the field. "Credit goes to the Indian captain, Mr. Gill and his captaincy. Even India was without Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah. Shami, they aren't keen on picking. India's strength has come down to Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. Rahul scored in two matches, but he got out cheaply today. What were the rest doing?" asked Basit on the YouTube Show 'The Game Plan'. India took a 1-0 lead in the series but ended up losing the next two matches due to disappointing performances from the bowling unit. In the 3rd ODI, the hosts had the early advantage with two quick wickets but Glenn Phillips and Daryl Mitchell took the game away from them. Basit highlighted the errors committed by Team India in the 3rd ODI and sarcastically commented that Gill should "go to school and learn captaincy". "When New Zealand almost chased down a 300-plus target in the first ODI, they had set their goal.

Harshit Rana Receives Stunning Praise From His Big Critic: "New Zealand Were Scared"

Former Indian cricket team batter Kris Srikkanth was all praise for all-rounder Harshit Rana and even claimed that New Zealand were scared when he was batting during the 3rd ODI encounter in Indore on Sunday. Although the hosts slumped to a 41-run defeat, Harshit stunned everyone with his aggressive batting and even ended up scoring 52 off 43 deliveries. Srikkanth, who has previously criticised Harshit's selection in the team, could not help but appreciate his batting. Following the match, he hailed Virat Kohli for yet another stunning century but also highlighted how Rana's batting shifted the momentum. "Virat Kohli is King of Kings. Bow down to him. What a knock! If you look at the scorecard and the fall of wickets, they fell continuously. It was 1/28, 2/45, 3/68 and 4/71. Nitish Kumar Reddy came and steadied the innings and later hit sixes. But the real game-changer was Harshit Rana. The way Rana was batting, New Zealand players were shivering. I was amazed by Rana's batting and performed at a different level. They were literally shaking and didn't know what to do. He was hitting sixes effortlessly and his batting was tremendous," Srikkanth said on his YouTube channel. Chasing a mammoth target of 338, India looked in deep trouble but the partnership between Kohli and Rana gave them some hope. The duo added 99 runs for the seventh wicket and Rana contributed 52. Srikkanth was quick to point out that it was Rana's aggressive batting that kept the required run rate in check and allowed Kohli to play his natural game on the other end.

"Out of the 99 runs that Virat Kohli and Harshit Rana added, Rana made 52. That 52 runs were crucial and gave Kohli hope even though the asking rate was above 11. Rana's hitting reduced it to 10 and New Zealand were scared. New Zealand captain was scared too," he added.

Ramiz Raja Asks Bangladesh Fans To "Make Some Noise", Gets Trolled Over Stunned Silence

One of the greatest players to have played for Pakistan, Ramiz Raja had to face embarrassment in a Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) match after his attempt to get fans in the stadium make noise fell flat. In a video that has surfaced on social media, Ramiz could be seen asking the fans to 'make some noise' before the start of the match but what happened next made him a butt of jokes on social media. Despite Ramiz's appeal, the fans mostly remained silent. Ramiz, realising he was in the middle of a tough crowd, himself said: "they don't want to make some noise". Here's the video: BPL 2026 Rescheduled After Controversy BPL, Bangladesh's marquee T20 league, faced an unprecedented crisis on 15 January 2026, when a total player boycott led to the cancellation of all scheduled fixtures for the day. The revolt was triggered by some public remarks from M. Najmul Islam, the Chairman of the BCB Finance Committee, who labelled former captain Tamim Iqbal an "Indian agent" for suggesting a diplomatic resolution to the ongoing T20 World Cup venue dispute with India. Tensions further escalated when Islam claimed that players did not deserve compensation for missing the World Cup and should instead "return crores of taka" for their underperformance in previous tournaments to the board, prompting severe backlash. As the cricketers welfare body in Bangladesh staged a protest, the situation saw two BPL teams refuse to leave their hotels for the Dhaka-phase matches, forcing the BCB into an emergency late-night intervention to save the tournament. To resolve the impasse, the board officially stripped Najmul Islam of his finance chairmanship and initiated disciplinary proceedings. Though a compromise was established between the board and the players later, prompting the BPL to resume on 16 January under a revised schedule, the incident did leave a scar on the T20 league and Bangladesh cricket overall.

'SHAMEFUL' AND 'TERRIBLE LOOK' - THE CHAOS THAT MARRED SENEGAL'S TRIUMPH

Senegal beat Morocco to win the Africa Cup of Nations for a second time - but only after the final was overshadowed when they temporarily refused to play after the hosts were awarded a stoppage-time penalty with the match goalless. Referee Jean Jacques Ndala gave the spot-kick in the 98th minute after being advised by the video assistant referee (VAR) to consult the pitchside monitor and review defender El Hadji Malick Diouf's challenge on Brahim Diaz. Amid sensational scenes, head coach Pape Thiaw, still incensed by Ndala's decision moments earlier to disallow a Senegal goal, ushered his team off the field. Former Liverpool striker Sadio Mane stayed on the pitch and tried to encourage his Senegal team-mates to finish the game. Following a delay of around 17 minutes, the players did eventually return. Real Madrid forward Diaz, the tournament's top scorer with five goals, was trusted with the penalty, but his tame 'Panenka' effort was caught by Senegal keeper Edouard Mendy who barely had to move, and Ndala immediately blew his whistle for full-time. Villarreal midfielder Pape Gueye then scored the winning goal in the fourth minute of extra time to seal a second triumph in five years for the Lions. In his post-match news conference, Morocco coach Walid Regragui said Senegal's actions were "shameful" and do not "honour Africa". Fifa president Gianni Infantino strongly condemned the "ugly scenes" in a post on Instagram. Thiaw, meanwhile, had his media briefing cancelled after a ruckus broke out in the press room. But in an interview with BeIN Sport, he accepted that he should not have ordered his team off the field. "We didn't agree," he said. "I don't want to go over all the incidents. I apologise for the football. "After reflecting on it I made them come back [on the pitch] - you can react in the heat of the moment. We accept the errors of the referee. "We shouldn't have done it but it's done and now we present our apologies to football."

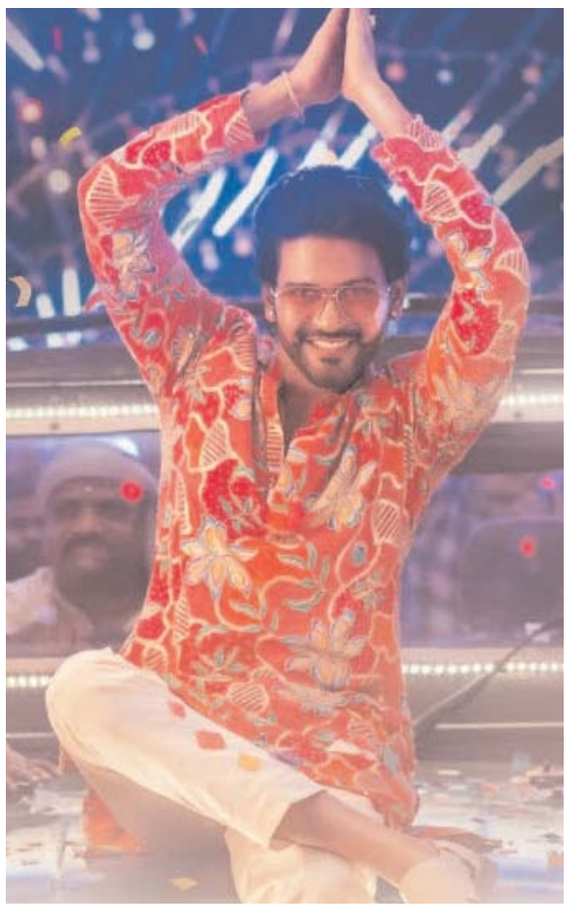
DJOKOVIC REGISTERS 100TH AUSTRALIAN OPEN WIN

Novak Djokovic delivered a serving masterclass as he registered his 100th victory at the Australian Open with a straight-set win over Spain's Pedro Martinez. The world number four, who is bidding for a standalone record 25th Grand Slam singles title, only dropped five points out of 57 on serve across a two-hour exhibition of serving excellence. The 38-year-old produced eight holds to love, only lost one point in each of the second and third sets and won 93% of points behind his first serve - all while maintaining a first-serve percentage of 77%. The 10-time champion fittingly closed out the win with his 14th ace of the night, triumphing 6-3 6-2 6-2. Mark Woodforde, a 17-time Grand Slam doubles champion, hailed Djokovic's serving as "supreme" and "exceptional" on BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra but the Serb offered a more understated assessment of his performance. "Tonight's performance was great, I can't complain about anything. I served very well," said Djokovic. "It's always a challenge to kick-start the tournament on the right note and send the right signal not only to yourself but your opponents watching you play. "I have a couple of days without a match to recover my body. I'm using every hour to get in shape for the next challenge." After notching up a century of wins in Melbourne - a feat he has also achieved at Wimbledon (102) and Roland Garros (101) - Djokovic was treated to video highlights from his 2005 main-draw debut during his post-match interview. Djokovic, in understandably jovial spirits, played down this period of reflection, insisting he will not get caught up in his career achievements until he has "put the racquet aside [and is] sipping some nice cocktail on the beach".

SOBBING JONES AMONG AUSTRALIAN OPEN RETIREMENTS

An emotional Francesca Jones vowed to pick herself up after the British number three saw injury wreck her chances of a first main-draw win at the Australian Open. Jones was left sobbing on court after struggling with a glute problem from the early stages of her first-round match against Polish qualifier Linda Klimovicova. The distraught 25-year-old tried to continue but ultimately quit when trailing 6-2 3-2. The world number 71 has a rare genetic condition which means she plays with a modified grip, defying the doctors who said she would never play professionally. "If I was someone that didn't know how to pick myself up quickly, I'd have no capacity to be where I am right now," Jones said. A groin injury had forced Jones out of a match at last week's Auckland International, but it was a glute problem that led to her retirement against Klimovicova. Jones was born with Ectrodactyly Ectodermal Dysplasia (EEC) and has three fingers and a thumb on each hand, three toes on her right foot and four toes on her left. After a difficult 2024 where she found herself outside the world's top 150, Jones planned to retire in 2025 if her ranking did not improve. Instead, she enjoyed a life-changing season that pumped new energy into her tennis career. Jones had received direct entry into the Australian Open main draw for the first time, but this marked a sad exit to what had been a proud moment. There was a sombre atmosphere on the court as Jones sobbed loudly while receiving treatment in the third set. The crowd applauded her sympathetically as Jones limped off with a towel covering her head. It is the 16th time she has retired from a match since the start of the 2023 season. "I don't relate to any of the retirements directly to what could be referred to as 'kid with a syndrome'," Jones said. "What I relate it to is that I don't think I had a team in place and the expertise that I needed from a younger age.

Star Entertainer Naveen Polishetty Rewrites Records



Star entertainer Naveen Polishetty has officially entered the big league, and Anaganaga Oka Raju stands as the biggest blockbuster of his career. In just five days, the film has stormed past a massive ?100.2 CRORES GROSS worldwide, turning the Sankranthi box office into a celebration of records, momentum, and pure audience frenzy. From the very first show, Anaganaga Oka Raju has enjoyed unstoppable word of mouth, packed houses, and repeat family audiences. The result is historic. All distributors crossed breakeven within just four days, a rare feat in today's highly competitive release environment, clearly establishing the film as a clean blockbuster across territories. With this sensational run, Naveen Polishetty delivers his FOURTH CONSECUTIVE BLOCKBUSTER, reinforcing his status as one of the most reliable and bankable stars of Telugu cinema. Each release has only pushed his market higher, and Anaganaga Oka Raju now crowns that journey as his career-high grosser. Overseas, the film has created another landmark. Naveen Polishetty completes a HATTRICK OF $1 MILLION+ FILMS IN THE USA, a feat achieved by only a select few. Even more remarkably, Anaganaga Oka Raju is now racing rapidly towards the prestigious $2 MILLION mark, with collections holding strong every single day. The overseas distributor Moksha Movies ensured fantastic screen holding and strategic placement despite a tight festive schedule, playing a crucial role in the film's massive overseas success. Back home, the AP and TS box office has shown extraordinary strength. Despite heavy Sankranthi competition, all distributors of Sithara Entertainments stood solidly behind the film, giving it the best possible release, strong screen counts, and prime placements. Their belief in the content translated directly into sustained footfalls and record-breaking numbers. Built entirely on content, comedy, emotion, and audience connect, Anaganaga Oka Raju has emerged as the definitive Sankranthi entertainer, appealing across age groups and regions. Trade circles are calling it a biggest ever blockbuster driven by strong writing, repeat value, and long-run potential. With ?100.2 crores in just five days, breakeven in four days, a hattrick of Million Dollar USA films, four consecutive blockbusters, and a run that is still accelerating.

Chiranjeevi's Mega Sankranthi Blockbuster Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu All-Time Industry Record In Telugu States On Day 7, Close To 300 Cr Worldwide & $3 M In North America

Megastar Chiranjeevi's festive winner Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu is having a record-shattering run. Directed by Anil Ravipudi, the film has not only maintained a rock-solid hold throughout its first week but has also pulled off many landmark feats, including achieving breakeven. The numbers underscore the momentum. After a massive opening, the film has steadily posted big numbers daily, including a strong 31 Cr haul yesterday. The global total now sits at 292 Cr, placing MSG on the brink of the coveted 300 Cr club, a milestone it is expected to cross comfortably today. This performance positions the film to surpass Sankranthiki Vasthunnam, thereby becoming the highest-grossing film of Anil Ravipudi's career. MSG has also become the All-Time Highest Share Collected Film In AP & TS on its 7th day. Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu has entered into second week with excellent occupancies everywhere. MSG's impact is equally electrifying overseas.

Gavireddy Sreenu's 'Cheen Tapak Dum Dum' Begins with Star-Studded Pooja Ceremony

Gavireddy's New Film Cheen Tapak Dum Dum Launched with Pooja Ceremony - Graced by Samantha, Mallidi Vassishta, Gopichand Malineni, BVS Ravi & Nandini Reddy

Subham Fame Gavireddy Sreenu new film has been launched today with a formal pooja ceremony amongst his well-wishers. The film marks the new journey of writer-turned-actor Gavireddy Sreenu, who earlier entertained audiences with his performance in the Amazon Prime hit series Kumari Srimathi and Subham.

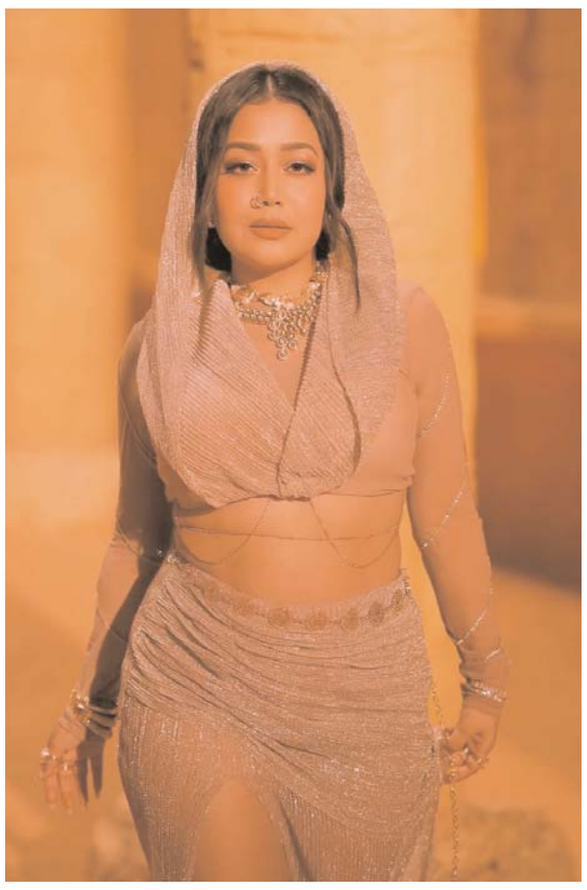
The film is interestingly titled as Cheen Tapak Dum Dum, promising a perfect entertainer. The launch event was graced by star heroine Samantha, directors Mallidi Vassishta, Gopichand Malineni, Nandini Reddy, BVS Ravi, Gowthami, and other eminent personalities from the industry, making it special for the entire team.

Samantha gave the first clap, Gopichand Malineni directed the first shot, Mallidi Vassishta switched on the camera, and script handover was done by Nandini Reddy, BVS Ravi, and Gowthami marking an auspicious start. The film is produced by Srinu Nagulapalli and marks the first production of Village Talkies. The film is directed by Y N Lohit. It stars Brigida Saga in the prominent role. The film's production design will be handled by A S Prakash, while cinematography is handled by Senthil Kumar. Music is composed by PR, with Tirupathi Jaavana writing the lyrics. The VFX work is done by Nikhil Koduru, and the film's publicity designs are created by Shakthi VFX. The story and screenplay are written by Divya Thejaswi, Vikram Kumar K, Nag Trailblazer, and Ekalavya, forming a strong creative team behind the film. With strong creative backing and warm wishes from the industry, Cheen Tapak Dum Dum sets off on a promising and joyful journey.

About Yumna Zaidi's new Pak drama shot in Hyderabad, Karachi

Hyderabad: 2026 has kicked off on a strong note for the Pakistani entertainment industry, This Ramzan, viewers are in for a special treat as Yumna Zaidi and Hamza Sohail come together for the first time in a brand-new serial penned by Saima Akram Chaudhry with several dramas already dominating Hindi- and Urdu-speaking households across the globe. While some shows are currently on air, many highly anticipated projects are gearing up for release in the coming months. Among them is Yumna Zaidi and Hamza Sohail's upcoming drama, tentatively titled Load Wedding, which has already created a buzz. This Ramzan, viewers are in for a special treat as Yumna Zaidi and Hamza Sohail come together for the first time in a brand-new serial penned by Saima Akram Chaudhry, known for her popular hits Suno Chanda, Chupke Chupke, and Hum Tum. The drama has been shot across multiple Pakistani cities, including the hills of Nathiagali and the streets of Islamabad, Hyderabad, and Karachi, giving the story a vibrant and authentic backdrop. The cast also features seasoned actors Bushra Ansari and Arshad Mehmood, along with rising talents such as Rumaisa Khan and a new male lead whose identity is still being kept under wraps. Promising a mix of romance, family emotions, and humour with a refreshing twist away from the writer's usual formula, the drama is directed by acclaimed filmmaker Ali Hassan and will air on HUM TV. Yumna and

'Not sure if I'll be back': Neha Kakkar's mysterious Insta story



Mumbai: Bollywood singer Neha Kakkar on Monday announced that she is taking a break from her personal and professional commitments, citing the need to step away from responsibilities, relationships, and work. She took to her Instagram stories section, where she shared a note, which read: "Time to take a break from Responsibilities, Relationships,
Work and Everything I can think of right now. Not sure if I'll be back or not. Thank you." She then requested the shutterbugs and fans to not "film her at all". "And I request Paparazzi and Fans to Not to film me at all. I hope you respect my privacy and let me live freely in this world. No Cameras Plz! I request! This is the least you all can give me for my peace (sic)," Neha concluded the post. The "Lollipop" singer did not disclose the reason behind her decision. Neha is the younger sister of playback singers Tony Kakkar and Sonu Kakkar. She began performing at an early age at religious events. In 2005, she participated in the second season of the singing reality show, Indian Idol.

She made her Bollywood debut as a chorus singer in the film Meerabai Not Out. She rose to prominence with the release of the dance track "Second Hand Jawaani" from Cocktail in 2012. Neha then went on to belt out hits with popular party songs, including "Sunny Sunny" from Yaariyan and "London Thumakda" from the 2014 soundtrack album Queen. The singer has also appeared in several music videos and as a judge on several television reality shows, including "Indian Idol".

VIJAY VARMA SHARES SELFIE WITH A 'GOLDEN TOILET' AT AMITABH BACHCHAN'S HOUSE

Explosive claims: Black magic behind Shefali Jariwala's death?

Mumbai: Indian actress and model Shefali Jariwala's sudden demise last year left the entire nation in shock. The actress passed away on June 27, 2025, at the age of 42 in Mumbai, reportedly due to a cardiac arrest. Shefali rose to fame with the iconic music video "Kaanta Laga" and later became a familiar face on reality shows such as Bigg Boss. Now, 6 months after her death, her husband, actor Parag Tyagi, has made a startling revelation. During his appearance on the latest episode of "Abraa Kaa Dabra" podcast, hosted by Paras Chhabra, Parag claimed that black magic was performed on Shefali twice before her demise. He said he sensed something unnatural during prayers and even through physical touch, which reflected in her health as insomnia, anxiety, depression, and dark circles. While expressing strong conviction, Parag chose not to name anyone or go into specific details. According to Parag, where there is faith and God, there is also the presence of evil. He recalled that the first time he felt something was wrong, the feeling passed, but the second time it was much stronger and heavier. "Just by touching her, I could understand something was not right," he said, adding that this prompted him to increase his prayers and religious rituals. "I know for 100 per cent that someone has done something," Parag stated, while maintaining he cannot accuse anyone directly. Shefali Jariwala and Parag Tyagi's love story began quietly in 2010, away from the spotlight. After dating for four years, the couple tied the knot in 2014 in an intimate wedding ceremony. "I know for 100 per cent that someone has done something," Parag stated, while maintaining he cannot accuse anyone directly. Speaking on Paras Chhabra's podcast, Tyagi said his belief was not based on rumours or hearsay but on what he described as lived experience and intuition. He acknowledged that many people do not believe in such practices but insisted that he does. "Bahot saare log nahi maante inn cheezon ko but main bahot maanta hoon. Jahan par bhagwan hai wahan shaitaan bhi hai. Aur pata hai log apne dukh se dukhi nahi hai, dusre ke sukh se duhkhi hai. Mujhe lagta nahi mujhe pata hai kisine kiya hai. Main ye nahi bol sakta kisne kiya but kisine toh kiya hai." Tyagi added that he sensed something was wrong on more than one occasion, suggesting that the feeling was persistent and unsettling. "Mujhe mehsoos hota hai ke kuch toh gadbad hai. Ek baar nahi do baar hua hai aisa mehsoos, aur ek baar toh nikal gaye lekin iss baar thoda heavy rahi cheezein. I don't know, idea nahi kya cheez thi kya nahi." What he says he noticed Elaborating further, Tyagi spoke about moments of prayer and devotion, claiming he could sense changes in Shefali during those times. He said these feelings were strong enough for him to increase religious rituals at home. "Main jab baitha hoon na bhakti mein mujhe mehsoos ho jaata hai kuch toh gadbad hai. Pehli baar mein woh itni hasmukh ladki hai… main zyaada details mein nahi jaana chahunga but mujhe unko touch karke samajh jaata tha ke bhai kuch toh gadbad hai. Iss baar kuch zyaada tha toh maine thoda sa puja badha di thi. I know for 100 per cent kisi ne toh kiya hai."

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