



Vijay's TVK public meeting in TN's Salem on Feb 13 gets police approval

Chennai, Feb 8 : The Salem City Police, on Sunday, granted conditional permission for Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader and actor-turned-politician Vijay to hold a public campaign meeting in the district on February 13, allowing the rally to proceed at the Thalamuthu Natarajan Stadium near Sheelanayakkanpatti Highway under strict safety and crowd-control regulations.



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INBRIFS

Elusive tiger continues killing cattle in Telangana's Siddipet district

Hyderabad (TSIT): The Telangana Forest Department has intensified its operation to catch a tiger which continued its cattle killing spree in the villages of the state's Siddipet district. Panic gripped people in the Arepally village of Koheda Mandal after some farmers spotted the elusive tiger. The big cat killed five calves near Chandranaik Thanda. Farmer Maloth Ramesh lost his cattle. Alerted by the locals, the Forest Department officials, along with the police, reached the area to collect pugmarks. Authorities have advised farmers not to tie their cattle in agricultural fields but to keep them safely at their houses. The Forest Department officials have also cautioned farmers not to go alone in the fields. Women, senior citizens, and children have been asked to remain alert. Earlier, the tiger attacked and killed cattle at Ghanapur village, Akkenapally, and Baswapuram villages in the district. At Ghanapur, the tiger killed a calf in agriculture field. Farmer Bal Reddy said when he came to the cattle shed, he found a calf killed and another seriously wounded. The Forest officials reached the place and started to track the pugmarks of the tiger.

Delhi Police bust high-profile cyber fraud module with international links

New Delhi, Feb 8 : The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has busted a high-profile cyber fraud module with international linkages and arrested three accused involved in an organised cyber-financial racket. The breakthrough was achieved by the Northern Range-1 (NR-1) team during its ongoing 'Cy-Hawk' operations, officials said on Sunday. According to an official press release issued by the Crime Branch, an E-FIR No. 53/2025 (60001651/2025) dated December 17, 2025, was registered under Sections 308/318(4)/319/340 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Police Station Crime Branch, Delhi. The case was filed on a complaint of Ranjan (56), a resident of Uttam Nagar, who alleged that he was cheated of approximately Rs 42.5 lakh in a stock market-related cyber fraud.

CM Revanth Launches Sharp Attack on BRS and BJP at Public Meeting

Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched a strong political attack on the BRS and BJP while addressing a large public meeting at Chelpur accusing the previous BRS regime of corruption, land grabbing, and misuse of power during its ten-year rule.

The Chief Minister alleged that the BRS under K. Chandrashekar Rao functioned through blackmail and illegal practices, remarking that the party symbolically stood for "Blackmail Rajakiya Samithi." He referred to past phone tapping allegations and claimed businessmen were pressured and properties were grabbed during the earlier regime. He said those responsible are now facing the consequences of their actions.

Targeting Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, the Chief Minister questioned why no CBI probe had been ordered into the Kareshwaram and Formula-E race cases, and alleged that BJP leaders were shielding BRS leadership. He also criticized the Centre for filing ED and CBI cases against Sonia Gandhi and



Rahul Gandhi while not acting on corruption allegations related to irrigation projects. On administrative reforms, the CM clarified that the State government is not planning to abolish or newly create districts at present. He said any future reorganization would happen only after public consultation and Assembly discussion, accusing BRS of spreading false propaganda for political gain. Revanth Reddy assured that pending issues of Singareni

workers would be addressed, including continuation of compassionate appointments and resolution of cases of dismissed workers. He also announced removal of the medical unfit board system affecting workers. Appealing to voters in the municipal elections, the Chief Minister urged people not to support BRS and BJP, calling them "two sides of the same coin," and asked them to vote for Congress candidates for local development.

Highlighting welfare and development measures, he said the State sanctioned over 17,000 crore for municipalities and corporations, with significant allocations for the erstwhile Warangal region and Bhupalpally municipality. He also detailed large-scale Indiramma housing works and future tourism development plans along the Godavari river belt, along with major arrangements planned for Godavari Pushkaralu 2027.

PM Modi meets Malaysian business leaders, Highlights investment opportunities in India

Kuala Lumpur/ New Delhi (TSIT) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday held wide-ranging discussions with leading Malaysian industry figures, underscoring India's growth trajectory and inviting greater Malaysian participation in key sectors of the Indian economy. The Prime Minister met Tan Sri Tengku Muhammad Taufik, President and Group CEO of PETRONAS; Tan Sri Dato' Seri Vincent Tan Chee Yioun, Founder of Berjaya Corporation Berhad; Dato' Amirul Feisal Wan Zahir, Managing Director of Khazanah Nasional Berhad; and Dato' Pua Khein Seng, Founder of Phison Electronics.

During the interaction, Prime Minister Modi welcomed the steady expansion of business-to-business ties between India and Malaysia and noted the strong interest of Malaysian companies in



India's long-term growth story. He outlined the series of reforms undertaken in recent years to improve ease of doing business and to create a stable, efficient and predictable policy environment. "India today offers a transparent and forward-looking business ecosystem driven by reforms, digitalisation and strong fundamentals," the Prime Minister said. "I encourage Malaysian companies to explore the vast opportunities in sectors such as infrastructure, renewable energy, digital technology, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and healthcare."

Nostalgia brimmeth over as old beauties cruise through Delhi roads

New Delhi, 8 Feb (TSIT) The much-awaited 59th edition of The Statesman Vintage and Classic Car Rally was flagged off on Sunday by Delhi Lieutenant Governor V. K. Saxena, marking yet another milestone in one of India's oldest and most prestigious motor-ing events. The rally commenced from The Statesman House on Barakhamba Road, transforming the heart of the capital into a moving museum of automotive heritage. In the Vintage Section (cars manufactured till 1939), the coveted Statesman Challenge, Best Overall Performance (Vintage Trophy), was awarded to Gidwaney for his meticulously maintained 1935 Bentley. The Indian Oil Heritage Preservation Trophy went to the National Rail Museum for its iconic 1914 John Morris & Sons fire engine, while the PNB Housing Vintage



Excellence Trophy was clinched by Ranjit Mallik with his 1936 Bentley. The Classic Section (1940-1956; above 1500 cc) was won by Harshpati Singhania for his 1958 Chevrolet, while Jaideep Phookan secured the Oil India Post-War Excellence Performance Trophy with a 1962 Mercedes-Benz. Apart from these major awards, over 80 participants were recognised across various other categories. The prizes were distributed by The Statesman Group's Chairperson R. P. Gupta, along with

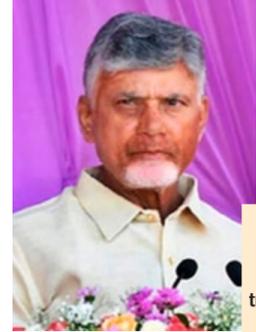
(1945-1962; above 1500 cc), the Statesman Diamond Jubilee Post-War Elegance Achievement Trophy was won by Harshpati Singhania for his 1958 Chevrolet, while Jaideep Phookan secured the Oil India Post-War Excellence Performance Trophy with a 1962 Mercedes-Benz. Apart from these major awards, over 80 participants were recognised across various other categories. The prizes were distributed by The Statesman Group's Chairperson R. P. Gupta, along with

Director Vineet Gupta, Managing Director Ravindra Kumar, Hemant Rathore, Executive Director, IOCL, Arvind Kumar Pandey, Deputy General Manager, Bank of Baroda, and Manoj Kumar Singh, Deputy General Manager, State Bank of India. Speaking at the event, Lieutenant Governor V. K. Saxena said, "I believe that more such programmes should be held in Delhi. People here are extremely passionate, and the enthusiasm of participants is clearly visible. I congratulate The Statesman and its entire team for organising such a beautiful event." The Statesman Vintage and Classic Car Rally, held annually in Delhi and Kolkata, is among the oldest continuously running motor-ing events in India and the subcontinent. First organised in Delhi in 1964, the rally was extended to Kolkata in 1968.

CM Naidu orders inquiry into food poisoning at govt-run Ashram hostel

Amaravati (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday ordered an inquiry into a food poisoning incident in which 92 tribal students of a government-run Ashram boys' hostel fell ill. The incident occurred at the Ashram hostel in Devarapalli village in Rampachodavaram Mandal of Polavaram district on Saturday.

The Chief Minister directed officials to submit a detailed report by Monday and made it clear that strict action would be taken against those found responsible for negligence. The Chief Minister on Sunday held a review meeting with officials from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) and other departments and issued the necessary instructions. Officials informed the Chief Minister that 92 students of the Devarapalli Ashram Boys' Hostel in Rampachodavaram experienced symptoms such as vomiting, stomach pain, fever and diarrhoea, and were immediately shifted to hospitals in Mareedumilli and Rampachodavaram. They explained that after having



provided treatment. They further stated that a special medical camp was set up and samples of food and water were collected for testing. Officials informed the Chief Minister that a Joint Inspection Committee has also been constituted to investigate the incident.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday ordered an inquiry into a food poisoning incident in which 92 tribal students of a government-run Ashram boys' hostel fell ill.

breakfast on Saturday morning, the students began complaining of stomach pain and vomiting, following which they were shifted to hospitals for treatment. Officials said the health condition of all the students is currently stable. Officials also informed the Chief Minister that they inspected the hostel immediately after the incident and assessed the prevailing conditions. Primary medical examinations were conducted on the remaining students in the hostel, and those showing symptoms of diarrhoea were

Chief Minister Naidu instructed that the health condition of the students undergoing treatment at Rampachodavaram Area Hospital should be continuously monitored and that he be kept regularly informed of their condition. He also directed the district Collector to submit a comprehensive report on the incident by Monday. CM Chandrababu Naidu further instructed officials to initiate departmental action against those responsible for the incident and to take criminal action as well, if necessary.

KTR demands judicial inquiry into Forensic Lab fire

Hyderabad, Feb 8 (TSIT): Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday demanded a judicial inquiry into the Saturday's fire incident at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Hyderabad and alleged that it was a deliberate conspiracy by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to destroy crucial evidence related to the long-pending "vote-for-note" case. Addressing the media in Hanmakonda during the party campaign for municipal elections, Rama Rao claimed that the incident was stage-managed to permanently eliminate



forensic material at a time when the case had reached its final stage, and a verdict was imminent.

KTR, as the BRS leader is popularly known, asserted that the circumstances surrounding the blaze raised grave suspicions, including the outbreak of fire in a highly secured facility during winter, the absence of staff in a laboratory that is supposed to function round-the-clock, and the government's contradictory statements on the extent of damage. "Initially, the authorities claimed that there was minimal loss. However, the FIR later revealed that ten years' worth of evidence dating back to 2015 had been completely destroyed.

India to be LWE-free by March 2026, reiterates Home Minister Amit Shah

Raipur, Feb 8 (TSIT): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that Maoist ideology is the main reason for Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in the country, asserting that this destructive ideology has ruined the lives of three generations of tribals living across several states, including Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

The Home Minister said that Maoist ideology forced innocent tribals to take up arms and created a false narrative that Naxalism emerged because of a "lack of development" and "law-and-order issues". He added that the BJP-



led government has resolved to make the country Naxal-free by March 31, 2026, and remains firm in its commitment.

"I appeal to those involved in Naxal activities to surrender before the security forces. I would especially appeal to

young tribal women that the BJP government has better plans for their future," he added. "I completely disagree with those who say that development and law and order are the reasons for Naxalism. The establishment of Naxalism was a conspiracy rooted in Maoist ideology, and I have evidence to establish this fact. If it were a development problem, then the situation in many districts at that time was even worse than in Bastar. If it were a law-and-order problem, many districts had poorer law-and-order conditions," Home Minister Shah said.

# Komatireddy Venkat Reddy Bats for Rahul Gandhi as PM During Nalgonda Civic Poll Campaign

Hyderabad: State Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Sunday strongly advocated for Rahul Gandhi as the next Prime Minister, stating that the country needs a secular, inclusive leader capable of uniting people beyond caste and religion.

Campaigning for the Nalgonda Municipal Corporation elections, the Minister said Rahul Gandhi has demonstrated his commitment to national unity through the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which aimed to bring together people from diverse backgrounds across the country. He said India requires leadership that treats every citizen equally and



protects the spirit of the Constitution.

Komatireddy noted that Rahul Gandhi comes from a family that has made significant sacrifices for the nation and said such leadership is essential to ensure welfare and justice

for all communities. He called on party cadre and supporters to work with dedication until Congress assumes leadership at the national level.

Referring to the State government, he said the Congress administration

led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is giving priority to all sections of society through inclusive development and social justice-oriented policies.

The Minister also criticized opposition parties, alleging that BRS and BJP function alike in key matters, and urged voters not to place their trust in them. He appealed to citizens to vote for Congress candidates in the municipal polls, saying a vote for the "Hand" symbol would strengthen pro-people governance.



Chief Minister Revanth Reddy visited the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Kodavatancha, Regonda Mandal, Jayashankar-Bhupalpally district. Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Konda Surekha, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, and local MLA Gandhira Satyanarayana Rao also accompanied the Chief Minister during the visit to the Kodavatancha Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy planted a sapling in the temple premises. The Chief Minister and the ministers inaugurated the Kodavatancha Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple guest house and other development works.

## Young author Konda Sushmitha Patel offers fresh spiritual perspective through debut book

Hyderabad: In a remarkable blend of youthful creativity and spiritual depth, young author Konda Sushmitha Patel has authored a thought-provoking book titled "Rudra: In-depth of Shiva, Parvathi and Creation Om." Written at a young age, the book has drawn appreciation for its originality, philosophical insight and innovative interpretation of sacred concepts associated with Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi.



Daughter of Telangana Minister Konda Surekha, Sushmitha Patel's work reflects disciplined study, devotion and imagination. Rather than presenting conventional devotional narratives, the book explores the deeper symbolic and cosmic dimensions of Rudra, Shiva-Shakti balance and the primordial sound Om.

The author examines themes such as creation and dissolution, the interplay of divine masculine and feminine energies, the symbolism of Shiva tattva and Shakti tattva, the spiritual essence of Om vibration, and inner transformation through the Rudra principle. Readers have noted that the writing style is clear, structured

and expressive, making complex spiritual ideas accessible to both young readers and the general public. What sets the book apart is its contemporary, inquiry-based approach to ancient spiritual knowledge. Literary observers say the work represents a new wave of youth engagement with Indian knowledge systems, where tradition is studied deeply and expressed through a modern narrative voice.

Educationalists and cultural observers have praised the young author's initiative, describing the book as a rare combination of devotion and analytical thought. Many believe her achievement serves as an inspiration for young writers and students to explore philosophy, culture and spirituality with confidence and originality.

## Shikha Goel Says Most Case Property Safe After Fire at Telangana FSL

Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Shikha Goel, Director of the Telangana Forensic Science Laboratory (TG FSL), said that most case property has been safely retrieved and secured following the recent fire incident at the FSL facility in Nampally.

According to the official statement, the fire broke out around 10:08 am on February 7 in the Computer Forensic Lab located on the first floor of the building. An employee first noticed smoke and alerted staff and police personnel present on the premises. Fire alarms were triggered and initial response measures were taken using available extinguishers before fire



tenders arrived. Fire department teams reached the spot within minutes and brought the blaze under control by about 1:30 pm. No loss of life or injuries were reported. Some damage was caused to the computer forensic lab, training hall,

and a few related sections on the first floor. A case has been registered at Nampally Police Station and an investigation is in progress. Officials said the extent of damage is being assessed. TG FSL teams, along with police and panch witnesses.

## Harkara Venugopal Rao Campaigns in Ramagundam Urges Voters to Back Congress Candidates

Ramagundam: Telangana State Government Advisor Harkara Venugopal Rao campaigned extensively in multiple divisions of the Ramagundam Municipal Corporation on Sunday as part of the ongoing municipal election drive, calling upon voters to support Congress party candidates and ensure their victory.

Touring Village Ramagundam 28th Division, he said the area has consistently stood as a stronghold of the Congress party and expressed confidence that the same spirit would be reflected in the



upcoming election. He later visited Lingapur and Housing Board Colony areas under the 29th Division and interacted with residents and local leaders. Venugopal Rao appealed to all voters to cast their ballots in favour of the Congress party's

"Hand" symbol in the elections scheduled on the 11th of this month. He said that continued development of the divisions and civic infrastructure would be possible only if candidates of the ruling party are elected with a strong mandate.

## MINISTER DAMODAR RAJA NARSIMHA LEADS CONGRESS CAMPAIGN IN ANDOLE JOGIPET MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Hyderabad: Damodar Raja narsimha, State Minister, conducted an extensive campaign across Andole Jogipet Municipality in support of Congress Party candidates contesting in the ongoing municipal elections.

Beginning in Ward No. 9 Minister campaigned for Congress candidate Tupakula Meena. He later toured several wards and extended support to Ward No. 4 candidate Tirumala Kalpana, Ward No. 5 candidate Kottagolla Madhavi, Ward No. 6 candidate Rachakonda Jyothi, Ward No. 8 candidate Bandla Santosh, and Ward No. 1 candidate Gaddi Arun Kumar. He undertook door-to-door visits and padayatras, interact-



ing directly with residents and seeking their support. Addressing women and local voters, the Minister explained the welfare and development programmes being implemented by the State government. He said special focus is being given to women's empowerment through interest-free loans to self-help groups and creation of local livelihood opportunities through cottage industries.

He highlighted key welfare measures including Indiramma housing, fine rice distribution, ration cards, and free bus travel schemes, stating that these initiatives reflect the Congress government's pro-people approach. He added that Andole Jogipet is emerging as an education and healthcare hub with a 150-bed modern hospital, nursing and polytechnic colleges, KGBVs, and model schools.

Expressing confidence, the Minister said Congress candidates would secure a strong majority in all wards and urged party workers to coordinate closely and reach every household to ensure victory.

## Bandru Shobha Rani Campaigns for Congress-Backed Candidates in Aleru Municipal Polls

Aler: State Women's Corporation Chairperson Bandru Shobha Rani took part in the municipal election campaign in BC Colony of Aleru town, extending support to Congress-backed ward candidates.

As part of the election outreach, she campaigned for Ward No. 7 candidate Beejana Balamani-Bhaskar and Ward No. 8 candidate Pamu Anita. She conducted door-to-door visits and interacted with local residents, women, and youth, seeking their support and votes for the Congress-



supported nominees. Speaking during the campaign, Shobha Rani emphasized the importance of electing dedicated public representatives for strengthening municipal development and welfare delivery. She highlighted the focus on women's empowerment, basic civic amenities, and inclusive urban growth.

## Fisheries Chairman Mettu Sai Kumar Campaigns in Cheriyal Municipal Elections



Hyderabad: Fisheries Chairman Mettu Sai Kumar participated in the Cheriyal Municipality election campaign and conducted outreach programmes in Ward No. 2 and Ward No. 6 as part of the ongoing civic poll campaigning. During the campaign, he visited the wards and took part in door-to-door interactions with residents, appealing to voters to support the party-backed candidates in the municipal elections.

## A Two-Day National Seminar on "Empowering Research

WARANGAL, February 8, Tsit : AI Tools for Academic Writing and Publishing" was successfully conducted on 6-7 February 2026 at Government Degree College, Mulugu, Mulugu District. The seminar was organized with the financial support of PM-USHA and the Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE).

On the first day, the program was inaugurated by Chief Guest Prof. G. Ram Reddy, Sammakka Saralamma Tribal University, Mulugu. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. P. Varalakshmi, Department of Commerce and Business Management, who elaborated on the growing role of AI tools in improving research quality and academic publications. Dr. B. Radhika Rani also addressed the participants as Chief Guest and highlighted ethical and effective use of AI in



research. On the second day, Dr. Iranna Shettar, Deputy Librarian, NIT Warangal, attended as Chief Guest and spoke about advanced AI applications in library and research environments. Dr. M. Anjaiah, Assistant Professor, Dravidian University, Andhra Pradesh, participated as Guest of Honour and emphasized digital

research skills for scholars. The seminar was chaired by the College Principal Dr. K. Malleham. Dr. B. Balaiah, Vice Principal and IQAC Coordinator, addressed the gathering and stressed the importance of integrating AI tools into academic research practices.

The seminar was convened by Dr. B. Jagadish, Librarian, with

Dr. CH. Bhaskar, Associate Professor in Commerce, serving as Co-Convenor, and Dr. B. Sirisha, Assistant Professor of Commerce, as Organizing Secretary. They coordinated the sessions and activities of the seminar. Among the participants were Dr. K. Indrasena Reddy, S. Anil Kumar, Library and Information Science students, research scholars, faculty members, librarians, and principals from various colleges. The seminar featured expert lectures, interactive sessions, and discussions focusing on AI-driven tools for academic writing, publishing standards, and research excellence. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. K. Kavtha and positive feedback from participants, who appreciated the seminar's practical insights and academic value.

## Edulapuram municipal polls: Ponguleti vs Kandala

Khammam (TSIT): The Edulapuram municipal elections in Paleru Assembly constituency of Khammam district have emerged as a straight contest between Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and former MLA Kandala Upendra Reddy, with both leaders treating the civic polls as a crucial test of political strength ahead of future Assembly elections. Paleru has traditionally been considered a Congress stronghold, but the party faced setbacks in several key gram panchayats during the recent panchayat elections. Of the 134 sarpanch posts in the constituency, Congress won 84 while the BRS secured 32, many of them in major gram panchayats. These results caused concern within the Congress, prompting the party to take the Edulapuram municipal elections seriously, with Minister Ponguleti inten-



sifying campaign activities across the municipality to consolidate the party's position. On the other hand, former MLA Kandala Upendra Reddy is making a determined effort to reassert the BRS presence in Paleru. Banking on the party's performance in the panchayat polls and continuing its alliance with the CPM, the BRS is aiming to win a significant number of seats in the municipality. With 32 wards and 45,252 voters, Edulapuram is the largest municipality in the constituency and the biggest among the seven municipalities currently going to polls in the district.

## Ex-Minister Niranjan Reddy who participated in the campaign of the house

Wanaparthy: Former Minister. Singireddy Niranjan Reddy 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, wards candidates Srikar Goud, Manyemma, Sujatha, Putta Anjaneyulu, Gandham Madhan, Shankaramma, Shirisha, Srinivasulu, M. Balaraju, Murali Sagar toured widely. Conducted door-to-door election campaign.



## People know who is real and who is fake: Harish Rao targets CM Revanth Reddy



Sangareddy, February 8 (TSIT):Siddipet MLA and former minister Harish Rao on Sunday strongly criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, stating that the people of Telangana clearly know who is genuine and who is fake. He was addressing a preparatory meeting in Sangareddy ahead of the municipal elections.

Harish Rao said the large turnout during his whirlwind tour of Sangareddy reflected public support for the BRS. Taking a dig at the Chief Minister's remarks made at Bhupalpally, he alleged that the Congress government had funds to pay 40,000 crore as commissions to contractors but lacked money to support the poor, pensioners and government employees.

He asserted that the BRS pink flag was flying high across the united Medak district and expressed confidence that the car symbol would win in municipalities including Sangareddy, Sadashivpet, Zaheerabad, Kohir, Narsapur and Medak. During a roadshow in Sangareddy, people welcomed him by waving pink flags and raising slogans in support of Telangana and KCR.

Highlighting the achievements of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, Harish Rao said KCR fulfilled promises by achieving Telangana statehood and implementing welfare schemes such as pensions, Kalyana Lakshmi and KCR Kits. He credited major development works in Sangareddy and Sadashivpet, including drinking water supply,

road development and sanctioning of a medical college, to KCR's tenure.

Criticising the Congress government, Harish Rao alleged that no significant development had taken place in Sangareddy over the past two-and-a-half years and accused the government of misleading people with election-time inaugurations without proper sanctions. He termed the present regime a "commission-driven government" and said several welfare schemes were discontinued after Congress came to power. Concluding his address, Harish Rao urged voters to give a fitting reply to the Congress government through the ballot and vote for BRS candidates to ensure continued development. Local party leaders, workers and public representatives were present at the meeting.

## Both BRS-BJP are same: CM Revanth

Bhupalpally, February 8, TSIT : Minister Revanth Reddy vehemently declared that BRS and BJP are one and the same and both parties are colluding to harm the Congress at the Prajapalana Sabha organized by Jayashankar Bhupalpally district in Chelpur, he came under fire on the opposition's attitude. "In the last 10 years, KCR has cheated the poor by saying that he will give them a double bedroom house has anyone got a house? But he got a farm house on a thousand acres in Erravalli, his son, son-in-law and daughter got farm houses, he did not build houses in the villages because he has no love for the poor."

He warned that BRS means 'Black mail Rajakiya party' and the sins committed will not go away, they will get stuck in that quagmire.

The Chief Minister



Chief Minister Revanth Reddy accused BRS and BJP of secretly working together against Congress, alleging corruption, betrayal of the poor, and shielding KCR's family, while asserting that true development and welfare will reach the people only under Congress rule.

made harsh comments on the BJP government at the Centre. Kishan Reddy claims that he is not hurt by being called 'Revant Uddin' and that he belongs to everyone.

Kishan Reddy became 'Kalvakuntla Kishan Rao' and questioned why KCR and KTR are not being

arrested.

The BJP, which harassed Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi with ED cases, criticized why it is protecting KCR's family, which has looted lakhs of crores.

Revanth Reddy questioned why no action was taken against the ascetics who blackmailed journalists and judges through telephone tapping.

Giving direction to the people in the background of municipal elections.. "Will KCR come to pick up a nala in the street? Will Modi come from Delhi to put up a light? At the time of marriage, do we look at the elder and give him a child, or do we give him a child?" He joked.

He called for development to happen only if we win people like Gandra Satyanarayana who works in our gully.

To the combined municipalities of Warangal district, their government has given Rs. 616 crores of funds have been given and the councilor should be their leader if all these works are to go smoothly.

Elaborating on the development plans, he said that every temple from Basara to Bhadrachalam and the Godavari catchment area will be developed as a tourist destination for the 2027 Godavari Pushkaras, for which Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000 crores have been declared ready to spend.

He promised that his government is giving 3,500 houses to each constituency under Indiramma Houses and after April, the second installment of houses will be sanctioned. He called upon the activists to bless this public government for providing Indiramma sarees and free travel in buses to the girls and to raise the Congress flag on Bhupalapally soil.

## Neelam Madhu Mudhiraj Joins Campaign Celebrations After Congress Wins 11 Seats in Isnapur Municipality

Hyderabad: As part of the ongoing municipal election campaign activities and post-poll outreach, local leader Neelam Madhu Mudhiraj participated in the victory celebrations of eleven Congress candidates who secured wins from various wards under the Isnapur Municipality limits.

The programme was attended by State In-charge Minister Vivek Venkataswamy, party in-charge Kata Srinivas Goud, and District Congress Committee (DCC) President Nirmala Jagga Reddy, along with party leaders, cadre, and supporters. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from grassroots workers and residents.

Speaking on the occasion, leaders expressed gratitude to voters for supporting the Congress can-



didates and said the results reflect public confidence in the party's local development agenda. They assured that the newly elected municipal representatives would focus on strengthening civic infrastructure, sanitation, drinking water supply, and basic amenities across Isnapur municipal areas.

Neelam Madhu Mudhiraj congratulated the winning candidates and appreciated

party workers for their coordinated campaign efforts at the ward level. He said the victory would help accelerate people-centric development works in the municipality and strengthen public representation. Party workers organized rallies and felicitation programmes to mark the occasion, highlighting unity and coordination among local leadership and cadre.

## TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud Addresses Corner Meeting in Nizamabad, Urges Support for Congress Corporators



Hyderabad: Telangana PCC President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud addressed a corner meeting at Kotagalli in Nizamabad and called upon voters to elect Congress corporator candidates to strengthen constituency development and people-centric governance.

Speaking at the meeting, he said people need leaders who respond when called and remain accessible among the public. He urged citizens to support leaders who

work daily in the field rather than those who appear only during elections. Mahesh Kumar Goud highlighted that the Congress government has been implementing several welfare schemes ranging from free bus travel for women to distribution of fine rice and other social support measures. He noted that even in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state, fine rice distribution is not being implemented at this scale. Referring to

development commitments, he said the Chief Minister has assured major funding support to transform the city into a model urban centre, with large allocations promised for infrastructure and civic improvement.

Criticizing opposition parties, he said some BJP leaders are trying to do politics in the name of religion and making statements that people no longer take seriously. He remarked that politics is about performance and public service, not mere symbolic gestures.

He also stated that after becoming PCC President, he worked to realize a long-pending 35-year dream project of an engineering college within three months, and that foundation stone was laid for an agriculture college by the Chief Minister.

## Minister Seethakka Calls for Strong Congress Victory in Bhuvanagiri Municipal Polls



Hyderabad: Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka participated as chief guest in a major municipal election rally held in Bhuvanagiri town and called upon voters to ensure a strong victory for Congress candidates.

The rally was organized under the leadership of Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbam Anil Kumar Reddy, with Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy also attending. A large number of party leaders and workers took part in the programme. Addressing the gathering, Minister Seethakka said the Congress government is committed to grassroots development and strengthening local bodies. She emphasized that electing

Congress candidates in the municipality would help accelerate welfare delivery and civic improvements at the ward level.

She highlighted that the government is focusing on women's empowerment and the strengthening of self-help groups through financial and institutional support. She urged voters to back candidates who are accessible to the public and dedicated to solving local problems. Other speakers at the rally criticized opposition parties and appealed to voters to support Congress nominees with a clear majority in the municipal elections. Party cadre and supporters participated enthusiastically in the rally.

# Telangana CM playing communal card in municipal elections, says BJP

Hyderabad, Feb 8 : Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao on Sunday accused Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of playing a "full-fledged communal card" in the municipal elections. He claimed that the Chief Minister is putting vote bank above the law by pushing for four per cent reservation for Muslims.

"Congress is attempting to push a 4 per cent reservation for Muslims by any means necessary. This move is a direct insult to the framers of our Constitution, especially Babasaheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar, who unequivocally rejected religion-based reservations and warned against such divisive agendas," he said.

Rao claimed that only the BJP stands as a true guardian of Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution. Claiming that the Modi government at the Centre was providing funds to municipalities for development, the Minister of State wondered why people should vote for the Congress party. The BJP, which unveiled its manifesto last week, promised that there would be no increase in any taxes, including house tax, if it is voted to power in municipalities and municipal corporations.

The state BJP chief cam-



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aigned for the party candidates by addressing public meetings in Kothagudem, Kodad and Nalgonda.

He claimed that Telangana is tired of BRS-Congress and that people are looking to the BJP as the only option in municipal elections. The BJP has intensified the campaign for the February 11 elections to the 116 municipalities and

seven municipal corporations.

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay cautioned people that if they vote for the Congress party in municipal elections, the party would burden them by increasing taxes.

Bandi Sanjay, who is campaigning for BJP candidates in Karimnagar district, said the BJP has already released its manifesto for civic polls, promising a freeze on all local taxes. Addressing an election rally in Choppadandi on Sunday, the BJP leader appealed to people to bring the BJP to power in the Choppadandi municipality. He promised that he would bring funds from the Centre for the development of the town. He assured people that he would take responsibility for the municipality.

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## Mogili Sunitha Rao Mudhiraj Issues Strong Warning to Former Minister Malla Reddy

Hyderabad: AICC member and Telangana Mahila Congress State President, contested MLA Mogili Sunitha Rao Mudhiraj issued a strong warning to former minister Malla Reddy during a party programme, stating that women leaders and workers should not be underestimated or targeted. Addressing party members, Sunitha Rao Mudhiraj said the Congress party has consistently supported women and provided them with significant opportunities in public life and politics. She stated that women are growing as a strong force in leadership and grassroots movements. She cautioned that disrespectful remarks or actions against women leaders and party workers would not be tolerated and warned of serious political consequences if such incidents continue. Using strong language, she asserted that Congress women leaders would firmly resist any attempts to intimidate or insult them. Reiterating her stand, she said women in politics are capable of standing up boldly and fighting back against injustice, and called on party cadre to remain united and vigilant.



**Mini aircraft crashes in Vijayapura, pilot and passenger ejected safely**

Vijayapura: A private mini aircraft crashed in Karnataka's Vijayapura district on Sunday, but both the pilot and passenger narrowly escaped unharmed, officials said.

The two-seat aircraft, reportedly flying from Kalaburagi to Belagavi, went down in Mangaluru village, located in Babalshwar Taluk.

According to reports, both occupants were ejected from the aircraft before it hit the ground. The plane broke into three pieces on impact. The duo sustained injuries and were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

**AP: Jagan Reddy regime hurt sentiments of Hindus with adulterated ghee: TDP State Chief alleges**

Visakhapatnam, Feb 8 (TSIT) Telugu Desam Party State President Palla Srinivasa Rao on Sunday charged the previous Jagan Reddy regime with hurting the sentiments of crores of Hindus by allowing supply of adulterated ghee to the Tirumala hill shrine for preparation of the sacred laddu prasadam. Addressing a press conference here, he cited investigation details to state that synthetic and chemical substances were used for the preparation of the sacred Tirumala laddu prasadam, calling it a profound betrayal of Hindu

faith. "Nearly 20 crore laddus were prepared using close to 68 lakh kilograms of what was described as so-called ghee. Reports indicate that instead of pure dairy ghee, substances such as palm oil, chemical additives, and synthetic compounds were used to make ghee that was supplied to the Tirumala temple," he said.

Stating that 70,000 to 80,000 devotees visit Tirumala hill shrine daily, the TDP senior leader warned that defiling a globally recognised sacred offering would remain a permanent blot on history.

The TDP State Chief demanded strict punishment for all those who were involved in the adulterated ghee scam.

"The Tirumala laddu adulteration is a living example of how institutions deteriorate when those in power have no reverence for dharma," Palla Srinivasa Rao regretted, recalling that over 200 attacks took place against Hindu temples during the five year YSRCP regime but cases were registered in only some incidents allowing the perpetrators to get away with their crimes. Though attacks

took place on many Hindu temples during the YSRCP regime, the then government did not take firm action to protect temples from attacks and punish the culprits, he reiterated.

The TDP State Chief accused the former Chief Minister Jagan Reddy of encouraging violence during his tenure, and now attempting to play the victim card while provoking caste tensions for political survival. He stated that immediately upon assuming office, the coalition government brought this issue to light and placed the facts before the public.

**Chandrababu Naidu using laddu issue to divert attention from failures: YSR Congress**



Amaravati, Feb 8 : YSR Congress Party leader and former minister Kurasala Kannababu on Sunday accused Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu of repeatedly dragging the Tirupati laddu issue into public discourse to divert attention from what he described as the failures of his government.

Speaking to the media in Kakinada, Kannababu said that despite being in power for 20 months, the government has failed to implement key promises and resorts to raising the laddu controversy whenever it faces criticism.

Kannababu, who is the North Andhra regional coordinator of the YSRCP, alleged that for political gain, Chandrababu Naidu is tarnishing the sanctity of Tirumala, hurting Hindu sentiments, and attempting to politically target YS Jagan Mohan Reddy through what he termed false propaganda.

He pointed out that even after the Supreme Court-monitored CBI Special Investigation Team (SIT) made it clear that there was no evidence of animal fat adulteration, the ruling coalition continues its alleged misinformation

campaign. He also said that the ghee samples cited in the controversy were drawn after the coalition came to power, and that approvals to Bhole Baba Dairy were originally granted during Chandrababu Naidu's earlier tenure.

Kannababu said the SIT report clearly recorded that ghee tankers rejected by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) during the coalition government's period re-entered the system through backdoor routes and were later used, yet the blame was being shifted to the YSRCP.

He criticised coalition leaders for questioning how ghee could be procured at low prices, reminding them that ghee had been supplied at even lower rates during Chandrababu Naidu's previous tenure. He condemned claims that adulterated laddus were sent even to Ayodhya, calling such statements irresponsible and asserting that they were unrelated to the TTD, as the consignments were sent by individual board members.

He stressed that former TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy himself approached

the Supreme Court seeking a CBI probe as he had nothing to hide, and alleged that the ruling side began its propaganda even before the investigation was concluded. He questioned whether dragging a deity worshipped by millions into political battles was not an insult to faith.

Accusing Chandrababu Naidu of attacking Hindu dharma itself, Kannababu said that after being exposed by the SIT findings, the Chief Minister was now introducing new claims such as the alleged use of "toilet cleaning chemicals" in laddu preparation to keep the controversy alive.

He alleged that Chandrababu Naidu is trying to use BJP support to politically target the YSRCP and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. He contrasted this with the previous YSRCP government's record, claiming it protected Hindu interests, built around 3,000 temples, constructed temples dedicated to Lord Venkateswara in multiple cities, and issued orders recognising Tirumala's seven hills and banning non-Hindu religious propagation there. He accused the current ruling coalition of failing to protect temples and instead presiding over their neglect. Kannababu further alleged that when YSRCP leaders demand apologies for what they term false allegations, they face abuses, attacks and police cases. He claimed incidents involving petrol bombs and acid bottles, vandalism at leaders' homes, and misuse of the police machinery to intimidate the opposition, describing the situation as "jungle raj".

**'Youth betrayed': Vijay targets DMK govt over sudden TNPSC exam cancellation**

Chennai, Feb 8 : Thousands of government job aspirants across Tamil Nadu were left shocked and disappointed after the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) abruptly postponed the Group-2 and Group-2A main examinations scheduled for Sunday, citing lapses in the allocation of examination centres.

The last-minute decision triggered widespread frustration among candidates and quickly escalated into a political controversy, with several parties criticising the state government.

Candidates who had travelled long distances to attend the examination expressed anger and distress over the sudden announcement. Many had spent months and even years preparing for the highly competitive recruitment process. For them, securing a government job through the Group-2



and Group-2A services is seen as a pathway to financial stability and long-term security.

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president Vijay strongly condemned the development, accusing the DMK government of failing the youth of the state. In a social media post, he said the government had "betrayed the hopes of thousands of young people" through what he described as poor planning and administrative inefficiency.

"A government job is the biggest dream for many youngsters. They study day and night for years and clear the preliminary examination through sheer hard work. Cancelling the main exam at the last moment shatters their confidence and wastes their precious time," Vijay said.

He added that even if the examination is rescheduled, candidates would be forced to repeat their preparation, causing mental stress and uncertainty. According to him, such lapses

reveal the government's lack of seriousness towards youth welfare. Pointing to earlier irregularities reported in other recruitment examinations, including municipal job tests, Vijay questioned whether deeper issues lay behind the sudden cancellation.

"It is natural to suspect that something is being hidden. Those responsible must explain what really happened," he said, demanding accountability and transparency. He urged the authorities to ensure that such incidents do not recur and called for corrective measures to protect the interests of aspirants. Vijay also asserted that the youth would respond democratically in the upcoming Assembly elections. Meanwhile, TNPSC is expected to announce revised dates for the examinations, as anxious candidates await clarity on their next opportunity.

**AP: Govt. urged to take precautions to check H5N1 Bird Flu outbreak**

Vijayawada, Feb 8 (TSIT) Dr. Ambati Naga Radhakrishna Yadav, Chairman of the YSRCP NTR District Doctors Wing, has urged the government of Andhra Pradesh to take required precautionary measures to prevent the outbreak of H5N1 bird flu.

Dr. Ambati Naga Radhakrishna Yadav has written to the Chief Secretary and the Secretary of Animal Husbandry & Health, seeking urgent preventive action following the H5N1 Avian Influenza outbreak in Chennai.



Highlighting the gravity of the situation reported on February 6, where hundreds of crows were found dead in the neighboring state, Dr. Yadav emphasized that Andhra Pradesh's shared borders with Tamil Nadu—specifically through Chittoor, Tirupati, and Nellore—make the state

highly vulnerable to the spread of the virus via migratory birds and poultry transport.

In his communication, Dr. Yadav, a medical professional, underscored the severe risks the H5N1 strain poses to human health, noting its potential to cause acute pneumonia and multi-

organ failure with high mortality rates. He called for a proactive "One Health" coordination between the health, animal husbandry, and wildlife departments to prevent any zoonotic spillover. Dr. Yadav urged the administration to immediately implement intensified field surveillance, strict biosecurity checks at border points, and public awareness campaigns on the safe handling of bird carcasses to protect both the poultry industry and the citizens of Andhra Pradesh.



The Mahashivaratri Brahmotsavams, which will be held for eleven days (from 08.02.2026 to 18.02.2026) with the Navahnika Deeksha to celebrate Mahashivaratri, began in srissailam...

**SRM University-AP becomes founding academic partner of AP's Quantum Valley Project**

Amaravati: In a major boost to India's quantum technology ecosystem, SRM University-AP has joined the Andhra Pradesh Government's ambitious Quantum Valley Project as its founding academic partner. The university signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Government for establishing a Quantum Reference Facility, the first of its kind in India and the fourth globally.

The MoU was signed on the occasion of the announcement and foundation stone laying of the Amaravati Quantum Valley Project, in the presence of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Minister for IT, Electronics and Communications Nara Lokesh. Vice Chancellor Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar, Registrar Dr. R. Premkumar, Dean-Academic Affairs Dr. Vinayak Kalluri and



Dean-Research Prof. Ranjit Thapa represented SRM University-AP. With this partnership, SRM University-AP becomes the first academic institution to collaborate with the Andhra Pradesh Government on the Quantum Valley Project, focusing on academic partnerships, research and talent development. The Quantum Reference Facility at SRM AP will function as a shared

national and global platform, enabling startups, researchers and industry partners to test and validate quantum computing components, benchmark performance and assess efficiency before large-scale deployment. The initiative aims to lower entry barriers, reduce development risks and accelerate the commercialisation of quantum technologies. The university is also setting up a dedicated

Quantum Institute to promote interdisciplinary research, teaching and training in quantum sciences, involving experts from physics, computer science, electronics, mathematics and engineering. In addition, SRM AP will offer specialised academic programmes, hands-on laboratories, industry-linked projects, internships and startup incubation in quantum technologies.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar said the initiative reflects the university's commitment to research excellence and technological self-reliance, with a vision to develop 'Made in India' quantum solutions. He thanked the Andhra Pradesh Government for its visionary leadership and support, stating that the Amaravati Quantum Valley Project will position the State as a global hub for deep-technology innovation.

**Organizers Receive Asia Book of Records & India Book of Records for Historic Candle Formation**

Pocharam, Hyderabad, Telangana — In a moment of great honor and recognition, Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records have officially conferred their prestigious awards on the organizing team for successfully attempting the record of the Largest Human Formation of a Star Using Candles in Tanuku, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh on 15th December 2025.

The record certificates were presented by Noel Swarnajit Sen, Former Director General of Police (DGP) of United Andhra Pradesh (IPS), along with Dr. J. Chiranjeevi, Founder of Ashirwad Global Learning Center.

The record was received by Rt. Rev. Bishop Dr. Mathew Meagher and Rev. O. Manoj Bob, accompanied by the dedicated team members Rev. G. Timothy Raju, Bishop B. David Raju, Rev. A. Sam Bob, Rev. R. Salmon Joseph, Rev. E. Vijay Prasad, Rev. P. I. Brenham, Rev. K. Blessing Raju, Rev. K. S. Raju, Rev. K. David Babu, Rev. A. Reddiah, Rev. S. Krupavaram, Rev. G. Joshua, Rev. B. Yesu Ratnam who played a vital role in organizing and executing this remarkable event.

The historic attempt witnessed



enthusiastic participation and meticulous coordination, symbolizing unity, peace, and collective responsibility through the powerful imagery of candlelight. The formation stood as a visual expression of harmony and social commitment, earning appreciation from record authorities and dignitaries alike. Speaking on the occasion, the organizers expressed gratitude to all volunteers, participants, and

supporters whose cooperation made this achievement possible. The recognition by both Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records stands as a testament to teamwork, vision, and community engagement. This milestone not only brings national and international recognition but also inspires future initiatives aimed at social awareness and unity.

# No 'saudebaazi', India-US trade deal safeguards farmers: Chouhan

**BHOPAL:** Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday asserted the India-US trade deal was reached through constructive dialogue, not "saudebaazi" (bargaining), while hitting out at the Congress over its allegations that it was a surrender. The pact provides complete protection to the agriculture sector and keeps farmers' and the national interests paramount, Chouhan said, asserting that key agricultural products vital to cultivators have been excluded from the agreement. "No product that would cause even the slightest harm to Indian farmers has been included in this agreement," the senior BJP leader said at a press conference at his residence here. He further slammed the Congress, pointing out that

despite ruling for years, the party had failed to connect farmers to global markets or bring stability to the Indian economy. "The India-US trade deal has sent a message to the world that Bharat's policy is one of commitment, not compromise. With self-confidence, we take decisions in the country's interest," the Union minister said. The Congress on Saturday claimed that India has not benefited from the trade agreement and that it is "not a deal but a surrender" of the country's self-esteem and interests. Dismissing the Opposition party's claim, Chouhan said, "We did not do 'saudebaazi' (underhand dealing or bargain) but did it (reached the deal) by a balanced approach with constructive dialogue."

The pact was a unique example of India's diplomacy, development and dignity, he asserted. "Diplomacy means nation first, development is the foundation of the country, and dignity means the dignity (garima) of farmers has been fully taken care of," he said. US President Donald Trump on Monday said India and the US have agreed to a trade deal. On his part, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was delighted that "made in India products will now have a reduced tariff of 18 per cent". Congress's media and publicity department head, Pawan Khara, claimed that India will soon become a dumping ground for American products, which would hurt the interests of farmers and small and medium



industries here. Chouhan rejected the Congress's charges, saying the party had ruled the country for years but did little for farmers. "The Congress ruled the

country for decades, including 10 years of the UPA, but failed to connect farmers with global markets or provide stability and momentum to the Indian economy," he said.

He said the Indian economy was the world's sixth largest at the time of Independence, but was pushed down to the 11th position. "We are now moving rapidly towards becoming the world's third largest economy," he added. He clarified that agricultural products, which are the core strength of the country's farmers, have been kept out of this agreement. "National interest is paramount, farmers' interest is paramount," he asserted. He noted that Prime Minister Modi had said he would not let the country bow and would not allow any harm to farmers' interests. "You will see in this trade deal that both these aspects have been fully taken care of," the Union minister said. Chouhan also stressed that India will not allow

the entry of any genetically modified (GM) products, calling it a very big decision. "This will preserve the purity of Indian agriculture. Our soil and our seeds will remain safe," he maintained. Chouhan further said that no tariff concessions have been given to the US on products such as meat, poultry, dairy, soybean, maize, rice, wheat, sugar, coarse grains, bananas, strawberries, cherries, citrus fruits, green peas, chickpeas, moong, oilseeds, ethanol and tobacco. He said dehusked grains and flour, potatoes, onions, peas, beans, cucumbers, mushrooms, frozen vegetables, oranges, grapes, lemons and mixed canned vegetables will also not enter India. Dairy products, including liquid, powdered and con-

densed milk, cream, yoghurt, buttermilk, butter, ghee, butter oil, paneer, whey products and cheese, will also not be allowed entry into India. Spices, including black pepper, cloves, dried green chillies, cinnamon, coriander, cumin, asafoetida, ginger, turmeric, carom seeds, fenugreek, mustard, and other powdered spices, will also not come in, he informed. This would ensure the livelihoods of Indian farmer families remain secure, the agriculture minister said. The Congress on Saturday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the interim trade agreement with the US, claiming the deal is against India's interests, and that all the "hugloma-cy and photo-ops" have not amounted to much.

## Punjab Police recovers 25 kg of heroin from Amritsar, arrests two

**CHANDIGARH:** Two persons were arrested, and 25 kg of heroin, along with arms and ammunition, was seized from them in Punjab's Amritsar, a police officer said on Sunday. The arrests were made by the Punjab Police in a joint operation with the Border Security Force (BSF), Amritsar, the officer said. "In a major breakthrough against trans-border narcotics and arms smuggling, Amritsar Rural Police, in a joint operation with the BSF, recovered a huge consignment of 25 kg heroin, 2 pistols and 60 live rounds," Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said in a post on X. DGP Yadav said that two persons, residents of the Ghogha area, were also arrested during the operation.



"The recovery points towards an organised cross-border smuggling module using drones," he added. Efforts are underway to trace forward and backward linkages. An FIR has been registered, and further investigation is underway, he said.

## Surajkund swing collapse: Police arrest ride operator, staff; CM calls for strict adherence to safety norms

**FARIDABAD:** Police on Sunday arrested a swing operator and one of his staff members, a day after an on-duty inspector died and 12 others got injured when a giant 'Tsunami' swing snapped mid-air and collapsed at the Surajkund fairgrounds here. The tragedy struck the 39th Surajkund International Crafts Mela on Saturday evening, when about 19 people were riding the swing before it suddenly tilted and then crashed onto the ground. Inspector Jagdish Prasad (58), who died trying to save people, joined the Haryana Armed Police in 1989 and was to retire in March after completing 36 years in the force, officials said. His body was handed over to his family on Sunday after an autopsy, police said. "A special investigation team formed to probe the incident has arrested two accused - Mohammad Shakir, a resident of Himachal Pradesh's Sirmour district, and the proprietor of Himachal Fun Care that operated the giant swing, and Nitesh from Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, who worked under

Shakir. The role of others is being examined," Yashpal, a spokesperson for Faridabad police, said. A total of 12 people were injured in the accident, including female ASI Neelam, female constable Sharmila, SPO Rajesh, Harsh Prakash, Prashant, Amisha, Parvinder, Sunil, Shivani, Balbir, Anuj and Pooja, Yashpal said, adding that five of them have been discharged from the hospital after treatment. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday directed the concerned officials to ensure strict adherence to safety standards in the fair and other public events. "The government stands firmly with the family of Jagdish Prasad in this difficult time. Those seriously injured in the accident will receive financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh each from the state government," Saini said. The district administration, meanwhile, has said that the fair will continue on Sunday, with the swing area cordoned off pending further investigation. On Saturday night, Haryana DGP Ajay Singhal announced a com-

ensation of Rs 1 crore for the brave inspector and a government job to one member of his family. Stating that Prasad will be given the status of a martyr, the DGP lauded the officer for sacrificing his life trying to save the lives of others. On Sunday, DGP Singhal and Faridabad Commissioner Satendra Kumar Gupta met Prasad's family and offered their condolences. They also visited a hospital to inquire about the injured, police said. "Inspector Jagdish Prasad made a commendable effort to rescue the injured while on duty. His death is a profound tragedy for the police department. "The department will provide financial assistance to the family as much as possible, and employment will be provided to an eligible member under the compassionate leave policy," the DGP said. On Sunday, Tourism Director Parth Gupta and Faridabad Deputy Commissioner Ayush Sinha inspected the fairground to review security arrangements.



The accident occurred barely an hour after a gate collapsed at the fairground, injuring two, including a child, officials said. Police earlier formed a four-member SIT to investigate the case, headed by DCP (Crime) Mukesh Kumar, with ACP (Crime) Varun Dahiya, and sub-inspector Sanjay Kumar from the Surajkund police station as members, a senior police officer said.

The SIT has been tasked with carrying out a detailed probe into the incident, including fixing responsibility for negligence, if any, and evaluating adherence to the safety compliance measures. According to the complaint filed by Assistant Sub-inspector Sunny, he was present at the fairground with Inspector Prasad when many people were seen enjoying the 'Tsunami' ride.

## Gaurav, wife have 'deeper connection' with Pak agent; FCRA violated to pay her salary: Himanta

**GUWAHATI:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday alleged that Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, his British wife Elizabeth Colburn and Pakistani national Ali Tauqueer Sheikh had a "deeper connection", and that information from the Intelligence Bureau was secretly passed on to the neighbouring nation. Addressing a press conference here ahead of the Assembly polls, Sarma also claimed that Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) rules were violated when Colburn was paid salary by Sheikh while she was working in India. The CM also alleged that Gogoi undertook a "very confidential" visit to Pakistan in 2013 and was believed to have undergone "some kind of training" there, daring the Congress leader to

come clean on the trip or face charges of "rashtra-droh" (treason). Gogoi, also the state Congress chief, termed Sarma's presser "worse than a C-grade cinema" a "super flop". The CM said, "We believe there is a deeper connection between Gogoi, Colburn and Sheikh. We believe that Colburn and Sheikh were part of an international conspiracy." Sarma asserted they bypassed the Indian government to work with local municipal agencies, and this cannot be probed by the Assam Police. "So we recommended a national probe by the Ministry of Home Affairs," he added. Sarma claimed that Colburn had worked with LEAD Pakistan, an organisation run by Sheikh, before being transferred to India to work with the same group. "But her salary continued to be paid by

Sheikh," he said. LEAD Pakistan sent money to LEAD India, and the latter paid to Colburn bypassing FCRA regulations, the CM alleged. "Pakistani agencies cannot donate to an Indian entity as it's an enemy nation. Probably special permission was obtained in UPA time to pay Colburn," he added. The CM claimed that after working in India, Colburn started gathering information surrounding India and used to give reports to Sheikh. "Colburn got information from IB sources about climate action after Narendra Modi came to power. She sent a 45-page report to Sheikh," he added. He also alleged that Colburn travelled to Islamabad six times while working with LEAD India and visited Pakistan thrice after joining another NGO.

The chief minister claimed that direct receipt of Pakistani funds in violation of FCRA norms was not easy and suggested that there could be "another handler very close" to the UPA government establishment. He also alleged that Colburn had a Pakistani bank account to receive salaries there, but she did not reply during questioning if it was closed or still active. "Gogoi, however, did not mention this Pakistani account in his election affidavit. Now, I feel his opponent should complain to the EC about giving wrong information in the affidavit," he added. Assam govt will seek cancellation of OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) of Colburn as her presence is detrimental to India. While the press conference was going on, Gogoi in a post

on X said, "I pity the journalists from Delhi and Assam who had to suffer the most flop press conference of the century. This was worse than a C grade cinema." "Most mindless and bogus points" have been offered by the "so-called political shrewd" CM of Assam, he said. "This #SuperFlop is in contrast to our #XomoyParivartanYatra which has been a hit in uncovering the 12,000 bighas of land occupied by the Chief Minister and his family members," Gogoi said. Sarma further said the Congress MP undertook a "very confidential visit" to Pakistan in December 2013, when his wife was already posted in India, and he was staying at the CM's residence then. His father, late Tarun Gogoi, was Assam chief minister at that time.

## 'Operation Prahar-2' against wanted criminals from Feb 10: Punjab DGP

**CHANDIGARH:** The Punjab Police will launch "Operation Prahar-2", a statewide drive against wanted criminals from Monday, said Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav here on Sunday. The 72-hour operation focuses on wanted criminals and will start from Monday, Yadav said. Our purpose is to make Punjab safe and secure by giving a sense of security to common people, the DGP said while speaking to reporters here. He said 12,000 officers, who will be part of 2,000 teams, will be deployed under this operation. "Our aim is to make Punjab crime and gangster-free. There is zero tolerance for crime and organised crime," Yadav

said. Earlier on January 20, the Punjab Police had launched Operation Prahar, a statewide drive to dismantle the entire ecosystem of organised crime. Highlighting the outcome of last month's operation, Yadav said to date, 5,290 people have been arrested, and 2,972 have taken into preventive custody. On the ongoing drive under "Yudh Nashian Virudh" (war against drugs), the DGP said that as many as 34,000 FIRs have been registered since March 2025, and 45,000 arrests have been made, which include 3,000 big suppliers and 65 hawala operators. Heroin recovery stands at 2,150 kg to date, he said. Police have given detailed

instructions regarding operational preparedness, Yadav said. Senior officers will visit the scene of the crime and will personally be in the fields and supervise checkings, patrolling and will make maximum utilisation of manpower in core duties of policing, the DGP said. In every district, fixed checkpoints will be established for round-the-clock checking of vehicles, especially two-wheelers, he said. "We have also issued SOP (standard operating procedure) that if any incident takes place, what should be the response to that. In this, we are putting a lot of focus on the use of wireless networks," he said.

## Agencies hired by govt selectively targeting booths where SP won elections: Akhilesh slams SIR

**LUCKNOW:** Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday alleged large-scale misuse of the Special Intensive Revision exercise in Uttar Pradesh, claiming that professional agencies hired by the government were selectively targeting booths where his party had won elections. Addressing a press conference here, Yadav said, "The government has hired certain agencies comprising professionals sitting in Delhi, Lucknow and other places across the country. They have access to the entire electoral roll data and, using that, they are identifying booths where the Samajwadi Party won elections previously. Form-7 is being systematically filled and sent from such booths." According to the Election Commission, Form-7 is used to either object to someone's inclusion in the electoral roll or request deletion of a name already listed. "The forms are properly filled, printed and then sent. At many places, this has led to protests and disturbances," Yadav claimed. The former Uttar Pradesh

chief minister also alleged that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise had already influenced election outcomes in the country. "Through the SIR, they (the BJP) have managed to win the Bihar elections. The exercise played a major role there," he claimed. Alleging that similar attempts were being made in poll-bound West Bengal, Yadav said, "The BJP is trying to do the same thing in Bengal. That is why the Bengal government and its chief minister (Mamata Banerjee) are repeatedly saying that the poll panel has become the BJP's commission. On Mamata Banerjee arguing her case against the SIR before the Supreme Court as a lawyer, Yadav said, "She was forced to wear the black coat and stand before the Supreme Court against the BJP. This shows the kind of discrimination that is taking place and how the Election Commission has become a 'Sahyogi Dal' (ally party) of the BJP." He also claimed that several Samajwadi workers and PDA 'praharis' had flagged the suspi-

cious forms. "From time to time, the PDA praharis and Samajwadi workers and leaders have given us forms which were already filled," he claimed. PDA is a political acronym coined by Yadav to represent a coalition of backward classes (Pichhda), Dalits, and minorities (Alpsankhyak). Yadav also referred to specific cases, naming individuals who, he claimed, were victims of forgery. "A matter involving Dashrath and Nandlal has now come to light. Nandlal is with us today. I am happy that brave Nandlal is standing with us," he said. Alleging signature forgery, Yadav said, "This is the same Nandlal whose thumb impression was allegedly taken by the BJP. Just think of all the sections that are invoked when someone forges a signature. The Election Commission also has rules on this. "I have given Rs 1 lakh to Nandlal for his courage, for helping to save democracy, and for bringing the truth before us. BJP leaders were pressuring him earlier."

## PM Modi protected interests of farmers, workers: BJP chief on India-US trade deal

**NEW DELHI:** BJP chief Nitin Nabin on Sunday said the Narendra Modi government made the trade deal with the US "diplomatically and patiently", ensuring the interests of the farmers and workers remain protected. India and the US announced on Saturday that they have reached a framework for an interim trade agreement, under which both sides will reduce import duties on a number of goods to boost the two-way trade. Attending an event at the Ramelela Maidan here, Nabin congratulated the prime minister on the trade agreement. The Modi government has "diplomatically and patiently" made a trade deal with the US, he said. "I congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this deal. He has protected the interests of the farmers, workers and enhanced the



self-respect of the country." Flagger off 500 e-buses along with Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and her Cabinet ministers, the BJP national president said these buses were a gift for the people of the national capital, who, on this day 8 last year, handed over a massive victory to the BJP.

In the past year, the BJP government in Delhi has worked with zero tolerance towards corruption, and promoted digital governance, he said while lauding various initiatives such as the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Health Scheme. Nabin alleged that the previous AAP government depended on "excuses",

while the BJP government now believes in performance and working for the people. The change is visible under the government run by the BJP, which always works to create hope and take development to people's doorsteps, he said, citing the Atal Canteens opened in Delhi that provide meals to the needy at a nominal

price of Rs 5 per person. "The previous governments made big promises, put up hoardings and made announcements. But the results were not visible on the ground. However, our government has proved that it is a result-oriented dispensation," he asserted. Lauding CM Gupta, Nabin said the BJP government is working with dedication to realise Prime Minister Modi's dream for a clean Yamuna river. In a dig at AAP chief Kejriwal, the BJP president said, "A former chief minister used to say that there were problems with treatment at hospitals because outsiders thronged them. "The BJP government is now saying the health services will be upgraded so that people from anywhere in the country may benefit from them. This is the difference between the BJP and other governments," Nabin asserted.

# EDITORIAL

## Perils of Opening India's Agricultural Market to United States Business

'Uttam Kheti, Madhyam Vaan, Nirghin Seva, Bheekh Nidaan.'

These words in Bhojpuri, from a folk song popular in the faraway fields and villages of Purvanchal distil a code of life in a few words. Sung in the purvanchal region spanning eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar, they roughly mean 'agriculture is the worthiest pursuit, trade a middling profession and service is the worst - even begging is better than that'. This folk wisdom may sound harsh to urban ears, but it captures an agrarian worldview shaped by generations of lived experience. It also offers a telling lens from which to view the current talk about opening India's agricultural market to the United States.

Usually, this debate is framed in the language of global integration, trade efficiency, market access and consumer choice. Rarely is it viewed from the vantage point of Indian farmers and farm families, for whom agriculture is not merely an occupation but a way of living, remembering, asserting dignity and freedom - and surviving against the odds. So, let it be clear: your writer is no expert on international trade or business. He speaks, instead, as one who has spent a significant part of his life as an agriculturist, or listening closely to farming communities, and ultimately anchoring his stories in the folklore and lived realities of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The contrast

In India, agriculture is not an "abstract" sector, waiting to be liberalised. It is an emotionally-connected and fragile ecosystem sustained by collective memory, social bonds and narrow margins of hope. For farmers, their fields are as precious as the birth of a son. Oxen, cows and buffaloes are not merely sources of sustenance; they are symbols of dignity, continuity and pride.

This stands in sharp contrast to American agriculture, which is built on scale, heavy subsidies, advanced technology and corporate modes of organisation. Indian agriculture, in contrast, rests on small landholdings, unpaid family labour, seasonal uncertainty and cultural continuity. More than 85% of Indian farmers are small or marginal. Yet their homes, cattle wealth and farm fields remain the ultimate fallback for families - especially for children who lose jobs, fall ill or suffer business losses in the unfarily competitive urban ecosystem. Recall the lakhs of migrant labourers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, who, during the COVID-19 catastrophe of 2020-22, had to walk hundreds if not thousands of kilometres from Delhi, Punjab, Maharashtra and elsewhere to reach their homes. To them, memories of that long march to their villages are still fresh. They trudged home, carrying on their tired backs or in carts their babies and belongings. In those moments of profound distress, they instinctively chose their villages over cities, despite official claims that they would be provided food, medicine, oxygen and care. So, the fact that both India and America have vast farmlands does not make them similar. No such long march occurred in the United States of America during the pandemic. Nor do Indian farmers compete with American farmers. They merely coexist with them - as they do with nature and as they must do with policy - often an uneasy coexistence. Opening India's market to farm produce from the United States, without robust safeguards for domestic farmers, is not 'competition'. It is an uneven contest between an industrial system and a survival economy. And it could well signal the beginning of the end of India's cultural and civilisational threads, woven around agriculture.

In the United States, agriculture is primarily a source of income and profit for large corporations and business houses that enjoy heavy clout within the governance system. In India, agriculture denotes identity, culture and social continuity. In the United States, it is largely another means to generate income and maximise profit.

Unlike Indian farmers, American farmers do not worship their oxen and cows, nor do they celebrate harvest as a civilisational ritual. Their cattle wealth is destined to become steak, meatball and bacon - commodities that join the global supply chains, but little else. Seen purely through an Indian agriculturist's lens, powerful corporations and business houses appear to have inspired US President Donald Trump's decision to push for an agricultural trade deal with an India still mired in rural poverty, inequality and stark disparities.

When subsidised American produce enters Indian markets, price signals are bound to collapse. For a small farmer, even a modest price dip can determine whether a daughter or son goes to school, or whether a loan is rolled over once again.

## US-India Trade: Why the Interim Agreement Is A Vital Reset



After months of escalating tensions and ongoing negotiations, the United States and India announced an interim trade agreement, with a final comprehensive accord expected in March. The agreement is a welcome and long-overdue development, representing a deliberate effort by both governments to step back from an increasingly untenable trajectory and to restore a degree of stability to an economic relationship that had come under sustained strain. The US-India strategic partnership has weathered one of its most difficult periods in over 25 years. While other arenas of the bilateral relationship continued to advance, economic tensions steadily accumulated. The Trump administration's decision to impose punishing 50 per cent tariffs on India plunged the bilateral relationship into crisis and uncertainty, with many questioning the longstanding bipartisan consensus surrounding the relationship as well as its underlying strategic logic. Half of the tariff rate was purportedly the result of India's imports of Russian oil, underscoring the far-reaching geopolitical dimension to the trade tensions. For months, a resolution to arrest the

downward trajectory of the trade relationship appeared elusive. Both sides, however, recognised that the status quo was unsustainable. The finalisation of a comprehensive trade deal between the EU and India, following more than two decades of stalled negotiations, injected new urgency in the US-India negotiations. Allowing trade disputes to persist without a clear path forward risked undermining confidence in the broader relationship and limiting the effectiveness of cooperation in other areas. The interim framework reflects a mutual recognition that the ongoing dispute could not persist unaddressed. At the most fundamental level, the framework succeeds in stabilising the trade relationship. The establishment of a reciprocal tariff baseline and the removal of the additional duties imposed last year reduce uncertainty for exporters, importers, and investors. While the resulting tariff levels remain meaningful, the restoration of improved predictability itself is a material improvement. Equally important is the way the framework reconnects economic engagement with strategic alignment. The United

States has made clear that trade treatment is being evaluated alongside energy, defense, and geopolitical considerations. India appears willing to situate trade discussions within that broader strategic context. This reflects the reality of contemporary trade policy where economic outcomes are increasingly shaped by national security and foreign policy considerations. Unsurprisingly, this is one of the key themes that runs throughout the joint statement between the two countries. Perhaps the most encouraging element of the framework is its emphasis on technology. The explicit focus on advanced technology products, data center infrastructure, and high-end compute signals a shared understanding that the future of the bilateral relationship will be defined in large part by digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, and secure supply chains. This is a meaningful shift from earlier trade dialogues that were often dominated by traditional market access disputes. There are additional signs that suggest a more pragmatic approach by both sides. The attention to non-tariff barriers, including standards con-

formity assessment and licensing practices, acknowledges that many of the most significant trade frictions today operate outside formal tariff schedules. Progress in these areas could yield practical benefits if implemented with discipline. The reintroduction of digital trade principles is also notable. Embedding this discussion within a broader trade framework may provide a more durable foundation, particularly as data-driven services and cross-border digital activity become central to both economies. At the same time, caution is warranted given how many questions remain unanswered. Many of the most consequential details remain unclarified. Questions remain about the durability of the new tariff structure, the scope of rules of origin, the mechanisms for enforcement and dispute resolution, and the treatment of sensitive sectors such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and digital services. Moreover, questions persist around the role of India's Russian oil imports, the singular factor that prompted Trump to impose an additional 25% punitive tariff on India last year.

## When Leaders Threaten and Civil Servants Look Away, Democracy Crumbles

L'affaire Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam, suggests the land where the Brahmaputra flows is becoming a rogue state. The term, normally used in international affairs, refers to a ruling entity that is keen to deliberately and purposefully commit transgressions and break laws and policies meant to ensure peace and amity. The chief minister's actions - he launched a tirade against Harsh Mander, a former civil servant and highly regarded peace activist - fit this definition. How else does one interpret Sarma's brazen threat, made in a media interview: "Who is Harsh Mander? I have seen many such people in my life. He damaged the NRC [National Register of Citizens] in Assam and if I had been in a position then, I would have taught him a lesson. Now that he has filed a case against me, just watch how many cases will be filed against him ... At least 100 cases will be filed against him. I have material to initiate cases. Since he has targeted Himanta Biswa Sarma, he will get a response. He will know when I target him." What is the provocation for this statement from a constitutional functionary heading a government in the Union of India? According to Mander, he had filed a police complaint against Sarma over the latter's public statements made on January 27, 2026, that "promote hatred, harassment and discrimination against Bengali-speaking Muslims in Assam". Mander has sought prompt action and the registration of an FIR under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita, 2023, including sections 196 (promoting enmity between groups and doing acts prejudicial to harmony), 197 (making assertions prejudicial to national integration), 299 (malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings), 302 (uttering words intending to wound religious feelings) and 353 (statements conducing to public mischief). On that day in January, at an official event in Digboi in Tinsukia district, Sarma had termed Bengali-speaking Muslims "Miya" and made statements encouraging their harassment and discrimination - including deleting their names from the voter rolls. Mander has requested a

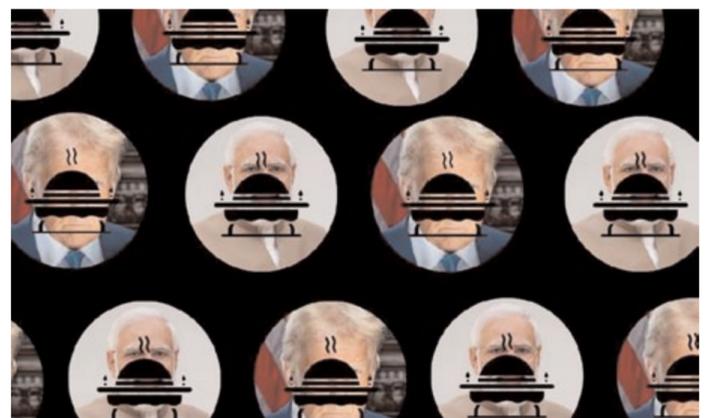


proper investigation and immediate steps to prevent such statements in the future as the special revision of electoral rolls proceeds in Assam. The complaint has been filed at the Hauz Khas Police Station in New Delhi and there is no word that the police have taken further steps in the matter. Besides, Sarma's heavy-handed tactics are not limited to Mander. His statements related to the Election Commission of India (ECI) are equally plain and blunt, and he appears to have commandeered the institution itself. At the same official event, he said his job was to "make the Miya people suffer", and then he declared that Muslims would not be allowed to vote in Assam. According to him, the special revision was a preliminary step - when the SIR [Special Intensive Revision] will be conducted, "four to five lakh" Muslim votes would be deleted in the state. The ECI has not responded to the chief minister who has openly declared he was working to take away the voting rights of a section of Indian citizens. The three eminent former civil servants who occupy the exalted position of Chief Election Commissioner and election commissioners seem to have allowed politicians to take the lead instead of them. It looks as if the civil servants of Assam have also let go of their responsibilities in favour of their political bosses. How else could a person occupying a transient

political position, who has no legal, executive or judicial authority to launch criminal proceedings, intimidate a citizen with "100 cases" for providing legal human rights assistance to [Muslim] victims in search of justice? Possibly emboldened by past victories, this politician appears to treat Assam's IAS and IPS officers as little more than instruments to be directed. Something similar happened a quarter-century ago in another state, and its thunderous reverberations are still being felt throughout the country. Mander was the first to call out the Gujarat massacre of 2002 as a pogrom and to say that the bureaucracy and the police (civil servants) had been complicit in the targeted violence against Muslims in the state. He then left the IAS for good, saying, "My heart is sickened, my soul wearied, my shoulders aching with the burdens of guilt and shame." I experienced a similar moment while at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie, sometime in March 2002. I had been invited by Wajahat Habibullah, director of the academy at the time, to deliver a few lectures to the IAS probationers on government and civil society. Believing that the Gujarat tragedy would still be fresh in the minds of the young probationers, I briefly explained the horrid events to them and sought their reaction.

## NOT THE WHOLE COURSE, THIS IS AUTHORITARIANISM A LA CARTE

India and the US are operating under a similar form of authoritarianism that has emerged from substantially similar reasons, while being distinctly different from that found in other countries. Last week the director of the FBI, Kash Patel, announced an investigation into Signal groups monitoring the activity of the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) personnel in Minnesota. It is no coincidence that this sounds very much like the rationale behind which the Indian government has gone after Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, and others protesting the National Register of Citizens and Citizenship Amendment Act in the 2020 Delhi riots case. In both cases, the government seeks to criminalise group conversations about dissent that is central to democratic politics. The anti-democratic regimes in India and the United States have deep similarities, and those similarities deserve specific focus. Unfortunately, this is rarely the case. For example, John Burn-Murdoch wrote recently in the Financial Times comparing Trump's assault on democratic institutions, and how this compares with democratic backsliding in Hungary, Venezuela, Russia, and Turkey. Don Moynihan, Professor of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, reads the data differently, but does not quibble with Burn-Murdoch's choice of comparative countries. But it is worthwhile to note that none of the countries being compared have a long or deep history of democracy. All the countries - unlike the US - have very centralised govern-



nance structures, with little in the way of federation. Burn-Murdoch's 10 metrics - Electoral integrity, judicial independence, media freedom, central bank independence, civil service & bureaucratic autonomy, toleration/encouragement of political violence, use of state force against civilians, legislative constraints on executive, targeting political opponents, and civil liberties & human rights - are important, but wouldn't it be wise to compare how they are faring in a country similar to the US? It is not just the long and deep history of democracy in the countries that is important, or just the (weak) federalism, but also deep structural similarities of the Modi/Trump anti-democratic project. Critical to both these regimes have been a long-fought 'culture war' - one that pits 'True Americans/True Indians' against perfidious minorities (and also women). In the US the cleavage has been over race and religion, in India, it has been over caste and reli-

gion. In both cases, important legal and constitutional provisions have been used to stoke tensions. In the US this was the end of racial segregation in schools, as well as the autonomy of women to decide over abortion in the 60s and 70s, and in India over separate legal provisions for Muslims (and Kashmiris) as well as reservations in public administration for suppressed caste groups. In both countries, the support for the most reactionary politics has come from states within the Union which have the lowest human development indicators. In both countries, the Supreme Court has played an extremely partisan role, refusing to confront the executive on issues of substance, often finding a way to green flag executive impropriety, so much so that the lawyer and legal commentator Gautam Bhatia has spoken of an "Executive Judiciary." In both cases, the prime executive has surrounded himself with oligarchs, who have - often after 'helpful' state

action - taken over media organisations that were mainstream and known for investigative journalism. And it is worth noting that in both cases, the current avatar of macho nationalism came to power after a visible minority became the chief executive of the country for the first time in its history. Nor do the list of similarities end there. There is the attack on verifiable statistics - particularly on the economy, the pressure on the independence of the central bank, the use of federal forces (the Enforcement Directorate and the Election Commission in India, and others) to pressurise Opposition states and politicians, the elimination of important public institutions - such as the Planning Commission, the elevation of sycophants to positions of authority, handpicking and extending the term of key bureaucrats, and the relentless bragging about how they are perceived by the world.

## Udupi: District hospital generates significant revenue through waste management



Udupi, Feb 8: The Udupi district hospital has set a benchmark in waste management by generating revenue worth lakhs of rupees over the past two years through the systematic disposal and recycling of medical and general waste.

The hospital has implemented a robust segregation process where waste is categorized into dry, wet, and biomedical waste at the source. It is reported that the scrap materials, including plastic bottles, cardboard, and other recyclable items, are being sold to authorized recycling units, leading to a steady income for the institution.

According to available information, the revenue generated from these activities is being

utilized for the maintenance and developmental works of the hospital. The success of the Solid and Liquid Resource Management (SLRM) unit within the hospital premises has been highlighted as a primary factor for this achievement.

Health department sources indicate that the initiative has not only helped in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene within the hospital vicinity but has also significantly reduced the burden of waste disposal on the local municipal body. The systematic approach is now being considered as a model for other government hospitals in the state to ensure environmental sustainability while being financially self-reliant.

## Mangaluru: First pediatric robotic surgery done at K S Hegde Hospital

Mangaluru, Feb 8: A 14-year girl was referred to the department of Pediatric Surgery at Justice K S Hegde Hospital with stomach pain. She was evaluated by a multidisciplinary team involving paediatric surgeon, paediatrics and surgical gastroenterology. She was diagnosed to have a large tumor arising from the liver (cau-

date lobe). There is a high risk of rupture and uncontrollable bleeding in such large liver tumors if not treated on time. Open surgery for removal of the tumor is associated with significant surgical complication as the tumor is located near major blood vessels like vena cava which could lead to excessive bleeding during surgery. Hence

the pediatric surgery team along with surgical gastroenterologists made an informed decision to conduct a robotic assisted liver resection surgery. The operation was challenging and took 11 hours and was done under the guidance of a proctor, Dr Kalayarasan Raja, a renowned surgical gastroenterologist from JIPMER, Pondicherry.

Anaesthesia for such cases is challenging due to the possibility of drop in blood pressure and excessive blood loss which was efficiently managed by the expert anaesthesia team.

The patient had an uneventful and smooth post-operative recovery under the care of the Pediatricians and Pediatric ICU staff.

## Incubation Centre and international conference to be inaugurated at Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University

Bengaluru: Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University will take a major step forward in its academic and innovation journey with the inauguration of a state-of-the-art Incubation Centre and the hosting of an International Conference on "Innovation, Incubation & Global Academic Collaboration" on February 9, 2026.

The University Incubation Centre, to be inaugurated at the PK Block, is designed as a dynamic academic hub to promote student entrepreneurship, faculty-led start-ups, industry collaboration, applied

research, live projects and technology-driven innovation. The initiative places strong emphasis on experiential and hands-on learning to equip students with industry-relevant skills. The Incubation Centre has been conceptualised and initiated by Governor Nominee Syndicate Member Prof. B. R. Supreeth, in his individual academic and professional capacity, with the objective of enabling students to engage in real-world problem-solving and innovation-driven initiatives. Vice-Chancellor Prof. B. R. Ramesh will present the University's

vision of transforming the institution into a centre of excellence in research, innovation, incubation and global academic partnerships.

The International Conference will be held under the technical leadership of Dr. Y. A. Narayana S w a m y, Technical Chairman of WEEHtec-2026, focusing on technology-driven solutions integrating sustainability, economics, environment and public policy. Prof. Inayathulla will play a key role in coordinating international academic participation and technical sessions. In a first for a public university in

Karnataka, over 37 international scientists and global academic experts will participate in the conference, highlighting the University's expanding global academic presence. The grand inaugural session at the Jnanajyothi Auditorium will be attended by Karnataka Government Ministers, policymakers, academicians, industry leaders and international experts.

The one-day conference is expected to witness participation from over 600 students and 200 delegates and will conclude with a valedictory session and cultural programme by students.

## Ulaibettu rape-murder case: K'taka HC confirms death penalty for 3 convicts



BENGALURU, FEB 8: The Karnataka High Court has upheld the death sentence awarded by a Sessions Court to three men convicted of the brutal gang-rape and murder of a minor girl in Mangaluru. A division bench headed by Justice HP Sandesh confirmed the capital punishment while hearing a criminal referred case filed by the state government and appeals filed by the convicts seeking to overturn their sentence. The convicts have been identified as Jayaban Adivasi alias Jayasingh and Mukesh Singh from Madhya Pradesh, and Manish Tirkey from Jharkhand. Another individual, Sita Rantu Lohar, was also involved in the legal proceedings.

### 'CONSCIENCE OF SOCIETY SHAKEN'

In its judgment, the High Court bench observed that reducing the sentence for such a heinous crime would send a wrong message to society and encourage similar atrocities. The bench remarked that the convicts lured a girl aged seven years and seven months on the pretext of buying her snacks to satisfy their lust. They took turns raping her before stran-

gling her and dumping her body in a drain. This shocking incident has shaken not just the judiciary, but the collective conscience of society, the court noted.

### BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

The horrific incident occurred on November 21, 2021, near Vamanjoor in Mangaluru. The convicts were laborers at a local tiles factory. The victim was the daughter of a woman who worked at the same factory. According to the prosecution, the accused lured the child to their room under the guise of giving her sweets. One accused committed unnatural sex, while the others raped her. To conceal the crime, they strangled the girl to death and threw her body into a nearby drain. Following a complaint by the victim's mother and a subsequent police investigation, the Additional District and Sessions Court (POCSO) in Dakshina Kannada had previously sentenced the trio to death and imposed a fine of Rs 40,000 each. With the High Court now dismissing the convicts' appeals, the trial court's order for execution stands confirmed.

## Hinduism is the best religion with culture, faith, belief, ethics and ideas: S. Suresh Kumar



Bengaluru: Rajajinagar Assembly Constituency: A grand Hindu Samajotsava program was held in Dayanandanagar ward. Hundreds of women, including MLA S. Suresh Kumar, flagged off the grand procession. Former BBMP members M. Muniraju and Mrs. Shakeela Muniraju participated.

The grand procession reached Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Stadium via Dayanandanagar, Srirampur, Gauthamnagar, Bandireddy Circle,

Ramakrishna Sevanagar.

Speaking, S. Suresh Kumar said that the Hindu Samajotsava is being held as part of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh centenary celebrations. Hindu means a religion that is a symbol of culture, faith, belief, good ethics and ideas, and only when Hindus are organized, the country will survive. He said that Hinduism has a lot of respect in the world today.

I should be proud to say that I am a Hindu.

Hindu Samajotsava is being celebrated from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. He said that Hindu society is alert today.

Musical instruments, singing and various art groups participated in the procession. Mandal BJP President Sudarshan, Central District BJP General Secretary Raghavendra Rao, Assembly Constituency General Secretary Girish Gowda, Mandal Yuva Morcha President M.S. Sanjay Kumar were present.

## Centre's policy to reduce cancer drug costs: MP Tejaswi Surya

Bengaluru: The Centre's policy is not only to reduce the cost of cancer drugs, but also to focus on cancer prevention and health care. MP Tejaswi Surya has called on the public to utilize this facility. Speaking at the inauguration of the Cancer Prevention and Wellness Centre at Sri Shankara Cancer Foundation on World Cancer Day, he praised Dr. B.S. Srinath's leadership in making world-class cancer prevention and care accessible to all. Dr. B.S. Srinath, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sri Shankara Cancer



Foundation, stressed that cancer prevention and early detection are the most powerful tools to reduce the burden of cancer in India. The newly inaugurated Cancer Prevention and Wellness Centre will offer expert consultations and cancer screening services, which will promote prevention and timely diagnosis. As part of World Cancer Day celebrations, cancer warriors who were successfully treated at the hospital were felicitated. The program was attended by Trustees of Sri Shankara Cancer Foundation B. R. Nagaraj, Dr. Tejaswini Ananth Kumar, Rammohan Sivapuram, Abhinav Ramanand, Sandeep Agarwal, Shri Manandhi Ramesh, Additional Trustee Shri Srinivas Prasanna and Director Dr. R. V. Prabhakar Rao.

## KSRTC offers free driving training for SC youth; here's how to apply

Bengaluru, Feb 8: The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has announced free driving training for candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) community, in a move aimed at improving employment opportunities among youth.

The initiative will provide training for both Light Motor Vehicles (LMV) and Heavy Motor Vehicles (HMV), equipping candidates with professional driving skills to help them secure jobs in transport corporations or the private sector. Only SC candidates from Karnataka are eligible to apply.

**Eligibility criteria**  
• Age limit: Applicants must be at least 20 years old and should not exceed 45 years.

• Educational qualification: Candidates should have passed a minimum of 8th or 10th standard, depending on the type of training opted for.

• Documents required: Caste certificate, income certificate, Aadhaar card, and passport-size photographs.

How to apply



Interested candidates can obtain the application form by visiting their nearest KSRTC divisional office or training centre. After scrutiny of applications, eligible candidates will be selected for the training programme.

**Facilities**  
During the training period, candidates may be provided free accommodation or a stipend, subject to the rules of the respective division.

Candidates who successfully complete the training will

receive assistance from KSRTC in obtaining an official Driving Licence. Additionally, preference will be given to trained candidates during future KSRTC driver recruitment drives.

**Important dates**  
• Application process: Already underway

• Last date to apply: Typically 15 to 20 days from the date of notification; applicants are advised to submit their forms by the third week of February 2026 (around February 20).

## Rs.500 crore ARAI Research Centre to come up in Mandya: H.D. Kumaraswamy

Mysuru: Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, H.D. Kumaraswamy, announced that a world-class Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) research centre will be established in his Mandya Lok Sabha constituency with an investment of 500 crore. Funds for the project have already been allocated in the Union Budget 2026-27, he said.

Addressing a press conference in Mysuru, Kumaraswamy stated that the project requires 100 acres of land and that he has personally written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah seeking immediate allotment. He expressed confidence that the State Government would provide the land at the earliest.

Calling the ARAI centre a crucial initiative, the Union Minister said it would significantly benefit Mandya and the Mysuru region while also strengthening Karnataka's automobile sector. He noted that ARAI, a premier autonomous R&D body under the Ministry of Heavy Industries, plays a key role in vehicle testing,



certification, safety standards and emissions control.

Responding to criticism over what he had brought to Mandya, Kumaraswamy said the proposed

ARAI centre itself was a strong answer, adding that further investments would follow once land is allotted. He rejected allegations of injustice to Karnataka in the

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, H.D. Kumaraswamy, announced that a world-class Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) research centre will be established in his Mandya Lok Sabha constituency with an investment of Rs.500 crore.

Union Budget and criticised the State Government for failing to utilise Central funds and schemes effectively.

Kumaraswamy also reiterated the Centre's commitment to reviving the Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Plant at Bhadravati and HMT, while urging the State Government to improve coordination with the Centre for development projects.

# CM Stalin flags shortfall in Railway funds, projects for TN; seeks PM Modi's intervention

Citing the doubling of the broad-gauge line between Thiruvananthapuram and Kanniyakumari as a key example, Stalin said compensation funds amounting to Rs 289.78 crore were yet to be allocated for the acquisition of 16.86 hectares, even though the project was being monitored through the Union government's Project Monitoring Group portal.

CHENNAI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi should intervene to ensure the immediate and full release of funds for railway projects in Tamil Nadu, revival of projects kept in abeyance, and sanction of additional new projects in line with the State's economic stature, Chief Minister MK Stalin urged on Sunday.

Tamil Nadu had accorded administrative sanction for acquiring 2,500.61 hectares of land for various Union government railway projects, but funds had not been sanctioned by the Railways for 931.52 hectares, Stalin said in his letter to the PM, adding that the Railway Ministry delaying the release of funds, particularly for land acquisition, were ham-



pering project execution. "Out of land acquisition required for 19 major ongoing railway projects, 94 per cent has already been completed and hand-

ed over to the Railways. However, progress is being affected due to delays and piecemeal release of funds," the Chief Minister wrote, add-

ing that timely payment of compensation was crucial to avoid disruptions. Citing the doubling of the broad-gauge line between Thiruvananthapuram and Kanniyakumari as a key example, Stalin said compensation funds amounting to Rs 289.78 crore were yet to be allocated for the acquisition of 16.86 hectares, even though the project was being monitored through the Union government's Project Monitoring Group portal. The State government had given the highest priority to railway projects and put in place a robust monitoring mechanism, with the Chief Secretary and Transport Secretary holding monthly coordination meetings with railway officials to resolve bottlenecks, he

said. Despite being India's second-largest economy and a major manufacturing hub, and making significant contributions to national GDP and exports, the allocation of new railway projects to Tamil Nadu has been relatively limited in recent years, he said. He urged the Prime Minister to direct the ministry to restart stalled projects such as the Thoothukudi-Madurai (via Aruppukottai) and T i n d i v a n a m - Tiruvannamalai lines, and consider sanctioning additional projects. He expressed confidence that the Prime Minister's intervention would strengthen cooperative federalism and lead to early resolution of the issues.

## EPS seeks release of Mettur water for standing Delta crops

THANJAVUR: AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday demanded that the Tamil Nadu government immediately release water from the Mettur Dam to save standing paddy crops in the Delta region.

Speaking to reporters after interacting with distressed farmers in Thanjavur district, he stated that the paddy crops, currently in the flowering (milk-ing) stage, require urgent irrigation for at least another 20 days to ensure a successful harvest. The farmers in the Delta region, particularly in Thanjavur, have invested heavily by taking loans to cultivate these crops. If water is not provided for the next 20 days, the paddy will wither and turn into chaff (pathir), leading to massive losses for the farming community. Edappadi K Palaniswami during the interaction, emotional farmers showed Palaniswami their parched fields and withered stalks, pleading for intervention. Some farmers noted that they were forced to use motors to pump meagre amounts of water to keep the crops alive, while others lamented that the cessation of water supply at a critical juncture had put their livelihoods at risk.

## Tamil Nadu: Farmer killed in elephant attack; locals demand Rs 25 lakh compensation



ERODE: A 30-year-old farmer was trampled to death by a herd of elephants in the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in the early hours of Sunday, officials said. The deceased was identified as Magesh, who owned agricultural land near Thalavadi. According to forest officials, Magesh had gone to his land at night to scare away wild animals damaging standing crops. At around 2 am, a herd of elephants entered the farmland and began consuming and damaging the crops. Magesh attempted to drive the elephants away by sounding an alarm and bursting firecrackers, officials said. Hearing the commotion, neighbouring farmers rushed to the spot and

joined him in trying to scare the elephants away. However, the herd retaliated, forcing most of the farmers to flee. Magesh was reportedly caught amid the herd and was trampled to death on the spot. After the incident, the elephants moved back into the nearby forest area. Forest department personnel later reached the spot and recovered the body. When officials attempted to shift the body to a hospital, local farmers prevented them, demanding compensation of Rs 25 lakh for the victim's family. Forest officials and police were holding talks with the farmers to resolve the issue. As of 1 pm, the body remained at the victim's farmland, officials said.



Honble Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated the Mudhalvar Thirumana Maaligai at V.O.C Road, Chennai, presided over the weddings of 10 couples and presented marriage gifts

## AIADMK reduced to NDA's tail, no longer a party: Sengottaiyan

COIMBATORE: Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader KA Sengottaiyan on Sunday said the AIADMK had lost its independent political identity and was now merely one of the parties in the NDA alliance. "AIADMK is not even a party anymore as it has become just one among the several constituents of the NDA. For us, DMK alone is the enemy," he said to the media in Erode, after participating in a flag hoisting ceremony, marking the second anniversary of TVK at Nambiyur in Erode. Referring to police firing during the anti-Sterlite protest, the TVK leader attacked AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami for not visiting the family of 13 persons shot dead in the firing. "He should explain why he didn't visit the victim's family," he said. Sengottaiyan also expressed confidence that parties that have not aligned with other fronts would come forward to join hands with TVK.

## Tamil Nadu: Honest cleanliness worker returns lost wedding jewellery worth lakhs

CHENNAI: A family that was pushed to deep distress after losing 20 sovereign gold jewellery and one kg of silver, which they had been keeping safe for their daughter's wedding, was saved from despair by an honest cleanliness worker, who returned the bag containing the valuables. The heartwarming video of the family members tearfully thanking Durai, the cleanliness worker, has gone viral on social media. Radhakrishnan, along with his wife Muthulakshmi and their daughter, had travelled to Tiruvarur from Guduvanchery to keep the jewellery safe at a relative's house when they accidentally dropped the bag con-



taining the valuables. Even as they were desperately searching for the bag, Durai, the cleanliness worker, found the bag during his routine work and handed it over to the police station, drawing widespread praise for his honesty and integrity. Later, the woman broke down in tears after Durai returned valuables worth several lakhs, including 20 sovereigns of gold jewellery and one kilogram of silver, that they had been saving for their daughter's wedding. The cleanliness worker was then taken to the police station, where he was honoured by the police for his honesty.

## Novel non-invasive tests effective alternative to liver biopsy in fatty liver disease: Study

New Delhi, Feb 8: Novel non-invasive liver disease assessments (NILDAs) can effectively replace liver biopsy for assessing liver fibrosis in patients with metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), a 2026 systematic review has found. The review highlighted that newer diagnostic tools show good to excellent accuracy in identifying advanced liver fibrosis and cirrhosis, offering a safer and less invasive option compared to traditional liver biopsy. Currently used NILDAs include the Fibrosis-4 (FIB-4) index, Aspartate Platelet Ratio Index (APRI), and liver stiffness measurement (LSM) through transient elastography (TE) and magnetic resonance elastography (MRE). However, researchers noted that these tests often produce indeterminate results and their accuracy varies across different patient populations. The review analysed over 900 studies published between 2020 and 2025. Of these, 48 met the inclusion criteria, while 15 addition-



al novel tests—previously omitted from recent American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) guidelines—were also evaluated. Several of the 15 novel NILDAs demonstrated strong diagnostic performance, supporting their use as alternatives to liver biopsy. The findings suggest that these tests could improve early detection and clinical decision-making in MASLD patients. Current AASLD guidelines recommend combining blood-based and imaging-based NILDAs. Patients with a FIB-4 score of 1.3 or above are advised to undergo further imaging evaluation, usually through TE or MRE. The review pointed to Agile 3+ and Agile 4 as promising tools that could replace LSM alone for diagnosing advanced fibrosis and cirrhosis, respectively. Developed for use in secondary and tertiary hepatology centres, these scores incorporate variables such as liver stiffness, platelet count, sex and diabetes status. Researchers found that using FIB-4 followed by Agile 3+ or Agile 4 reduced indeterminate results while maintaining accuracy comparable to TE-based LSM. The Agile scores performed similarly to conventional elastography but provided clearer classification when combined with FIB-4. However, concerns remain regarding the accessibility and cost-effectiveness of some novel NILDAs, particularly those relying on specialised biomarkers. That said, many newer models use readily available clinical data such as age, BMI and diabetes status, raising the possibility of home-based or primary-care screening tools in the future. According to the review, traditional tools like FIB-4 and TE remain useful for ruling out advanced fibrosis, while novel NILDAs may be more effective in identifying patients who already have significant liver damage. The study also noted the potential role of artificial intelligence in developing more accurate NILDAs, though further research is required before widespread clinical adoption.

## Google launches new AI-powered photo editing feature in India

With the new feature, users can edit images in Google Photos by simply describing the changes using voice or text

NEW DELHI: Tech giant Google on Wednesday launched a new Artificial Intelligence-powered photo editing feature in India. With the new feature, users can edit images in Google Photos by simply describing the changes using voice or text. "Now in India! Edit your images in Google Photos by simply asking. We're rolling out the ability to edit your images by simply describing the edits you want using your voice or text. And, with a little help from advanced Gemini capabilities, Photos brings your vision to life," Google shared in a blog post. Individuals can use the feature by opening a photo and tapping "Help me edit." "You can now also ask Photos to remove a



friend's sunglasses, open their eyes, or make them smile. The feature uses images from your private face groups to generate accurate, personalised edits of the people in your library," Google said. This feature in Google Photos is available in English, Hindi, Tamil, Marathi, Telugu, Bengali, and Gujarati on any

Android device with at least 4GB of RAM and Android 8.0 or higher. Google has also introduced three new features, such as conversational editing, personalised edits, and Nano Banana. With conversational editing, users can easily switch between tools and sliders. One can simply describe the edits such as

to 'make the background blurry,' 'remove the glare,' or 'make the colours pop.' By asking Gemini to "remove [name's] sunglasses" or "make [name] smile," users can personalise edits. Gemini will use images from private face groups to generate an accurate image. With the Nano Banana in Google Photos, users can now ask for all kinds of new transformations to the images. Describing just a new style can help users bring their vision to life in seconds. To continue ensuring transparency on AI-generated content, Google is also adding support for C2PA Content Credentials in Google Photos, which attaches a permanent digital label showing a modified image's origin and edit history.

# India's Russian oil buy to dwindle

New Delhi: India is likely to begin scaling back its crude oil purchases from Russia under an agreement reached with the United States in exchange for lower trade tariffs, sources said, adding that these imports will continue for now, as refiners like Nayara Energy have limited alternatives. US President Donald Trump on Friday signed an executive order rescinding a punitive 25 per cent duty on all imports from India, saying the move followed New Delhi's commitment to stop imports of Russian oil. While Indian refiners, which process crude oil into fuels such as petrol and diesel, have not received any formal directive to halt Russian purchases, they have been informally advised to begin scaling back buys from Moscow, three sources with knowledge of the matter said. Most refiners will continue to honour purchase commitments made before the announcement - orders typically placed six to eight weeks in advance - but will not place new orders thereafter, they said. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) and HPCL-Mittal Energy Ltd (HMEEL) had stopped buying oil from Russia soon after the US last year



slapped sanctions on Moscow's key exporters, while others like Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will wind down their purchases, sources said. Reliance Industries Ltd, India's biggest buyer, which late last year paused purchases after US sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil, is also likely to cease purchases after its resumption cargo of 1,50,000 barrels is delivered in the next couple of weeks. The only exception to this rule is likely to be Nayara Energy. Nayara was first sanctioned by the European Union and then by the UK for its Russian links (Rosneft holds 49.13 per cent in Nayara). Because of these sanctions, no other major

supplier is willing to do any commercial transaction with the company, resulting in it being forced to buy Russian oil from non-sanctioned entities. While the Oil Ministry has refused to comment on the issue, the Commerce Ministry and the Ministry of External Affairs have not directly commented on commitments made by India with regard to Russian oil purchases. Sources said India's oil imports from Russia have been on the decline since the US sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil came into effect. In December 2025, they averaged 1.2 million barrels per day, down from a peak of USD 2.1 million barrels per day in May 2023. In January, they further came down to USD 1.1 million barrels, and

the expectation was that they may decline to less than USD 1 million this month or the next. With the new understanding with the US, the imports may halve soon. India meets about 90 per cent of its crude oil needs through imports, and purchases of discounted Russian oil - sold at lower prices after Western countries imposed sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 - have helped reduce its import costs. Nayara, sources said, is likely to continue purchases of Russian oil from non-sanctioned entities in the near future. The refinery's unique position was explained to US trade officials during talks in December, they said, adding that Nayara may

have to be given an exemption from the 'no-Russian oil-buy' policy or a special dispensation be created. According to Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining and Modeling at Kpler, the India-US trade deal announced is unlikely to result in a near-term reduction in India's Russian crude imports. "Russian volumes remain largely locked in for the next 8-10 weeks and continue to be economically critical for India's complex refining system, supported by deep discounts on Urals relative to Brent. Imports are expected to stay broadly stable in the 1.1-1.3 million barrels a day range through Q1 and early Q2," he said. "Despite a recent moderation in purchases, India is unlikely to fully disengage in the near term." Prashant Vasishth of Iera said the US-India trade deal reportedly includes India stepping up purchase of US crude oil and potentially start buying oil from Venezuela. "For the Indian refining sector, there are ample avenues, including the US, to purchase crude as Russian crude accounted for less than 2 per cent of Indian crude imports prior to FY2023." The discounts on Russian crude oil were marginal prior to the US announcing sanctions on some Russian crude suppliers in October 2025.

# YouTube's \$60bn revenue revealed amid paid subscriber push

Google has revealed YouTube brought in more than \$60bn (£44bn) in revenue in 2025 as the firm targets getting more subscribers. The figure, which totals the money generated through advertising on YouTube as well as paid subscriptions, far surpasses streaming rival Netflix's \$45bn revenue. It appears to be the first time Google has individually highlighted its video platform's yearly revenue since acquiring it in 2006. Midia Research senior analyst Hanna Kahlert said while it was a big announcement, it was "perhaps not a surprising one" - with the platform becoming "almost infrastructural for digital natives". "YouTube is one of - if not the - most-used of all digital offerings, with over 70% of international consumers using it weekly, and over 50% using it daily," she told the BBC, citing Midia consumer survey data. Kahlert said the different ways the platform makes money - such as through adverts, or charging a monthly subscription to remove them - means it can "capitalise well" on its large audience. While YouTube's global ad revenue in the last three months of 2025 fell below Wall Street expectations at \$11.38bn (£8.37bn), Google boss Sundar Pichai highlighted YouTube's broader growth as part of a "fantastic year" for the company. He said



YouTube Premium - its service letting users pay to remove ads between videos, or songs on its music service - had helped boost paid subscriptions across Google consumer services to more than 325 million in 2025 overall. The company has not released YouTube's own subscriber numbers. But Philipp Schindler, Google's chief business officer, told investors on an earnings call on Wednesday YouTube was seeing "strong traction" in subscriptions. He said it has been "innovating to meet consumers where they are" with new, cheaper YouTube TV and Premium tiers. The firm has also been trying to find more ways to get people to subscribe - such as only allowing Premium users to play videos in the background on smartphones. At the same time, Shorts, YouTube's TikTok-style short videos, was also said to be averaging more than 200 billion daily views. 'Not just cat videos

anymore' As it celebrated its 20th birthday last year, YouTube swelled to become the second most-watched media service in the UK after the BBC, according to Ofcom. Ofcom later found the platform was used by 94% of UK adult internet users, with time spent on it growing to reach an average of 51 minutes a day per person. The UK's public service broadcaster recently announced plans to make shows for YouTube in a landmark deal. YouTube's \$60bn revenue in 2025 meanwhile beat that of rival Netflix - though Forrester analyst Mike Proulx said it was not an "apples-to-apples comparison". "The lion's share of YouTube's content is user-generated versus Hollywood-generated," he said. But he said "the competitive lines are blurring", with Disney+ partnering with OpenAI on short-form user created content, while YouTube will host the Oscars from 2029.

# FPIs turn net buyers in Feb; invest Rs 8,100 cr in a week on US trade deal

New Delhi: After three consecutive months of heavy selling, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) turned net buyers in the first week of February, infusing more than Rs 8,100 crore in Indian equities, aided by improving risk sentiment, along with a trade deal with the US. The inflows follow sustained withdrawals in recent months, with FPIs pulling out Rs 35,962 crore in January, Rs 22,611 crore in December, and Rs 3,765 crore in November, data with the depositories showed. Overall, in 2025, FPIs pulled out a net Rs 1.66 lakh crore (USD 18.9 billion) from Indian equities, marking one of the worst periods for foreign flows. The selling was driven by volatile currency movements, global trade tensions, concerns over potential US tariffs and stretched equity valuations. According to the data, FPIs invested Rs 8,129 crore in this month (till February 6). Himanshu Srivastava, principal manager-research at Morningstar Investment Research India,



said the recent buying reflects improving risk appetite and renewed confidence in India's growth outlook. "The sentiment was supported by easing global uncertainties, stability in domestic interest rate expectations, and optimism around India-US trade and policy developments," he added. The turnaround contrasts sharply with January's outflows, when FPIs exited Indian markets amid a global risk-off environment and elevated US bond yields. Echoing simi-

lar views, Vaqarjaved Khan, senior fundamental analyst at Angel One, said the breakthrough in India-US trade talks helped reduce geopolitical uncertainty and fuel a market rally, alongside stabilising US yields and supportive measures announced in the Union Budget for FY26, including fiscal stimulus and sector-specific incentives. VK Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Investments, said the appreciation of the rupee also played a key role

in improving sentiment. The rupee strengthened from a record low of 90.30 against the dollar, although it later weakened to around 90.70 by the close of February 6. He said the rupee is expected to stabilise and gradually appreciate to below 90 per dollar by the end of March 2026, which could trigger additional FPI inflows, although outcomes will depend on how global trade and artificial intelligence-related developments unfold. Market participants remain cautiously optimistic. Further inflows could materialise if corporate earnings momentum continues and global trade tensions remain contained, although lingering rupee weakness, elevated valuations and potential shifts in US policy could limit upside, Khan said. The inflows follow sustained withdrawals in recent months, with FPIs pulling out Rs 35,962 crore in January, Rs 22,611 crore in December, and Rs 3,765 crore in November, data with the depositories showed.

# Q3 earnings to drive stock market sentiment this week: Analysts

New Delhi: Inflation data, trading activity of foreign investors and global trends would dictate sentiment in the stock market this week, according to analysts. Besides, geopolitical developments and Q3 earnings will also guide market movement during the week. "This week features several important domestic and global triggers. In India, investors will closely track retail inflation data due on February 12 and foreign exchange reserves data on February 13, for insights into price trends and external sector stability. "The earnings calendar stays active, with key results expected from Titan Company and Mahindra & Mahindra, which may drive stock-specific action. Globally, participants will monitor a heavy US data calendar and performance of the Nasdaq Composite following its recent decline," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Geopolitical developments and their impact on commodity markets will also be closely



watched, Mishra added. From the Q3 earnings space, Ashok Leyland, ONGC, Bajaj Electricals and Eicher Motors will also be announcing their results during the week. India and the US on Saturday announced they have

reached a framework for an interim trade agreement under which both sides will reduce import duties on a number of goods to boost two-way trade. While the US will reduce tariffs on Indian goods to 18 per cent from the present 50 per

cent, India will eliminate or cut down import duties on all US industrial goods and a wide range of American food and agricultural products, including dried distillers' grains, red sorghum for animal feed, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruit, soybean oil, wine and spirits. "With the Union Budget 2026 and the RBI's monetary policy decisions now largely digested, Indian equity markets have entered a consolidation phase, shifting investor focus toward implementation, capex execution and the pace of actual spending. "Overall sentiment remains cautiously optimistic, with markets expected to stay event-driven in the near term, tracking global cues, capital flows and geopolitical developments in the Middle-East," Ponnudi R, CEO - Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,857.46 points, or 3.53 per cent, and the Nifty surged 868.25 points, or 3.49 per cent.

# Mcap of 8 of top 10 valued firms surges by whopping Rs 4.55 lakh cr

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top 10 valued firms jumped by a whopping Rs 4.55 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest winner, in line with a remarkable rally in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark surged by 2,857.46 points or 3.53 per cent. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and Hindustan Unilever were the gainers, while Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys saw their valuations erode. The combined market valuation of the eight firms was Rs 4,55,336.36 crore. Reliance Industries added Rs 1,41,887.97 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 19,63,358.79 crore. LIC's valuation zoomed Rs 64,926.1 crore to Rs 5,70,198.54 crore. The market valuation of Bharti Airtel surged Rs 52,516.39 crore to Rs



11,62,288.64 crore and that of ICICI Bank jumped Rs 52,476.97 crore to Rs 10,06,258.82 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance climbed Rs 48,659.83 crore to Rs 6,10,830.20 crore and that of State Bank of India by Rs 45,460.79 crore to Rs 9,84,353.06 crore. HDFC Bank's valuation advanced by Rs 32,350.28 crore to Rs 14,48,249.63 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever appreciated by Rs 17,058.03 crore to Rs 5,69,482.18 crore. However, the market valuation of TCS eroded by

Rs 88,172.8 crore to Rs 10,64,242.35 crore. The mcap of Infosys declined by Rs 63,462.66 crore to Rs 6,26,067.95 crore. IT stocks faced selling last week in-line with weak trends in tech firms globally amid valuation-related worries and concerns around the rapid pace of artificial intelligence advancements. Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, TCS, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, LIC and Hindustan Unilever.

# IPO-BOUND PHONEPE TARGETS GROWTH IN PAYMENTS, MERCHANTS, NEW PLATFORMS

New Delhi: Walmart-backed PhonePe, which aims to float its initial public offering (IPO) in April, plans to deepen its presence in India's digital payments market while expanding into financial services and new consumer platforms. In its draft papers, the company said digital payments will remain the core driver of growth, supported by investments to expand its user base, addressable market and platform scale. India's total addressable market for digital consumer payments stood at Rs 301 lakh crore in fiscal 2025 and is projected to grow to Rs 602-681 lakh crore by fiscal 2030, the company said, citing industry estimates. According to sources, PhonePe is aiming to launch its IPO in April. The proposed offering will be entirely an offer for sale of 5.06 crore shares by Walmart, Microsoft and Tiger Global, with no fresh issue component. In



January, the company received regulatory approval from the Sebi to proceed with its maiden public offering, following its confidential filing in September. To expand its consumer base, PhonePe plans to deepen penetration across smartphones and feature phones. India had an estimated 69-70 crore smartphone users in fiscal 2025, which is projected to rise to 96-108 crore by fiscal 2030, while feature phone users are estimated at 20-30 crore, according to the DRHP. In June 2025,

PhonePe acquired conversational engagement platform Gupshup's GSPay technology stack to enable UPI-based payments on feature phones. The company said it is also exploring future consumer use cases, such as credit on UPI, transit payments across transport modes, and payments through smart and connected devices. "We are also focused on future consumer-facing opportunities, such as enabling all forms of credit on UPI, building transit solutions across all modes of transportation,

and expanding consumer touchpoints through smart and connected devices across homes and vehicles," the company said. As of March 31, 2025, PhonePe had over 29 crore active customers, representing about 41-42 per cent of India's smartphone user base, indicating significant headroom for growth. On the merchant side, PhonePe plans to expand adoption of digital payments in a market where penetration remains well below global peers. India's digital merchant payment penetration stood at about 45 per cent in fiscal 2025, compared to China's 93 per cent, according to a report by RedSeer. Merchant digital payment volumes in India reached Rs 112 lakh crore in FY25 and are projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 20-22 per cent through FY30, supported by government initiatives, such as the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)

scheme. India has an estimated 5.6-5.8 crore small and micro merchants, 30,000-40,000 mid-market businesses and over 20,000 large enterprises. However, only about 1.11 crore merchants transact on PhonePe on a monthly basis, with around 67.5 lakh engaging daily, highlighting further scope for penetration, the company said. PhonePe is also scaling its financial services distribution business, including lending and insurance. Beyond its core businesses, the company plans to invest in new platforms to diversify revenue streams, including ShareMarket, its digital investing and wealth management platform, and an indigenous mobile app store, Indus Appstore. The company's financial performance improved in FY25, with revenue rising 40 per cent year-on-year to Rs 7,115 crore, while adjusted profit after tax more than tripled to Rs 630 crore.

# Noam Chomsky advised Epstein about 'horrible' media coverage, files show

Jeffrey Epstein sought advice from linguist Noam Chomsky over what he called "putrid" media coverage of sex trafficking allegations against him, new files show. In emails from February 2019, the disgraced financier asked if he should "defend myself" or "try to ignore". A response that appears to be from Chomsky laments "the horrible way" Epstein was treated and the "hysteria that has developed about abuse of women". "It's painful to say, but I think the best way to proceed is to ignore it," the email said. In a statement on Saturday, his wife and spokesperson, Valeria Chomsky, said that "Epstein created a manipulative narrative about his case, which Noam, in good faith, believed in". The February 2019 exchange was among the latest release of files from the US government's investigation into Epstein. The appearance of Chomsky's name in the files does not imply wrongdoing. Valeria



Chomsky's statement said her husband is in ill health since a stroke in 2023, and unable "to engage in public discourse". But she said the couple "felt a profound weight regarding the unresolved questions surrounding our past interactions with Epstein". She wrote that they did not know the "full extent and gravity" of the allegations against Epstein until he was

charged in 2019. The newly released documents appear to reveal years-old correspondence between Epstein, Chomsky and Valeria on numerous subjects, from academic papers to arranging meet ups. Epstein was arrested in July 2019 and found dead in his New York jail cell in August of that year awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges. In

2023, Noam Chomsky, 97, told the Wall Street Journal of his relationship with Epstein: "First response is that it is none of your business. Or anyone's. Second is that I knew him and we met occasionally." Epstein's email to Chomsky came as the Miami Herald published a series of investigative reports into Epstein and a plea deal he reached to avoid trial on fed-

eral sex trafficking charges in 2008. "Noam. I d love your advice on how I handle my putrid press," Epstein wrote, adding that media coverage was "spiralling out of control". "Do I have someone write an op-ed?" Epstein asked. "defend myself? or try to ignore. realizing that mobs are dangerous." A reply from an account labelled in the documents as Noam Chomsky reads: "What the vultures dearly want is public response, which then provides a public opening for an onslaught of venomous attacks, many from just publicity seekers or cranks of all sorts." "That's particularly true now with the hysteria that has developed about abuse of women, which has reached the point that even questioning a charge is a crime worse than murder," the email added. Valeria Chomsky said in a statement that she believes Epstein sought to take advantage of her husband. "Epstein had claimed to Noam that he

[Epstein] was being unfairly persecuted, and Noam spoke from his own experience in political controversies with the media. Epstein created a manipulative narrative about his case, which Noam, in good faith, believed in." The documents also appear to show that the couple turned to the financier for advice on interest payments, and how to communicate with their children about their finances. "N wants to send the letter below to his children," an email address identified as Valeria Chomsky wrote in September 2017. "Suggestions? Something to add?" "Feel free to suggest. We trust you," the email concluded. Valeria Chomsky said that Epstein had helped her husband with the transfer of \$270,000 of his own funds, and had never had investments with the financier or his office. Correspondence between Epstein and Chomsky also featured in previous document releases.

## MAN NAMED IN SOUTH AFRICA'S POLICE CORRUPTION PROBE FOUND DEAD



A South African man named in a major police corruption probe has died after reportedly shooting himself at a petrol station. Police are now investigating the death of Wiandre Pretorius, 41, who last week said he had survived an assassination attempt. Pretorius's name had been mentioned at the ongoing corruption inquiry, known as the Madlanga Commission. This was in connection with the 2022 murder of a witness, Emmanuel Mbense, allegedly at the hands of police officers. Four of the 12 people named as persons of interest in that killing are now dead themselves, a police spokesperson said. At

22:00 local time (20:00 GMT) on Saturday the police received reports that a man had taken his own life at a petrol station in Brakpan, east of Johannesburg. At the scene, officers found Pretorius's body with a firearm next to it, spokesperson Brig Athlenda Mathe said. The police are now looking at CCTV footage to confirm what happened. There had been reports that Pretorius had been involved in a row with his fiancée at the petrol station before taking his own life. The murder four years ago of Mbense is one of several issues that has come up at the Madlanga Commission.

## RUSSIA NAMES THREE SUSPECTS OVER SHOOTING OF GENERAL



Russia says it has identified three suspects involved in the shooting of high-profile military general Lt Gen Vladimir Alexeyev. They include the man said to have carried out the attack, who has been named as Ukrainian-born Russian citizen Lyubomir Korba. Russia's Investigations Committee (SK) said Korba arrived in the capital, Moscow, in late December "on assignment from Ukrainian intelligence services to commit a terrorist attack". Kyiv has reportedly denied involvement. Alexeyev, 64, was taken to hospital after the attack in a residential block of flats in the north-western outskirts of Moscow on Friday. He has since regained consciousness after surgery, according to Russian media reports. Alexeyev is number two in the main directorate of Russia's GRU military intelligence and the latest high-ranking military figure to have been targeted in or near Moscow since the full-

scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Spokeswoman Svetlana Petrenko said on Sunday that his attacker had fired three shots before fleeing and that Korba travelled to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) hours after the shooting. He has since been arrested and extradited. Russian state TV channel Ru-24 aired footage showing security agents escorting Korba off a plane at an unknown location. "Investigators conducted a thorough inspection at the scene, during which they discovered the murder weapon—a Makarov pistol with a silencer and three rounds of ammunition," Petrenko added. Forensic tests are being carried out on the gun. Russian media, quoting Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, reported that President Vladimir Putin had thanked UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Saturday for his country's help in catching Korba.

## 3 Doors Down lead singer Brad Arnold dies at 47

The lead singer and songwriter of 3 Doors Down, Brad Arnold, has died after a battle with cancer aged 47, the rock band announced on X. "He will be deeply missed and forever remembered," the band said in a statement on Saturday. The band is best known for 2000s rock hits like Kryptonite, Here Without You, When I'm Gone, and Loser. Arnold had announced in May 2025 that he was ill and had received a diagnosis of stage four clear cell renal carcinoma - a type of kidney cancer - which had metastasised into his lung. "I have no fear, I really sincerely am not scared of it at all," the frontman said, adding that he was disappointed that the band would have to cancel an upcoming tour. "I'd love for you to lift me up in prayer every chance you get," he said. In its state-



ment, 3 Doors Down said that, as a founding member, vocalist, and original drummer, "Brad helped redefine mainstream rock music, blending post-grunge accessibility with emotionally direct song writing and lyrical themes that resonated with everyday listeners". The original band was formed in Mississippi in the mid-1990s. Another founding member of the original trio, Matt Roberts, died in 2016 at the age of 38.

## JAPAN'S GOVERNING PARTY PROJECTED TO WIN SNAP ELECTION MAJORITY

Japan's ruling party, led by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, is set to seal a decisive win in Sunday's snap election, exit polls suggest. The country's first female prime minister is seeking a clear public mandate just four months after becoming Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) leader. Her predicted success is in marked contrast to her two predecessors, under whom the party lost its parliamentary majority because of corruption scandals and rising costs. An LDP-led coalition has governed Japan for much of its post-war history due to the lack of a strong opposition. Takaichi has pledged to step down if her party fails to secure a majority, and some have called the snap election a big gamble. In



2024 the LDP lost its majority in both houses of parliament, and its decades-old coalition with the Komeito party collapsed. But Takaichi's personal popularity appears to have helped the party, with approval ratings for her government mostly hovering above 70%. The LDP and its current coalition partner, the Japan Innovation Party, could

secure as many as 366 of the 465 seats in the House of Representatives, according to a poll by broadcaster NHK. People across Japan braved snow to vote in the country's first mid-winter poll in 36 years. Japan's transport ministry said 37 train lines and 58 ferry routes were closed and 54 flights cancelled as of Sunday morning. There was rare snowfall in Tokyo

as people headed out to vote. "People want their lives to be better and more comfortable because we are so accustomed to not having inflation [costs rising]... so people are very worried. I think we need a long-term solution rather than short-term fixes," Ritsuko Ninomiya, a voter in Tokyo told the BBC. Takaichi's enthusiasm, populist spending promises and nationalist rhetoric appear to have energised voters. Her social media presence has also cultivated new followers, particularly among young voters. She regularly shares clips of her daily life and political activities, and a video of her playing the drums with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung is one of many clips that have gone viral.

# ITALIAN POLICE ARREST PROTESTERS AFTER CLASH IN OLYMPIC HOST CITY MILAN

Six people have been arrested after police clashed with protesters in Milan, one of the host cities of the Winter Olympic Games, during the first day of the competition. Thousands took to the streets in the northern Italian city on Saturday to protest against the Games and a range of issues including the cost of living. Some released fireworks and threw stones at police, who responded with water cannon. It comes after the government tightened protest laws in the wake of a demonstration last weekend in Turin that left more than 100 officers injured, according to government figures. Meanwhile, officials are investigating suspected sab-

otage on northern Italy's railway network on Saturday. Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said those protesting against the Olympics were the "enemy of Italy" and had put images of the demonstrations "on the televisions of half the world", while thousands of other Italians were working hard to make the competition a success. She said this had happened "after others locked railway cables to prevent trains from starting". Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini described those involved in confrontations in Milan as "criminals". "Just days after the shameful violence in Turin, more clashes, more attacks on law enforcement," he said. "We're proud to have pushed for a



new security package that will allow for even more effective interventions against thugs and criminals." The Turin demonstration, which was called in response to the eviction of an unofficial social centre, started peacefully but later turned violent when armed groups confronted police.

More than 30 people were arrested. One officer was attacked with a hammer, which Meloni described as attempted murder. A new security package, which was adopted on Thursday after being fast-tracked as a result of the violence in Turin, allows police to detain suspected troublemakers for up

to 12 hours before demonstrations to stop them from spreading unrest. Critics have called it repressive. Most of those involved in Saturday's protest in Milan marched peacefully. One woman, Francesca Missana, told news agency AFP that the Olympic Games were "no longer sustainable from an environmental or a social point of view, their time is up". "These Games were promoted as sustainable and cost-neutral," protest organiser Alberto di Monte told AFP. He added that because the Games were spread across multiple sites, and that billions had been spent on roads instead of protecting the mountains. Saturday

also saw chaos on some of Italy's northern rail networks, with suspected attacks delaying people for hours. A fire hit rail infrastructure between Bologna and Venice, and police later found severed cables and an explosive device in locations nearby. Police said a track switch was set alight near Pesaro on the Adriatic coast and electric cables were found severed near Bologna, along with a rudimentary explosive device left by a track. Bologna's central rail station is a major hub, linking cities in the north and south, and east to west lines. RFI, which owns the country's railways, said services have since returned to normal.





## Tiigers of Kolkata finish ISPL Season 3 as runners-up after record-breaking campaign

Tiigers of Kolkata concluded the ISPL Season 3 as runners-up, demonstrating a strong return to the tournament's final stages following their inaugural season title and a difficult second season. Their success was driven by consistent performances, squad depth, and a series of record-breaking achievements. The team showcased its attacking approach from the start, setting a new tournament record when they posted a then-highest team total of 136 runs against Srinagar in the league phase. They later surpassed their own mark by scoring 149 runs against the same opponents, establishing the highest team total of the season. This performance also produced the largest margin of victory in league history, with the Tiigers securing a 93-run win. Their aggressive style continued into the knockout stages, as they scored 124 runs in the Eliminator against Mumbai, reinforcing



ing their reputation as one of the most entertaining sides. Leading the batting was Saif Ali, who earned the title of Best Batter of the Tournament with 225 runs, highlighting his consistency at the top of the order. He was supported by Krushna Gawali, Saroj Paramanik and Rajat Mundhe, who scored 183, 180 and 158 runs respectively, each finishing

among the top 10 run-scorers of ISPL Season 3. This reflected the team's balanced and deep batting lineup. Krushna Gawali recorded the highest individual score in ISPL history, making 74 runs from 26 balls. Saif Ali also secured second and third highest individual scores with innings of 61 off 30 balls and 58 off 33 balls, emphasising the team's

fearless and aggressive batting approach. The bowling attack complemented the batting with pace, accuracy and composure during critical moments. Seventeen-year-old Ankit Yadav was a standout, ranking among the top five wicket-takers of the season with 16 wickets. Vivek Shelar made a notable impact, delivering the fastest ball in ISPL histo-

ry at 145.2 km/h and achieving the third-best bowling strike-rate of 4.67. A defining moment came in Qualifier 2 against Ahmedabad, where Shelar took a hat-trick in a decisive over, turning the match and securing the Tiigers' place in the final. Arish Khan offered control and consistency as well, finishing second in economy rate with 3.50 runs per over and an average of 5.60. Captain Bhavesh Pawar praised the squad's collective efforts and support from ownership, stating: "This season has been about unity and clarity. Every player understood their role and stepped up when the team needed it most. I'd like to thank Aksha ma'am and the entire management for backing us throughout — that trust allowed us to play with freedom and confidence. While the final didn't go our way, the way this team fought and grew together is something we're proud of."

## Agni Chopra, 3 Idiots Director's Son, Denies PSL Registration. Fans Share Website Screenshots

A whirlwind of social media speculations erupted after Agni Dev Chopra, the son of renowned 3 Idiots director Vidhu Vinod Chopra and film critic Anupama Chopra, was spotted on the official registration list for the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2026 auction. Given the complex sporting and political ties between India and Pakistan, the news quickly went viral, leading to intense debate and, in some corners, online trolling directed at the Chopra family. However, Agni has since stepped forward to set the record straight. Reports began circulating that Agni Chopra (registered as a cricketer in the United States of America) was listed as a foreign player available for the upcoming PSL Season 11 auction. According to the document shared online, he was listed as a USA citizen (he was born in Detroit). His base price was reportedly set at PKR 6,00,000 (approx. INR 1.9 lakh). He was categorised as an overseas associate player.



Taking to Instagram to address the "fake and misleading reports," Agni Chopra categorically denied any involvement with the league. His statement was later amplified by his mother, Anupama Chopra. "I would like to clarify that I have not enrolled for the PSL. I remain fully focused on my cricket journey in the USA and my long-term career goals. I request everyone not to fall prey to misinformation." However, fans refused to let the controversy die down and began sharing screenshots of the PSL website on social media plat-

forms, asking why 'Agni Chopra' was listed among the players who have registered for the auction. It remains unclear if this was an administrative error or an unauthorised registration. Some even asked Agni to take legal action against PSL if he hadn't registered for the auction. Agni Chopra's Cricketing History Playing for Mizoram, he made history by becoming the first player to score centuries in each of his first four first-class matches. He finished the 2023-24 season with 939 runs and won the prestigious Madhavrao Scindia Award.

## Bangladesh Intervenes, Adds New Twist To ICC vs Pakistan Row In T20 World Cup 2026

The 2026 T20 World Cup has taken another dramatic turn following Pakistan's decision to boycott their match against India on 15 February. In a bid to resolve the escalating tension, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President, Aminul Islam Bulbul, has headed to Lahore for a crucial meeting with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). In fact, two ICC officials, are also flying to Lahore for a meeting involving both BCB and PCB. The controversy began when the BCB, backed by Bangladesh's interim government, refused to send its national team to India for its group-stage matches, citing security concerns. Bangladesh



had formally requested that its fixtures be relocated to Sri Lanka, the tournament's co-host. However, the International Cricket Council (ICC) rejected the proposal following an independent security assessment that found no specific threat. When the BCB missed the final participa-



tion deadline in late January, the ICC was left with little choice but to remove Bangladesh from the biennial event, replacing them with Scotland in Group C. Pakistan's intervention and the "Marquee" Boycott In an unprecedented move, the Pakistan government and

the PCB have thrown their weight behind Bangladesh. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif confirmed that the national team has been directed to boycott their high-profile clash against India, scheduled for 15 February in Colombo. PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has described Bangladesh's exclusion as "unjust" and "politically motivated," asserting that no board should be pressured into playing in a location where they feel unsafe. sources indicate that the meeting between Bulbul and Naqvi aims to break the current deadlock. The two boards are expected to present a united front before meeting with ICC officials later today.

## Are Virat Kohli And Gautam Gambhir 'Fighting'? Secretary Devajit Saikia Gives Blunt Response

Ever since Gautam Gambhir has taken up the post of India's head coach, the state of his relationship with star batter Virat Kohli has been a constant topic of conversation among the cricket fraternity. Gambhir and Kohli famously clashed on numerous occasions during the Indian Premier League (IPL), and reports have emerged that the duo don't share the best of relationships even now. On this matter, Devajit Saikia - Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary - has spoken out. Saikia denied all rumours and reports that Gambhir and Kohli may be "fighting". "I have never seen them (Kohli and Gambhir)



fighting. They are in a very good cordial relationship," said Saikia, speaking on the India Today podcast. "IPL? Maybe I didn't see that match because I was with them when they were representing the country," Saikia added. During Gambhir's tenure, Kohli announced his retirement



from Test cricket in 2025. Kohli's spot in India's ODI playing XI for the 2027 World Cup has been a topic of contention amongst experts and fans alike, something that has reduced in recent weeks due to the legendary batter's impeccable form. At the age of 37, Kohli is now

arguably in the best form of his ODI career. He has smashed three centuries and a score of 93 across his last six ODIs for India. Another aspect that has led to chatter surrounding the relationship shared by Kohli and Gambhir has been the BCCI's strict stance on senior players playing domestic cricket when not on international duty. Over the last year, Kohli has appeared in both the Ranji Trophy and the Vijay Hazare Trophy after gaps of several years. Despite reports of friction between the two, Gambhir and Kohli have already worked together in delivering India an ICC trophy, in the form of the Champions Trophy 2025.

## 'The shirt used to weigh heavy - now England players double in size in it'



There was a time, maybe a couple of years ago, when the England shirt used to weigh heavy on the players. The pressure seemed to inhibit them. They were not expressing themselves. Everything was safety-first and a bit meek. No longer. Now, that England shirt seems to make the players double in size. They have embraced this team and this stage and are relishing showing the Allianz Stadium crowd what they are capable of. They are enjoying their rugby. And we are enjoying watching them. Perversely, it is because the mood is so good around the team that coach Steve Borthwick and the players can be so focused on the bits and pieces which went wrong in the 48-7 win over Wales to open their Six Nations campaign. There were no

cartwheels or laps of honour after the final whistle. The players looked like they were happy with the win but focused on the next task - and aware that they will have to be better when they take on a wounded Scotland in Edinburgh on Saturday. Tommy Freeman is rapidly approaching world-class status. The package that he brings to Test rugby - the pace, size, aerial ability and appetite for the ball - is pretty special. He was a starter for the British and Irish Lions in all three Tests against Australia in the summer and he is inked into this England team as one of those who will always have a place when fit. However, there is a question over which number Borthwick will write next to Freeman's name.

## Nepal Suffer Last-Over Heartbreak, Fall Short Of Major Upset vs England

Nepal fell narrowly short of a sensational upset as England won by just 4 runs in their T20 World Cup 2026 Group C match in Mumbai on Sunday. Half-centuries by Jacob Bethell (55 off 35) and captain Harry Brook (53 off 32) and a fiery cameo by Will Jacks (39 off 18) helped England post a respectable score of 184/7 in 20 overs. Nepal took the chase of 185 right down to the wire, thanks to contributions by Kushal Bhurtel (29 off 17), Rohit Paudel (39 off 34), Dipendra Singh Airee (44 off 29) and Lokesh Bam (39 off 20). However, England pacer Sam Curran held his nerve to defend 10 runs in the final over. Goodbye from this thriller! England secures the points



after a nervy finish, while Nepal can take plenty of positives from a fighting loss. But don't go anywhere because the cricket action continues. We are shifting gears immediately for the next clash, where Sri Lanka locks horns with

Ireland in what promises to be a cracking contest. The game has already started, so just switch tabs for more excitement. Cheers! The victorious skipper of England - Harry Brook says that it wasn't an easy game at all but they got over the

line. Adds that there are not many players who can take down Adil Rashid. He says that the total was great but Nepal were outstanding. He adds that Will Jacks' knock towards the end was crucial and that is the reason they got over the line. He ends by saying that Sam Curran bowled well, and he was calm under pressure. The captain of Nepal - Rohit Paudel says there is obviously disappointment, but more than anything, he is proud of how his team performed. Adds that the fight they showed against England was outstanding. Mentions they came in with one clear goal, to give their absolute best, and the players did exactly that.

## Vonn crashes in downhill as Johnson wins gold

Lindsey Vonn crashed in the women's downhill competition at the Winter Olympics as fellow American Breezy Johnson won an emotional gold in Cortina. Vonn, 41, was competing nine days after rupturing ligaments in her left knee but hitting the gate on her first jump left her off balance, and her dreams of winning a medal in what she said will be her final Olympic downhill were over. Vonn had successfully completed two training runs on the iconic Olympia delle Tofane course but was airlifted off the piste after being tended to for a lengthy period. World champion Johnson was in tears as her gold medal was confirmed after she clocked a blistering time of one minute 36.10 seconds. The 30-year-old watched on the big screen at



the finish line with her head in her hands when her teammate crashed, having completed her run sixth while Vonn was 13th to go. Germany's Emma Aicher was pipped by 0.04 seconds and took the silver medal while Italian home favourite Sofia Goggia secured bronze. Vonn was taking a huge risk by competing on Sunday having suffered the ACL injury

in Switzerland in the last World Cup race before the Games but was determined to take to the course for her favoured event. Stunned spectators applauded towards the helicopter as it carried her away from the piste which has brought her so much success in the past - with 12 of her 84 World Cup wins coming here. Vonn had been unsure what her knee

was capable of withstanding but had targeted the downhill as her favoured event while also being entered in the super-G and team events. It is now unlikely she will compete in any of those, meaning her Olympic career has almost certainly come to a devastating end. Vonn had appeared relaxed in the training runs and in the morning before the race. Her coach Aksel Lund Svindal said on Friday that he felt confident she could pull off something spectacular. No stranger to a comeback, Vonn retired from the sport in 2019 as the most decorated female skier at the time but had suffered several serious leg injuries. She made a shock return to the sport in 2024 having had a partial knee replacement in her right knee.

## Rockets' Sengun sorry for sexist remark at official



Houston Rockets centre Alperen Sengun says he has apologised to the female official he aimed a sexist remark at during a defeat by the Boston Celtics. The Turkish player was ejected in the fourth quarter of his side's defeat on Wednesday after angrily making the derogatory comment multiple times to Jenna Reneau, who is in her first season as an NBA staff official. "That was immature by me," said the 23-year-old Sengun, who was frustrated at no foul being called on him on a drive to the basket. "That was just in the moment, and I said some stuff I shouldn't say, but I felt bad about it." The incident involving

Sengun occurred on National Girls and Women in Sports Day, with the Rockets posting a message from Kevin Durant, external to mark the occasion. "Sometimes, you can't control yourself, but I should have known better," added Sengun, who was speaking after registering a triple double of 17 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists in a 112-106 win against the Oklahoma City Thunder on Saturday. "But I fixed it, and then I went to the locker room and I apologised. I shake [her] hand and said that would never happen again. It just happened in the heat of the moment. Then, she understood, and it was good on both ends."

## Amaravathiki Aahwanam” Pre-Release Event Held Grandly; Film Set for Worldwide Theatrical Release on February 13th



The much-awaited horror thriller *Amaravathiki Aahwanam* is gearing up for its grand worldwide release on February 13th. The film stars Siva Kantmaneni, Dhanya Balakrishna, Esther, Supritha, and Harish in lead roles, with senior actors Ashok Kumar, Bhadram, Gemini Suresh, and Nagendra Prasad in pivotal roles. Directed by GVK, the film is produced by KS Shankar Rao and R. Venkateswara Rao under the Lighthouse Cine Magic banner, presented by G. Rambabu Yadav, with production supervision by noted producer Muppa Venkayya Chowdary. The pre-release event was held in

Hyderabad on Saturday, drawing enthusiastic participation from the cast, crew, and industry stalwarts. Highlights from the Event DOP J. Prabhakar Reddy explained the unique concept of *Amaravathi* with “four angels who attract with beauty but terrify as devils.” Music Director Padmanabh Bharadwaj expressed confidence that the songs and background score will win audience appreciation. Actor Gemini Suresh shared his excitement about playing a challenging madman’s role. Sri Murali Mohan garu praised the producers for supporting small films that sustain the industry, wishing the film great success. Actor Raghu Babu lauded director GVK’s work, predicting recognition similar to *Vinayak* after Aadi. Producer R. Venkateswara Rao emphasized the film’s strong content and

confidence in its success. Director GVK clarified that despite the title, the film has no political backdrop and is a pure horror thriller. Hero Siva Kantmaneni assured audiences of two and a half hours of engaging entertainment, highlighting the dedication of the heroines and technical quality. Heroines Supritha, Esther, and Dhanya Balakrishna shared their experiences, praising the story, teamwork, and director’s vision. Actor Ashwin Babu compared the film’s potential to *Raju Gari Gadhi*, encouraging audiences to support it. Conclusion With strong performances, technical finesse, and a gripping storyline, *Amaravathiki Aahwanam* promises to deliver spine-chilling entertainment. The film is set for a worldwide theatrical release on February 13th.

## Kavya Kalyanram, Anvesh Michael’s pleasant love story “What’s Up Naresh” First Look, Glimpse Released



Kavya Kalyanram, who rose to prominence with *Balagam*, teams up with Kotha Poradu fame Anvesh Michael for one of the most pleasant love stories of the year- “What’s Up Naresh.” Written and directed by CV Vishal and produced by Bhagya Laxmi Chinta under the CVV Cinema banner, the makers kick-started the film’s promotions with the unveiling of its first look and first glimpse. The very title, “What’s Up Naresh,” sparks instant curiosity. The first-look poster exudes a warm, breezy, feel-good charm. Anvesh Michael, as Naresh, looks rooted and effortlessly endearing, while Kavya Kalyanram appears calm, cheerful as Sarika, and radiates a subtle emotional depth. Their

expressions hint at a heartfelt slice-of-life romance at its core. The first glimpse opens on a humorous yet grounded note, with the parents’ discussing marriage and dowry. The father reveals that the girl’s family is willing to offer 80 lakh but want the wedding after summer. Naresh, unfazed, insists he wants nothing less than 8 crore, and declares he’s ready to wait as long as needed. What follows is a peek into Naresh’s everyday routine. The glimpse culminates at the beach, where Sarika greets him, setting the stage perfectly for the second glimpse, arriving this Valentine’s Day. Follow their characters on a road trip to Gokarna, with top-notch music by the in-form Smaran Sai.

## GRAND SUCCESS MEET OF “SUMATHI SATHAKAM” HELD IN A CELEBRATORY MANNER

The clean family entertainer “*Sumathi Sathakam*”, produced under the Vision Movie Makers banner by Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati and directed by M.M. Naidu, has been receiving a positive response from audiences. Starring Amardeep Chowdary and Saylimchoudhri in lead roles, the film was released worldwide on February 6 through Mythri Movie Makers. The film also features Mahesh Vitta, Shailajamma, Tasty Teja, JDV Prasad, Karan Vijay, Mirchi Kiran, Akella Gopal Krishna and others in key roles. The music is composed by Subhash Anand, while Halesh handled the cinematography. Following the film’s good theatrical reception, the success meet was held in a grand manner. Speaking at the event, senior actress Malakpet Shailajamma thanked the audience for supporting the film and making it a success. She said the film once again proved that audiences always encourage good content and added that *Sumathi Sathakam* is a perfect family watch. Music director Subhash Anand expressed happiness over the film’s success and thanked hero Amardeep, the director, and producer for their support. He also appreciated Aditya Music for encouraging the film. Writer Bandaru Naidu said he was happy that audiences are appreciating not only the film but also the dialogues. He mentioned



that the film is receiving a very positive response on social media. Actor Mahesh Vitta shared that getting the right role depends on good writing, direction, and production support, all of which came together for him in this film. He added that after nearly 15 years, the film received censor certification without any cuts, mutes, or blurs, which speaks about the strength of the content. Director M.M. Naidu expressed gratitude to the audience, media, producer Sai Sudhakar, music director Subhash Anand, the technical team, and the entire cast. He praised Amardeep for his dedication and Shaili for learning Telugu and working hard for the film despite language challenges. Producer Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati said the film started as a

small project with new talent and has now achieved strong success. He stated that Vision Movie Makers will always support talented artists who are waiting for opportunities. He appreciated the entire technical team and cast for giving their best. He added that the audience giving such a big success to *Amardeep* after he asked for “one chance” is truly heartwarming. Heroine Shaili Chowdary said she was very happy to see the film’s success and thanked the director, producer, Amardeep, co-actors, media, and audience. She said the buzz created by the *Sumathi* song helped the film reach more people. Hero Amardeep thanked director Naidu and producer Sai Sudhakar for trusting him and giving him the opportunity.



## AAMIR KHAN TAKES A TUMBLE ON COURT

Hyderabad: Amir Khan recently joined a friendly pickleball game at the World Pickleball League (WPBL) in 2026. Fans took to social media to praise Aamir’s quick recovery and positive attitude, many fans

appreciated how he got back up and continued playing without letting the fall affect

himself at Jio World Garden in Mumbai on February 7. While playing with three fans, Aamir unexpectedly slipped on the court, causing fans to worry for a moment. In a video that went viral, Aamir was seen rushing forward to return a shot when he suddenly lost his balance and fell. He rolled briefly on the court but quickly got back up with the help of his teammate. Aamir smiled and continued playing, impressing fans with his fast recovery. Fans took to social media to praise Aamir’s quick recovery and positive attitude. Many fans appreciated how he got back up and continued playing without letting the fall affect him.

■ AAMIR’S RECENT WORK AND FUTURE

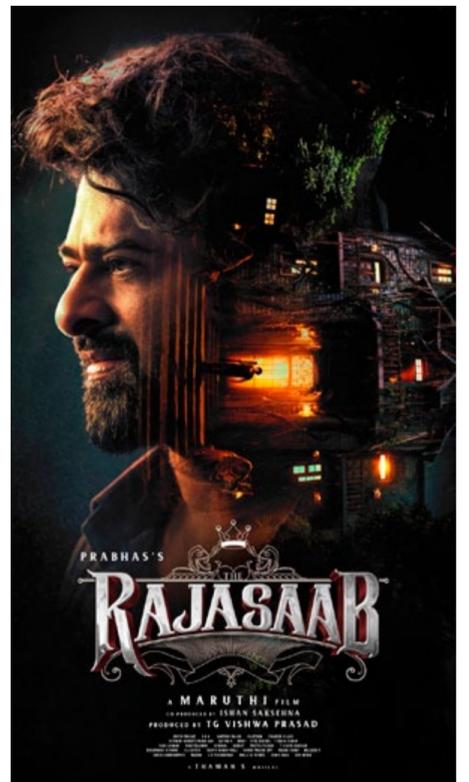
### PROJECTS

Aamir Khan was last seen in a cameo in *Happy Patel: Khatarnak* Jasoo, a film he also produced. He is also working on *Ek Din*, which stars his son Junaid Khan and actress Sai Pallavi. Aamir is set to play legendary filmmaker Dadasaheb Phalke in an upcoming biopic, directed by Rajkumar Hirani. Aamir’s participation in pickleball at 60 shows his commitment to staying fit. His sportsmanship and positive attitude continue to inspire fans both on and off the screen. “Fans took to social media to praise Aamir’s quick recovery and positive attitude, many fans appreciated how he got back up and continued playing without letting the fall affect him.

## SHAHID KAPOOR’S ‘O ROMEO’ GETS CLEARANCE FROM BOMBAY HIGH COURT



## THE RAJA SAAB OTT RELEASE: JIHOTSTAR CRASHES, BONUS SCENES ADDED



Hyderabad: Prabhas’ latest movie, *The Raja Saab*, premiered on JioHotstar on February 6, 2026, after a lackluster theatrical release. The film’s OTT debut faced technical difficulties, with many users reporting crashes due to the high demand. JioHotstar had to upgrade its servers to handle the surge of viewers eager to watch the film, which includes an extended cut with previously missing scenes.

■ THE RAJA SAAB EXTENDED CUT WITH

**BONUS FOOTAGE**  
The streaming version of *The Raja Saab* features additional footage, including a four-minute sequence showing Prabhas’ older look. This scene, initially cut from the theatrical release due to technical glitches, was highly anticipated by fans. The extended cut is a significant draw for viewers who felt the movie was incomplete in cinemas. While some fans appreciated the extended cut and praised Prabhas’ performance, the movie still faced widespread trolling on social media.

## “RK DEEKSHA” MOVIE IS GEARING UP FOR RELEASE IN THE SECOND WEEK OF MARCH

Produced under the banners RK Films and Sigdha Creations, “*RK Deeksha*” is directed and produced by Dr. Pratani Ramakrishna Goud and presented by B.S. Reddy. The film stars Kiran as the hero, with Aksh Khan of *Dhee* and Jodi fame and Alekya Reddy as the female leads. Tulasi, Anusha, Keerthana, Pravalika, Rohith Sharma and others play key roles. Having completed all production formalities, “*RK Deeksha*” is all set for a grand theatrical release worldwide in the second week of March. The film team shared details at a press meet held on this occasion. Director-Producer Dr. Pratani Ramakrishna Goud said “We have decided to release *RK Deeksha* in the second week of March, by which time students’ exami-

nations will also be over. Initially, we planned a *Sankranti* release, but due to additional time taken to enhance the quality of CG work, the release was delayed. *RK Deeksha* is a film that will appeal to audiences of all sections. It delivers a strong message that success is possible with determination and perseverance. The movie has all commercial elements like love, action, and emotion. Our songs are receiving a very good response. Singer Madhu Priya has rendered three songs, and a special song featuring Aksh Khan will be a major attraction. We have also created a powerful song paying tribute to brave soldiers, including martyr Jawan Murali Naik, who sacrificed their lives for the



nation. Presenter B.S. Reddy has extended great support to the film. We are introducing Rohith Sharma as a villain. Ravi Master, who has won medals in non-chaku martial arts across 118 countries, has choreographed the action sequences. This film will bring good recognition to

hero Kiran. After this, we plan to make a sports-based film. We are aiming to make two films every year. *RK Deeksha* will connect strongly with common audiences through its relatable content.” Hero Kiran said “I’m very happy that *RK Deeksha* is releasing in the second

week of March. Just like the title suggests, we acted in this film with great dedication. RK Goud garu has established the TFCC Association and has been encouraging technicians across 24 crafts. He gives opportunities to newcomers like us. B.S. Reddy garu has supported us immensely in production. While big names always have support in the industry, I sincerely request audiences to also support newcomers like us and make our film a success.” Heroine Aksh Khan said “I thank Ramakrishna Goud garu for giving me this opportunity in *RK Deeksha*. We have done a special song titled ‘Nandi Nandi’ based on the Nandi Awards backdrop, which audiences will really enjoy. My character is very strong, and working with Kiran was a great experience.

*RK Deeksha* is a complete package film with all elements. Every department has worked very hard. I request everyone to support our film releasing in the second week of March.” Actress Tulasi said “I played the role of the heroine’s friend in this film. I wish *RK Deeksha* becomes a big success.” Presenter D.S. Reddy said: “We have made *RK Deeksha* with all the elements audiences expect, along with a strong social message. Director-producer RK Goud garu has made this film with true dedication. We hope this movie brings good recognition to Kiran and Aksh. The greatness and sacrifice of our brave soldiers are beautifully portrayed in this film. We request audiences to support our film releasing in the second week of March.”