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RECIPROCAL TARIFFS

'India and U.S. close to finalising pact'

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VIOLENCE IN SYDNEY

Father-son duo behind shooting, say police

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Nabin takes charge as BJP working chief

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Presidential Reference verdict

It renders Governor's power as more a 'check' than a 'balance'

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HAMMER TIME

Drama set to unfold in IPL mini-auction

SPORT » PAGE 15

New chapter

The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill was introduced by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in the Lok Sabha

- The Bill proposes the setting up of a higher education commission along with three councils
- It seeks to subsume the functions of the University Grants Commission, the All India Council for Technical Education, and the National Council for Teachers' Education
- The commission will be an apex umbrella body to provide direction for comprehensive and holistic growth of higher education and ensure coordination between the Councils, the Bill says



Govt. to send higher education Bill to JPC

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Monday proposed that the new Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025, which seeks to overhaul the higher education regulatory framework by replacing the University Grants Commission (UGC), be sent to a Joint Parliamentary Committee with members from both Houses.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday afternoon tabled the Bill even as MPs from across Opposition parties opposed it, arguing that the Bill represented "executive overreach", subjected higher educational institutes to "pervasive executive control, graded autonomy, intrusive compliance requirements, severe penalties, and closure powers", and went against the principles of federalism.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

With new Bill, demand-led job scheme set to turn supply-driven

Viksit Bharat – Guarantee For Rozgar And Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill proposes to increase guaranteed workdays from 100 to 125, but raises the financial burden on States and dismantles the demand-driven structure of the MGNREGA

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The Union government is set to introduce the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee For Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005 in the Lok Sabha. The move will mark a shift from a "demand-driven framework" to a "supply-driven scheme".

Under the new system, allocations will be capped at a fixed budget determined by the Union government based on "parameters" not yet specified. Employment will be provided only in rural areas notified by the Centre.

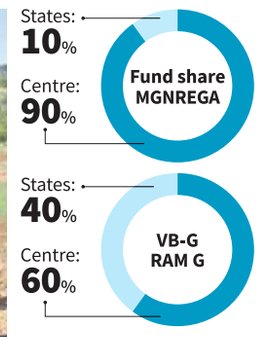
Framework change

The government has circulated the VB-G RAM G Bill to MPs, framing it as legislation to 'establish a rural development framework aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047'

Shifts from MGNREGA to VB-G RAM G Bill

- Rights-based employment guarantee → **Supply-driven employment and livelihood scheme**
- 100 days of wage employment → **125 days**
- Flexible budget → **Budget cap**
- Year-round → **Seasonal pause allowed**





*North-Eastern, Himalayan States, and J&K retain 90:10 ratio

While the VB-G RAM G Bill increases the number of guaranteed workdays from 100 to 125, it significantly raises the financial burden on States from the current 10% share to 40% of total expenditure. The government circulated the Bill among MPs on Monday, framing it as legislation to "establish a rural development framework aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047".

Under the MGNREGA, the Union government was responsible for 100% of the labour wages and 75% of the material wages.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Opposition raises several questions over new Bill

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Opposition on Monday raised questions about the Bill that seeks to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, ranging from the rationale behind removing the name of Mahatma Gandhi to increasing the financial burden on States and dismantling the rights-based architecture of the law.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

NEARBY



Lokesh seeks Centre's support for State's welfare

VIJAYAWADA
HRD Minister Nara Lokesh met Union Minister for Electronics & Information Technology and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw in New Delhi, following his recent visit to the U.S. and Canada. He also met Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Jayant Chaudhary. » Page 6

QR codes, kiosks to be set up in TTD temples

TIRUMALA
The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is planning installing kiosks and QR codes to facilitate UPI payments in all its 60 temples in various States. » Page 6

INBRIEF

Tributes offered to Amarajeevi Potti Sriramulu

Police officers of different cadres paid tributes to 'Amarajeevi' Potti Sriramulu on his 73th death anniversary, on Monday. Director General of Police (DGP) Harish Kumar Gupta paid homage to Amarajeevi Potti Sriramulu at the A.P. police headquarters at Mangalagiri. Meanwhile, NTR Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhar Babu garlanded the portrait of Potti Sriramulu at the Commissionerate, and recalled the sacrifice made by the leader. In Eluru district, Superintendent of Police (SP) K. Pratap Kishore offered tributes to the freedom fighter at the district police headquarters.

Driver Sensitisation Tab launched to educate drivers

Deputy Transport Commissioner Meera Prasad inaugurated a new Driver Sensitisation Tab Lab set up by Diageo India, in partnership with BharatCares and the Andhra Pradesh Transport Department, at the RTO office, here on Monday. New drivers will be educated on road safety behaviour at the lab through a mandatory 45-minute module featuring interactive video content and behavioural assessments designed to promote safe driving habits. By simulating real-life scenarios, the programme emphasises the importance of safety.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (December 16, Tuesday), the following articles are available:

- Why were IndiGo operations disrupted? **newsth.live/airlinedisruptionexp**
- How is Asia-like artemisinin resistance emerging in Africa? **newsth.live/africaresistance**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

'Poornahuti' marks end of Bhavani Deeksha Viramana

Over 5.15 lakh devotees visit the temple, nearly 21.20 lakh laddus distributed, and over 2 lakh devotees had annaprasadams during the five-day ritual, according to official statistics

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The 'Bhavani Deeksha Viramana' (relinquishment of deeksha) concluded on a grand manner with the performance of 'Poornahuti' at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri, on Monday.

The temple priests performed Poornahuti at the 'yagasaala' near Sivalayam, which marked the end of five-day ritual this year. Amid the chanting of Vedic hymns, the temple priests offered a silk sari, sandalwood pieces, ghee, flowers and fruits to the 'homam', and 'ashirvachanam' (blessings) were given to the devotees. The Poornahuti was performed under the supervision of temple sthanacharya Siva Prasad, chief priest Durga Prasad, and members of the Vedic committee.

Thousands of Bhavani devotees, after taking a holy dip in the Krishna river, made a beeline for the Kanaka Durga temple since midnight and offered special pujas to the goddess to mark the relinquishment. The devotees also undertook mandatory 'giri pradakshina' as part of Bhavani Deeksha Viramana ritual.



Devotees offering coconuts to the 'homam' during the Bhavani Deeksha Viramana in Vijayawada, on Monday. K.V.S. GIRI

The giri pradakshana was done by some devotees even on Monday and the roads were painted red with devotees turning up in the traditional red dress. The vicinity of Indrakeeladri reverberated with chants and slogans of 'Bhavani Mata Ki Jai', 'Jai Bhavani Jai Jai Bhavani' as Bhavanis stormed in large numbers to relinquish 'deeksha'.

According to official statistics from December 11 to 11 a.m. on December 15, over 5.15 lakh devotees visited the temple during the Bhavani Deekshas. Nearly 21.20 lakh laddus were distributed, while 2,03,645 devotees had annaprasadams. Additionally, 51,435 devotees offered hair at the Kalyanakatta.

Coordinated efforts

Meanwhile, addressing a press conference at Indrakeeladri, NTR District Collector Lakshmisha said the Bhavani Deekshas concluded successfully. He attributed the success to meticulous planning and coordinated efforts from all departments, including Revenue, Police, Endowments, and Municipal wings. The Collector highlighted innovative arrangements such as unlimited laddu distribution, uninterrupted annaprasadam, and enhanced drinking water facilities.

Devasthanam Chairman Borra Radhakrishna (Gandhi), Executive Officer V.K. Seena Naik, Festival Officer Murthy (EO, Dwaraka Tirumala) and temple staff participated in the programme.



Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha offering prayers to Goddess Ganganamma during the 'Padamara Veedhi Ganganamma Jatara' in Eluru, on Monday.

Minister offers prayers at 'Padamara Veedhi Ganganamma Jatara'

The Hindu Bureau
ELURU

State Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, along with family, offered prayers at the 'Padamara Veedhi Ganganamma Jatara' in Eluru, on Monday.

The Home Minister was given a ceremonial welcome at the temple by Jatara Committee chairpersons Chode Balasubrahmanyam and Chode Venkaratnam. As part of the festivities, Ms. Anitha visited the decorated 'mandapams' and offered prayers to Sri Ganganamma, Sri Mahalakshmamma, Sri Vinukonda Ankamma and Sri Pothuraju Babu, and presented sare (offerings) to the deities.

Eluru MLA Badeti Chanti and Mayor Sheikh Noorjahan accompanied the Minister and presented a sari to the presiding deity and participated in special pujas.

Several public representatives and officials were present during the visit, including Eluru Municipal Corporation co-option member S.M.R. Pedababu, RTC Regional Chairman Reddi Appalanaidu, Eluru Agricultural Market Committee Chairman Mamillapalli Parthasaradhi, temple priest Niranjan, and other local leaders.

Hopeful wait



A vendor selling Santa Claus masks ahead of Christmas festival near Ambedkar Smriti Vanam in Vijayawada, on Monday. K.V.S. GIRI

Hospital penalised for collecting excess money

The Hindu Bureau
NARASARAOPET

A private hospital in Narasaraopet was penalised for illegally collecting money from a beneficiary under the Dr. NTR Vaidya Seva scheme. The Palnadu district administration imposed a penalty three times the excess amount and directed the hospital to refund the collected sum to the patient.

The action was taken during a District Disciplinary Committee meeting held at the Palnadu Collectorate on Monday under the chairmanship of Collector Kritika Shukla. The case pertained to a 2023 complaint.

YSRCP rallies against privatisation of government medical colleges

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) organised a rally opposing the proposed privatisation of government medical colleges as part of its Statewide 'Crore Signatures' campaign in Vijayawada, on Monday. Leaders and party cadres from NTR district marched from Chuttugunta Centre to Shikhamani Centre and dispatched petitions containing public signatures to the party's central office.

The rally, which witnessed the good participation, was led by NTR district president Devineni Avinash, along with senior leaders including former Minister Vellampalli Srinivas Rao, ex MLAs Malladi Vishnu and others. The leaders flagged off a vehicle carrying bundles of signed petitions collected from across the district.



YSRCP leader Devineni Avinash speaking at a protest against privatisation of medical colleges, in Vijayawada on Monday. K.V.S. GIRI

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Srinivas Rao said the overwhelming public response reflected the growing dissatisfaction with the coalition government.

Meanwhile, Mr. Avinash said that 4,21,217 people from NTR district alone had signed the petitions opposing privatisation of government medical colleges. He demanded that the coalition government immediately withdraw the move, warning that it would face public anger if they failed to do so.

Timings
VIJAYAWADA

TUESDAY, DEC. 16	
RISE 06:28	SET 17:38
RISE 03:12	SET 14:43
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 17	
RISE 06:29	SET 17:38
RISE 04:02	SET 15:24
THURSDAY, DEC. 18	
RISE 06:29	SET 17:39
RISE 04:55	SET 16:09

Vijayawada Weather	max	min
Machilipatnam	30	21
Guntur Town	30	17
Vijayawada City	30	19

Vijayawada City Today
30°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slight warm. Night will be pleasant.

Vijayawada City Tomorrow
31°C Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night will be pleasant. Mostly dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU
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Government approves incentives for ₹61 crore resort in Bapatla dist.

The Hindu Bureau
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government approved a package of incentives for M/s Yaganti Estates to develop a resort at Pandurangapuram in Adavi village in Bapatla district, under the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2024-2029.

According to G.O.Ms. No.48 issued on December 13 by Tourism and Culture Department Special Chief Secretary Ajay Jain, the proposed Radisson resort will involve an investment of ₹61.32 crore and is expected to generate employment to 250 people. The project was cleared following recommendations of the State Investment Promotion Committee and the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB).

As part of the incentives, the government has approved reimbursement of 100% net State Goods and Services Tax for a period of 10 years or until recovery of 100% of the fixed capital investment, whichever is earlier. In addition, the developer will receive an incentive equal to 10% of the fixed capital investment, capped at ₹10 crore, to be disbursed in five equal annual instalments from the commencement of operations.

The project will also be eligible for electricity at industrial tariffs and reimbursement of electricity duty for five years. While reimbursement of stamp duty paid earlier will not be considered, 100% reimbursement of stamp duty on mortgage and hypothecation has been allowed.

A.P. to intensify energy conservation across all sectors, says Genco MD

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

AP-Genco Managing Director and State Energy Conservation Mission (SECM) CEO S. Nagalakshmi launched the National Energy Conservation Week-2025 celebrations by flagging off an awareness rally from the District Collector's camp office to IGMC Stadium, here on Monday.

On the occasion, Ms. Nagalakshmi stated that energy conservation, energy efficiency and clean energy generation were cost-effective tools that help in securing a sustainable future, and called upon the citizens, especially students, to become active stakeholders in the State's clean energy transition. She highlighted that every unit of energy saved contributed directly to climate action, economic savings, and energy security.



AP-Genco MD S. Nagalakshmi and senior officials of A.P. power utilities participating in a rally organised as part of the National Energy Conservation Week in Vijayawada, on Monday. K.V.S. GIRI

She said that Andhra Pradesh was intensifying energy conservation and energy efficiency initiatives across all sectors, including industry, buildings, institutions, and households. During an interaction with students, she stressed the importance of LED lighting, BLDC fans, star-rated appliances, and the growing adoption of rooftop solar systems and electric vehicles.

AP-Transco Joint MD G. Surya Sai Praveen Chand, CPDCL CMD P. Pulla Reddy, NREDCAP Vice-Chairman and MD M. Kamalakar Babu and senior officials of power utilities took part in the event.

Palnadu car accident: action taken against SI for negligence

The Hindu Bureau
NARASARAOPET

Palnadu Superintendent of Police (SP) B. Krishna Rao initiated departmental action against Chilakaluripet Sub-Inspector (SI) Sk. Rahmathulla for alleged negligence of duty and violation of conduct rules in connection with a recent road accident on NH-16 near Chilakaluripet that claimed the lives of five engineering students.

The accident occurred when a truck was allegedly stopped abruptly on the highway by the accused, M. Venkat Naidu, following which the car carrying the students rammed into the stationary vehicle, resulting in the death of five out of six occupants.

Venkat Naidu is the son of Assistant Sub-Inspector M. Srinivas. According to police officials, the departmental action against the Sub-Inspector was initiated for serious lapses in discharging his official responsibilities in the aftermath of the accident.

Charges

The charges include failure to immediately inform superior officers about the major accident, maintaining close associations with individuals involved in criminal activities and allegedly extending assistance to them.

The police further stated that the conduct of the Sub-Inspector had brought disrepute to the police department and eroded public confidence. Further action will be taken based on the outcome of the inquiry, the officials added.

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MARUTI SUZUKI

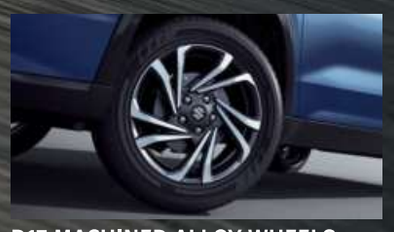
NEXA

ROAD TAX?
WE HAVE TAKEN CARE OF IT !

**GRAND VITARA STRONG HYBRID WITH
OFFERS OF UP TO ₹ 3.52 LAKH*.**

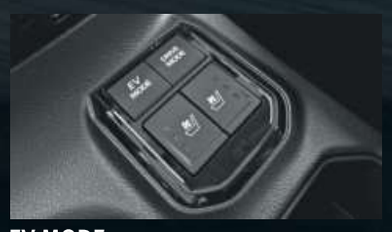


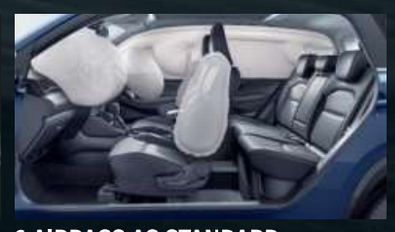
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STRONG HYBRID


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Fog, rash driving trigger accidents in Agency areas

Over-speeding, negligent driving on sharp curves, lack of proper sleep and possible drunken driving are emerging as major causes behind accidents in the region, say police officials

The Hindu Bureau
PADERU

Heavy footfall and rash driving, particularly by two-wheelers, on ghat roads has led to many road accidents in recent weeks in the Agency areas of Alluri Sitharama Raju district, causing serious concern among the police and local authorities.

Following a recent fatal accident at Maredumilli, restrictions were imposed on vehicle movement along ghat roads during night hours, as dense fog and overspeeding were identified as key factors. However, despite the night-time curbs, accidents continue to be reported in the early morning hours as well, when visibility remains poor due to fog and drivers tend to speed on relatively empty roads.


Accidents are being reported in the early mornings also when visibility is poor due to heavy fog. FILE PHOTO

In the last one week alone, three road accidents were reported under the Araku Police Station limits, resulting in the death of three individuals. This apart, another road accident occurred under Hukumpeta Police Station limits killing a 20-year-old youth. A number of youth have been travelling between Araku, Paderu, Chintapalli, Vanjangi exploring the locations which have been recording single digit temperatures.

Police officials say overspeeding, negligent driving on sharp curves, violation of traffic rules, lack of proper sleep and the possible involvement of drunken driving are emerging as major causes behind the accidents in the region.

In response to the accidents and keeping in view the heavy inflow of tourists, Araku police led by Circle Inspector L. Himagiri and Sub-Inspector G. Gopalarao launched an innovative traffic awareness and enforcement drive recently. As part of the initiative, the police conducted intensive vehicle checks along the ghat road, particularly focusing on helmet usage and safe driving practices. Stoppers were arranged at various places to arrest the speed of the vehicles. During the police drive, motorists riding without helmets were fined, while those who followed the rules were encouraged by giving them flowers.

A senior police officer from the Agency said that we have noticed that many youth are driving their vehicles in a drowsy state which is one of the reasons for the multiple accidents in the area. Additionally, even in the mornings, the villages are engulfed in thick fog. People should not drive or overspeed under any circumstances.

196 constables from Chittoor to get appointment orders today

The Hindu Bureau
CHITTOOR

Ahead of the training session for State Civil and Technical Police Constables (SCTPCs), Superintendent of Police Tushar Dudi on Monday addressed 196 candidates selected from Chittoor district, who will receive their appointment orders in Vijayawada on Tuesday. The SP said that the orders would be formally handed over at the A.P. 6th Battalion in Vijayawada by Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha.

Interacting with the candidates at the District Police Training Centre here, the SP offered them guidance and motivation. He described constables as the backbone of the Police Department and said that the law and order system at the grassroots level depended largely on their field-level efforts.

The SP informed the candidates that joining the police force was a matter of pride and responsibility, and that their conduct, discipline, and behaviour would reflect the image of the department. He urged them to uphold integrity and public trust during training and future service.

Lokesh to launch India's 1st AAD Educity at Bhogapuram today

The Hindu Bureau
VISAKHAPATNAM

IT and Human Resources Development (HRD) Minister Nara Lokesh will launch the GMR MANSAS Educity Project coming up at Bhogapuram on Tuesday. This initiatve is part of the State government's plan to establish the country's first Aviation, Aerospace, Defence (AAD) educational city.

According to an official release, the aviation, aerospace and defence sectors in India are developing at a rapid pace.

Passenger footfall is projected to reach 700 million across the 200 airports in the country. Similarly, the aerospace and defence market, valued at ₹28.7 billion in 2024 is expected to touch $57 billiion by 2034.

The release highlighted the shortage of pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers, including shortage of advance courses in arospace design, sustainable aviation, and AI/cyber security. Presently, only 8,000 aerospace engineers graduate annually just 0.5% of the total engineering graduades in the country.

The AAD Education City in Bhogapuram will be India's first integrated education and innovation hub for the sector.

Officials said that renowned universities will be set up within the City along with International branch campuses of these renowned universities.


Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu, with District Collector S. Venkateswar riding pillion, leads a motorcycle rally to create awareness on use of helmet, in Tirupati on Monday. K.V. POORNACHANDRA KUMAR

Tirupati police make helmets compulsory for motorcyclists

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUPATI

The Tirupati district police made helmets compulsory for motorcyclists starting Monday. After conducting awareness drives, sloganeering, and issuing warnings for a week, the rule came into force, with 700 policemen–wearing helmets–taking out a motorcycle rally.

After flagging off the event, District Collector S. Venkateswar rode pillion with Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu, who led the motorcycle rally, with both officials wearing helmets. The Collector described the rule as essential, citing the tragic number of road deaths among people aged 18-35 and the need to ensure that young people follow safety norms. "Do not wear helmet with the fear of getting caught, but with the responsibility towards your family," he advised the motorcyclists.

The implementation of the 'No Helmet - No Petrol' rule will ensure that fuel stations provide petrol only to motorcyclists who are wearing a helmet.

"This tightens the law further and makes our enforcement easy," said Mr. Subbarayudu.

Naidu lauds police

Meanwhile, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu appreciated the drive and lauded the district police. Taking to 'X', Mr. Naidu in a post lauded the 'No helmet - No petrol' rule as having the capability to ensure compliance.

The law came into force simultaneously in all police subdivisions of the district.

In Sri City, the police, along with Sri City's in-house security force, announced the implementation of the 'No Helmet - No entry into Sri City' rule to ensure better adherence to the culture of 'responsible and secure commuting'. Circle Inspector Srinivas and Sri City's security chief Y. Ramesh appealed to riders to wear helmets as a crucial safeguard.

2 more convicted in espionage case

The Hindu Bureau
VISAKHAPATNAM

Two more accused were sentenced to imprisonment by the National Investigation Agency special court in the Pakistan-linked Visakhapatnam Navy spying case, on Monday. So far, a total of 10 accused have been convicted by the court. The trial continues against the remaining five accused arrested by the NIA.

The two accused convicted are Somnath Sanjay Ikade of Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra, and Sonu Kumar of Hathras district in Uttar Pradesh.

The case, which NIA took over from the Counter Intelligence Police Station of the A.P. police in December 2019, relates to spying at vital installations and Indian Navy establishments by foreign agents.

Tickets on sale for India-Sri Lanka women T20 matches

The Hindu Bureau
VISAKHAPATNAM

Tickets for the T20 International matches between India Women and Sri Lanka Women, scheduled to be held at the Dr YSR ACA VDCA International Cricket Stadium on December 21 and 23, went on sale on Monday at 7 p.m.

Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) officials said that fans can purchase tickets exclusively through the District Zomato app. Prices have been kept affordable at ₹200, ₹300, ₹350, and ₹400, to suit supporters across all budgets, the ACA officials said.

This bilateral series promises thrilling action as India takes on Sri Lanka in front of a passionate home crowd, the officials added.

Authorities have recommended early booking as demand is expected to be high. For more details download the District by Zomato app.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Lokseva Bhawan, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar-751001
HE-SCH-PLAN-0059-2025/68576/H.E., Bhubaneswar, Dated: 15/12/2025
Corrigendum-V
(EXTENSION OF BID SUBMISSION DATE)
NOTICE INVITING RFP FOR ENGAGEMENT OF STATE PSU/ CENTRAL PSU/ DEPARTMENTAL UNDERTAKING AS PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT (PMC) FOR "CONSTRUCTION, REPAIR / RENOVATION ACROSS FIVE STATE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES, ODISHA UNDER PM USHA.
The last date for submission of bids against Request for Proposal (RFP) No.PM-USHA:01/2025 dated 09.10.2025, has been extended and all other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Sl.No.	Reference	Description	Date
1.	Bid Submission Dateline	Last Date & Time for Submission of Proposal	The last date and time for submission of RFP proposals is hereby extended. The revise dateline for submission of Bids : 22.12.2025, 03:00 PM

Sd/- Special Secretary to Govt. & SPD, RUSA/PM-USHA
N-232 OIPR-11001/11/0124/2526

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
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(E-Mail:- serwbpr2004@yahoo.com; Tel No.:-0680-2404287)
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement E-Mail/ E-despatch
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/55-2025-26/BPR

Identification No.	Name of work	No. of Works	Approx. Estimated Cost (In lakh)	Class of Contractor	Period of Completion
Online Tender / 55 - 2025-26/ BPR	Road Works under MMSY-IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING RD ROADS & MMSY-CMRL	03 Nos	From Rs.1217.56 Lakhs to Rs.2523.96 Lakhs	"A" Class & "Special Class as applicable	Period of Completion as provided as per Col.No.5 of Annexure of NIT

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding From	To
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Berhampur.	Online Tender / 55-2025-26/BPR	20.12.2025 at 10.00 A.M.	03.01.2026 upto 5.30 P.M.

(i) EMD / Bid Security, Cost of Bid document is to be transferred through Online as per the procedure mentioned in the DTCN.
(ii) Non-submission of the information/documents through online by the bidder as per the items mentioned in the eligible criteria of the DTCN will also liable for rejection of his tender.
Further details & Corrigendum if any can be seen from the website: - www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Berhampur
O-1752: OIPR-25071/11/0176/2526

Canara Bank — Vijaya Syndicate
ARM Branch, Circle Office, D.No.54-15-4B, Ground Floor, Lakshmi Avenue, Srinivasa Nagar Bank Colony, Ring Road, Vijayawada, AP - 520008.
Ph: 8331011695, E-mail: armvij@canarabank.com
E- AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable & Movable Assets Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic / physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of branches mentioned below of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 05.01.2026, for recovery of amounts mentioned below due to the ARM Branch, Vijayawada of Canara Bank from the below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). Description of the immovable properties with no encumbrances to the knowledge of the bank.
DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : 05.01.2026 at 2.00 PM to 4.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 5 minutes duration each till the conclusion of the sale) LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD: 05.01.2026 before 12.00 Noon
EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-wallet of M/s. PSB Alliance Private Limited (baanknet) portal directly or by generating the challan therein to deposit the EMD amount through RTGS/ NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan on or before 05.01.2026 at 12.00 Noon.

Borrower/Guarantors & Branch Details (All Accounts Transferred to ARM, Vijayawada Branch)	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	EMD (10% of Reserve Price)
ARM Branch, Vijayawada Borrower : M/s. Lakshmi Narayani Cotton Mills, Proprietor: Gunda Sudha Rani, Guarantor: G. Purnachandra Rao, Guarantor: M. Pamula Reddy Total Liability : Rs.5,37,24,983.57 Ps + interest + other expenses	Property No.1: All that part and parcel of the property consisting of open plots no. at 23 admeasuring 320 sq. yards situated at D No.'s 2/C1, 2/C2, 11/A2, 11/A3, 11/A4, 11/B3 & 11/B4 of Nadimpalem village and Gram panchayat, Supriya Enclave, Prathipadu mandal, Guntur district standing in the name of Smt G Sudharani vide document no. 99/2014. Boundaries: As per Deed.	Rs. 22.13 Lakhs	Rs. 2.22 Lakhs

Property No.2: All that part and parcel of the property consisting of open plots no. at 24 admeasuring 220 sq. yards situated at D No.'s 2/C1, 2/C2, 11/A2, 11/A3, 11/A4, 11/B3 & 11/B4 of Nadimpalem village and grampanchayat, Supriya Enclave, Prathipadu mandal, Guntur district standing in the name of Smt G Sudharani vide document no. 99/2014. Boundaries: As per Deed.
Property No.3: All that part and parcel of the property consisting of open plots no. at 32 admeasuring 220 sq. yards situated at D No.'s 2/C1, 2/C2, 11/A2, 11/A3, 11/A4, 11/B3 & 11/B4 of Nadimpalem village and grampanchayat, Supriya Enclave, Prathipadu mandal, Guntur district standing in the name of Smt G Sudharani vide document no. 99/2014. Boundaries: As per Deed.
Date & Time of Inspection of the Property : 03.01.2026 at 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact Chief Manager, ARM Branch, Vijayawada, Canara Bank, Ph. No. 8331011695 during office hours on any working day.
* Dues/taxes, if any, known/not known to the Bank are to be borne by the auction purchaser and the same is exclusive of the final bid amount. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiplies of Rs 10,000/- for Reserve Price up to Rs.25 lakhs, in multiplies of Rs 25,000/- for reserve price above Rs.25 lacs and up to Rs.50 lacs. The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of "Online" auction shall be declared as successful bidder.
E-Auction Process and Terms & Conditions, contact Service Provider : M/s. PSB Alliance (baanknet), web portal : "https://baanknet.com/eauction-psb" (Contact No.7046612345/6354910172/8291220220/ 9892219848/8160205051, E-mail: support.baanknet@psballiance.com.
Date : 12-12-2025, Place: Vijayawada Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

अनायासेन मरणं विना दैन्येन जीवनम्।
देहान्ते तव सान्निध्यं देहि मे परमेश्वर
II Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata (1.7.136)



14-04-1938 - 13-12-2025
With profound grief, we mourn the loss of
Mr. KN. Venkatasubramanian
a colossus of the Indian hydrocarbon sector. He was the rare technocrat who seamlessly bridged public service and private enterprise. A pioneer who architected India's petrochemical growth at IPCL, he rose to serve as Chairman of IOC, EIL later mentoring giants like Adani, Essar, Gulf Oil and Time Packaging as a Board Director. A devout soul and patron of Carnatic music, his legacy of integrity and industrial statesmanship will forever inspire.
Deeply mourned by Family, Friends & Relatives
Royapettah, Chennai. kuthooren@yahoo.com

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
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DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

15th ANNIVERSARY



Born: 04.12.1960 Died: 16.12.2010
Mr. G.PADMANABHAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Pay our homage with thanks.
Family Members & Employees of
INDELECT TECHNOLOGIES PVT. LTD, CHENNAI
Ct: 93802 43402 / 9382543299

2ND ANNIVERSARY



Mrs.BHARATHI SAMARAO
W/o.Late. V.N.Sama Rao, Advocate, Vellore.
Birth: 07.12.1935 Death: 16.12.2023
Lived as 'Exemplary Example' for a " Noble Soul "
Fondly remembered by:
VALLUR FAMILY MEMBERS

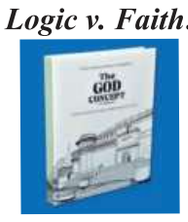
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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Smt G Sridevi, spouse of Naik Ramanuja Kiran Kumar. G (Army No 14551840F) (Retd) residing at H.No.25-5-1, Mondretivari Street, Jayakrishnapuram, Rajahmundry (Urban), East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, 533105 have changed my name from "G. SRIDEVI" to "GURAJALA SRIDEVI" vide affidavit dated 08/12/2025 executed before Notary Public, Rajamahendravaram.

TENDERS
CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY
Materials Management Division
e-PROCUREMENT - Tender is invited vide Tender No. MEE/MS/T/e-08/25/MM for the Supply of 110 items of Generic Medicines
For further details/ Corrigendum, if any Visit our website
www.chennaiport.gov.in/
www.eprocure.gov.in/
Chief Mechanical Engineer

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Poralla Katyayani (Old Name) D/o Poralla Mangala Kasi Viswanath D/No: 1-196, Garladinne, Anantapur Changing my Name from Poralla Katyayani(Old Name) to Poralla Katya (New Name) hence forth I am being called as Poralla Katya D/o Poralla Mangala Kasi Viswanath for all Purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE
PUBLIC NOTICE
To whomsoever it may concern
My client Axis Bank Retail Assets center, Vijayawada, states that 1.Sri Kanchibhotla Pavan Kumar & 2. Sri Kanchibhotla Venkata Krishna Sons of Gopala Krishna Murthy are the absolute owners of the property bearing D.No. 74-32-18, Flat No. E-3, Fourth Floor, Sri Sai Residency, Pandari Puram, in R.S.No.229/3, of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, NTR District, an Extent of 629.2 Sq.yds init 1/15th undivided Share of 41.94 Sq.yds, with a plinth area of 782 Sq.ft, of Flat No.E-3, Fourth floor of Sri Sai Residency bearing Old Assessment no.31508, New Assessment No.245407, along with Car parking, Lift, Stair case, Common area and with Common facilities etc., having purchased the same from 1. Sri.Yelamanchili Subbarao S/o Venkata Ramayya & 2. M/s Sri Vani Constructions Represented by its Proprietor Mulpuri Upendra S/o Radhakirshna Murthy (Sellers), by a sale Deed dated 29-11-2006 registered as document No. 5778/2006 at the office of Patamata Sub Registrar office, Vijayawada.The original of the said document bearing Registration No. 5778/2006 registered at Patamata Sub Registrar, Vijayawada, were lost by my client, while in their custody. The said property is in possession of 1. Sri Kanchibhotla Pavan Kumar & 2. Sri Kanchibhotla Venkata Krishna Sons of Gopala Krishna Murthy and are absolutely free from any encumbrance whatsoever. If any person has any claim or interest over the said property, he/she is requested to forward their claims along with the relevant documents to me within 15 days of this public notice. If I do not receive any claim from any person with in 15 days, it will be strictly presumed that this property is absolutely free from any claim or encumbrance and no one has any claim over this property.
Date: 15.12.2025
S.V.V.S.S.GANESH KUMAR, Advocate, D.No.17-23-15, Seethampeta, RAJAHMUNDRY-533104. Ph: 98854 34455.

PUBLIC NOTICE
PUBLIC NOTICE
This is an open notice on behalf of my client Bonigi Satya Babu S/o Suryanarayana Swamy (late) R/o D. No.4-308, Elaparru, Lakshmi Narasimhapuram, Gudivada. My client entered into a sale agreement with 1. Polipalli / Polipilli Subba Lakshmi W/o Polipilli Pydiyya (late) and their Children 2. Polupalli / Polipilli Satyanarayana, 3. Teku Nageswara Rao (adopted S/o Teku Butchiah) 4. Gurajapu Mangatayaru, 5. Polupalli/ Polipilli Durga Rao, 6. Polipilli Siva, 7. Kovvuri Neelima, 8. Polupalli/ Polipilli Ratnam, 9. Eluri Prameela Rani, 10. Polipalli / Polipilli Parvathi and their children 11. Kattamoori Naga Mani, 12 Velduti Krishnaveni, 13. Polipalli / Polipilli Sudha Bhavani 14. Polipilli Satyavathi and their Children, 15. Erusumalla Durga Malleswari, 16. Badam Lakshmi, 17. Polipilli Siva Nageswara Rao got as inherited property which was Purchased from Peddiboina Vani W/o Hanumantharao through Reg.Doc.No.1369/1968 at SRO Vijayawada, Dt.06-04-1968, Regd. on 19-07-1968 in favour of Polipili Pydiyya with the below Schedule Property, if anyone have any disputes /Objections / Claims please raise / Convey within 7 days from the date of this publication, either to my Client or to me through Speed Post with Acknowledgement Due. Later on if any objections or any claims raised from any one, My Client or else the scheduled property is not Bindovered for any type of queries / any actions. Schedule of the property: Residential Site for an extent of 276.90 Sqy and 450 Sft ACC roofed construction there in with the Boundaries East : Municipal Corporation Road- 33.0 ft , West : Property of Kanchi Veeramma – 38.0 Ft, North: Property of Sannaboyina Ratnam – 70.0 Ft, South : Property of Kancharla Koteswara Rao – 70.5 Ft. Situated at Patamata, D.No.57-3-17, RS.No.111/7 with all amenities and easement rights.
Dr. NAGA LAKSHMI SUNKARA, Advocate, D.No: 50-3-4/2, Sri Bhavan, Ramalayam Street, Gunadala, Vijayawada – 520004, Ph: 98855 85999
Dt:16-12-2025

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TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI
MEDICAL DEPARTMENT — **NOTIFICATION**

Roc.No.TTD-83021(31)/34/2025-CMO

NAME OF THE WORK: Supply of Manpower - 17 nos. of Para-Medical Staff to work at PAC - 5 Tirumala through Out-Sourcing basis (01 year) **NIT download starting date: 16-12-2025 @ 3.00 PM. NIT download ending date: 22-12-2025 @ 3.00 PM.** For further details visit to the web site **http://www.tirumala.org** and **http://tender.apeprocuremnt.gov.in.** For enquiry, please contact Phone Nos: **0877-2264371, 9849377080.**

TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC (Adv.No.322) Date:15-12-2025 — **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

SALE OF BY-PRODUCTS

1. Tobacco: FCV By-products: LS,LS2, URSCRAP, URSTEMS and **Non-FCV Byproducts:** 63CV, C/GT, LS, LS2, URSCRAP, URSTEMS, URDUST, BUTTS, SCRAP, STEM and DUST. All Grades are packed in CFC'S and Gunny Bags, produced while threshing/processing/handling of our tobaccos in Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka.
2. Damaged Gunny Pattas and Reusable Gunny bags at M/s Aruna Tobacco Company, Ganapavaram and other locations in Guntur District.
3. Packing Material Scrap: Damaged CFCs and Kraft Paper at M/s Aruna Tobacco Company, Ganapavaram, Guntur District.
Sealed tenders are invited from the interested parties for purchase of the Tobacco By-products Damaged Gunny Pattas along with damaged Bengal twine and Packing Material scrap as mentioned above. The tender forms and the terms and conditions of the sale can be obtained from the office of Vice President – Finance (TSBU). The filled up tender forms should reach the office of Vice President – Finance (TSBU) by 23rd Dec 2025. Company's decision is final to take any action with regard to the above tenders.

VICE PRESIDENT- FINANCE (TSBU)
ITC LIMITED - AGRI BUSINESS DIVISION,
P.B.No.317, G.T. Road, Guntur-522004. Phone No. 0863 - 2348000

BEFORE THE HON'BLE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
 # 31-31-21, Sri Narayana Bhavanam, Saibaba Street, Dabagardens, VISAKHAPATNAM-20

S.A.447/2022

Between:
Sri Enamala Venkataiah, S/o. late E. Subbaiah, Director of M/s. Heritage Mines Pvt. Ltd., Moondram Kattalai, Kundrathur, Chennai-500026. ...Applicant
And
CANARA BANK (Merged entity of Syndicate Bank) ARM Branch, GF, Circle Office Building, S.D. Road, Secunderabad, (T. S) & 8 others ...Respondents

NOTICE To,
R-9: Sri Tanguturu Srinivasulu Reddy, S/o. Venue Reddy, Resident of Eduru Village, Thotapalli, Guduru Mandal, SPSR Nellore District.

NOTICE/SUMMONS BY PAPER PUBLICATION FOR SHOWING CAUSE AS TO WHY THE RELIEF PRAYED SHOULD NOT BE GRANTED

Whereas the applicant instituted an application for set-asiding the actions of the respondents 1 and 2 i.e. 1) The Authorized officer, Canara Bank (Merged entity of Syndicate Bank) ARM Branch, GF, Circle Office Building, beside Rail Nilayam, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-500026. Telangana State and 2) Epuru Subba Reddy, S/o. late Sri E.B. Krishna Reddy, Director M/s. Metro Silicon Pvt. Ltd., R/o. # 27-1-39/B, Flat No.402, Pride Satya Sree, Nellore-524002, Andhra Pradesh, you are the respondent No.9. You are hereby summoned to appear and file your counter before this Tribunal at **10:30 A.M.**, or such time immediately thereafter according to the convenience of Tribunal on **31-12-2025** to answer the same.

You are directed to collect the annexure on your appearance before the Tribunal. If you intend to file any documents, you may file the same with a list along with the counter.

You should file your registered address and a memo of appearance when you enter appearance before the Tribunal either in person or by a Pleader/Advocate duly instructed to show cause as to why the relief sought for, should not be granted

Take notice that, in default of your appearance on the day mentioned herein before, the proceedings will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this 10th day of December, 2025

Signature of the Officer
Authorized to issue Notice/Summons

SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY:TIRUPATI - 517 502.
e- PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.D4/ Comp. Centre / Website /2025-26, Dated: 15-12-2025. For details log on to **https://www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** and Tender Schedule **Down-load Ending and Bid submission closing Date: 29-12-2025 at 04:00 P.M & 05:00 P.M** from Tender id No:**876266.**

Sd/- Prof. M. BHUPATHI NAIDU, REGISTRAR
S.V. University, Tirupati.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI
CHIEF ENGINEER OFFICE — **e - PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

ADV No.51/D3/CE/TTD/2025-26 Dt:13-12-2025

e-tenders invited on e-procurement for Forty Seven(47) works of TTD Engineering Dept.,●SE-I: NIT No:67 to 72 /SE-I/2025-26(6 works) ●SE-II: NIT No:845 to 869/SE-II/2025-26(25 works)●EE-II: NIT No.96/EE-II/2025-26(1 work) ●EE-III: NIT No.92 & 93/EE-III/2025-26(2 works) ●EE-VI : NIT No.147 & 148 /EE-VI/2025-26 (2 works) ●EE-VII : NIT No.69 to 71 /EE-VII/2025-26(3 works) ●EE-XI: NIT No.100/EE-XI/2025-26 (1 work) ●EE-XIV: NIT No.157/EE-XIV/2025-26(1 work) ●DE(Elec)-II: NIT No:460 to 465/E(Elec)-II/2025-26(6 works). For details log **www.tirumala.org** and log in **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.**for work details.

TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC (Adv.No.321) Date:15-12-2025 — **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

No.18/2025-26 — **e-Procurement Tender Notice** — **Dt.11.12.2025**

Name of Work: Repairs servicing and replacement of Mechanical and Electrical components on four arms and embankments of Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage. **Value of Work: 14687.00 lakhs.** Bid document available Date and Time: From **15.12.2025** at **11.00 A.M.** to **29.12.2025 up to 11.00 A.M.** Last date for Receipt of Tenders: **29.12.2025 @4.00 P.M.** Further details can be seen @ 'e' market place at **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** Phone: **0883-2417419**

DIPR 18395/CL, Dt: 15.12.2025

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Dowlaiswaram

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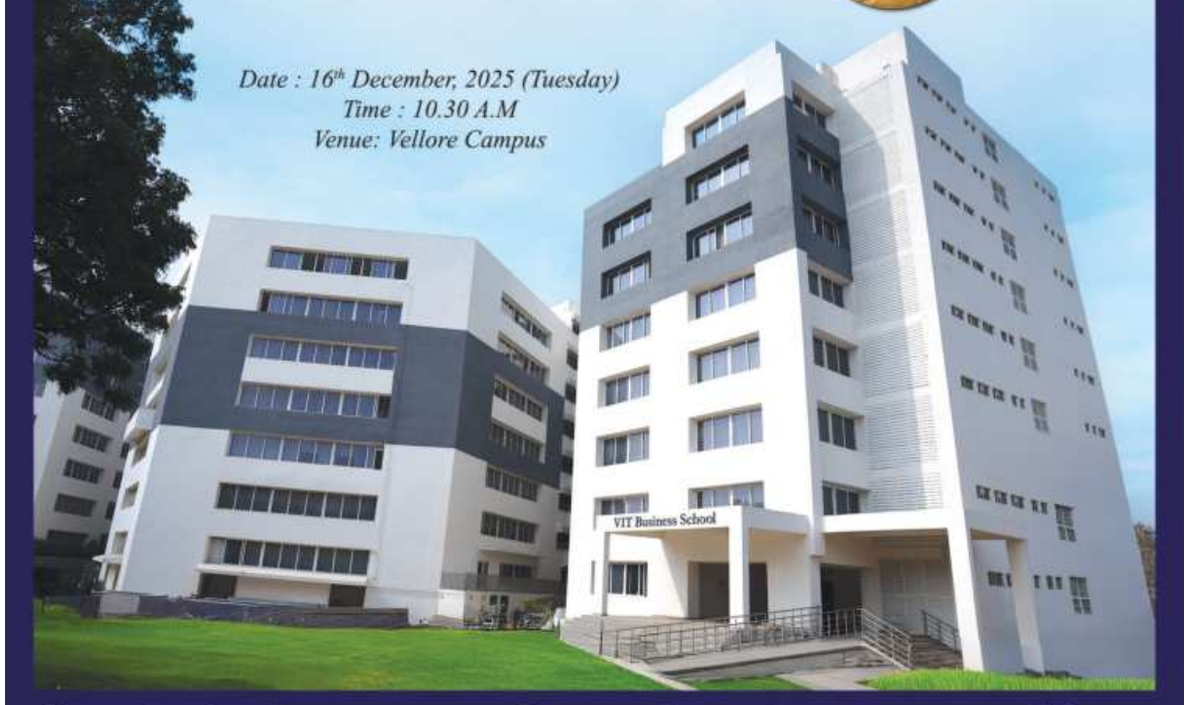
Inauguration of
3rd International Conference on Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (ICNAN'25)
&
New Building for
VIT Business School (VITBS) & VIT Online Learning Institute (VITOL)
by

Chief Guest
Thiru. S. S. Sivasankar
Hon'ble Minister for Transport and Electricity Government of Tamil Nadu

Nobel Laureate
Dr. Moungi Bawendi
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA Nobel Recipient in Chemistry, 2023

Presided by
Dr. G. Viswanathan
Founder & Chancellor, VIT

Date : 16th December, 2025 (Tuesday)
Time : 10.30 A.M
Venue: Vellore Campus



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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNDARGARH

Near Bana Durga Temple, Sankara, Sundargarh, Dist: Sundargarh-PIN-770020
Email: serw_sundargarh@yahoo.com
Via E-mail/ E-despatch

Office Order No.4020// Date :.12.12.2025

1st Corrigendum

The date of availability of tender online/ date of seeking clarification/date of opening of tender for all the works invited under NIT Letter No.3736 dtd 27.11.2025 vide Bid Identification No: Online - **RWCCESNG-23 of 2025-26** are hereby modified as follows:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding upto	Last Date & Time of Seek-ing Tender Clarification	Technical Bid Opening	Financial Bid Opening
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh	RWCCESNG-23 of 2025-26	24.12.2025 11:00 AM	09.01.2026 5:00 PM	08.01.2026 5:00 PM	12.01.2026 11:00 AM	Will be intimated separately

All other terms and Conditions are remained Unchanged.

Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh.

O-1785: OIPR-25133/11/0094/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR
AT-CHANDIKHOL, PO- SUNGUDA, JAJPUR -754296, Email-serw_kpd@yahoo.com

No:Tender Online RCK - 23/25 — **e-Procurement NOTICE** — Letter No.- 4208 Date:-08.12.25

1. Name of the Work : Tender for the Road works under (Impvt. to Existing RD Roads) in the Dist. of Jajpur.
2. Class of Contractor : As specified in the Column-6 of the Annexure.
3. Time of Completion : As specified in the Column-7 of the Annexure.
4. Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached
5. Other Details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding To	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender Technical Bid	Date & Time of opening of tender Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur	Tender Online RCK- 23/25	17.12.2025 at 11.00 A.M.	02.01.2026 to 05.00 P.M.	02.01.2026 up to 02.00 P.M.	03.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**

Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur

O-1767: OIPR-25129/11/0071/2526

LIC HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
LIC HFL — LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD
Door No 7-222, FF U3, 1st Floor,Tammiraju Nagar, JP Road, Chinamiram, Bhimavaram-534204.

POSSESSION NOTICE
SARFA&ESI Act, 2002 (Appendix –IV) Under Rule 8(1) for Immovable property

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the **LIC Housing Finance Ltd., Bhimavaram Area Office** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **19/05/2025** calling upon the borrowers **Mr Chenna Rao Midde (Applicant), Mrs. Bobathula Pragathi (Co-Applicant), (A/c No. 720400000908)** resident of D No 16-69, R S No.403/1, Asst No.2329 Kondapalli, Near American Hospital, Bank Centre, Kondapalli, Krishna, Andhra Pradesh-521228 to repay entire due amount to the **LIC Housing Finance Ltd.,** within 60 days from the date of publishing of the said noticeto repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.72,89,517.85 (Seventy Two Lakh Eighty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Seventeen Rupees and Eighty Five Paisa Only)** for closure of the loan (together with the future interest from **20/05/2025** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower has failed to repay the amount mentioned in the notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **SYMBOLIC POSSESSION** of the property mortgaged to the LIC Housing Finance Limited, in exercise of powers conferred on them under section 13(4) of the said act read with Rule No. 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, on the **12.12.2025**

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of **LIC Housing Finance Ltd.,** for an amount of **Rs.72,89,517.85 (Seventy Two Lakh Eighty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Seventeen Rupees and Eighty Five Paisa Only)** and applicable future interest there on till realization.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION / SCHEDULE OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Property Address Schedule-A : All that piece and the parcel of the property bearing **Sale deed No.2014/2021 Dated 24/03/2021,** the Immovable Residential Property bearing at Krishna District, Ibrahimpatnam Sub Registrar ilaka, ibrahimpatnam Mandal, Kondapalli Grama Panchayathi, Present Kondapalli Municipality, Kondapalli Grama, R.S.No.403/1, Door No.16-69, Asst No.2329, With an extent of 187 Sq. yards or equivalent to 156.356 Sq.mtrs site. **Bounded by: East:** 10 feet Wide Panchayathi Road, **South:** Property of Kota Nagesh Sold by Chundiri Lakshmi kantha rao, **West:** Remaining Site of Chundiri Lakshmi kantha rao, **North:** Panchayathi Road.

Date : 12.12.2025 — **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place: Bhimavaram — **LIC Housing Finance Ltd**

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti-584115, Raichur Dist, Karnataka State, Tele: 08537-275463, 276339,
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com Website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION No. 25/25-26 Dt: 15.12.2025
(Through KPP Portal only)

Tenders are invited by "The Senior Manager (Materials)" for the following Tenders, detailed below:

Sl. No.	Description	EMD in Rs.
1	Supply of 3.5 Core 120 SQ MM of 3.3 KV HT Double Wire Armoured Copper cable. **HGML/2025-26/IND0409**	1,93,000/-
2	Supply, installation and Commissioning of Optical Emission Spectrometer along with accessories. **HGML/2025-26/IND0407.**	1,67,000/-

Calendar of events: **(1)** Last date for receipt of tender: **29.12.2025 at 04.00 P.M. (2)** Opening of Technical Bid on: **31.12.2025 at 10.00 A.M.** For further details interested bidders are advised to log on to website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in KPP Portal.

Sd/- Senior Manager (Materials)

"LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA"

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1,BSWML, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052.

No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/15/2025-26 — **Date: 15.12.2025**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPPP only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the work. The details of the tender is as below.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs) Excluding GST	EMD (Amount in Rs.)	Time of Completion
1	Dissemination through Reputed Radio during the large events and Swachh Survekshan under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0	254.19	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e- payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs. 2,82,000/-** by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized/Scheduled Bank.	3 Years
2	Social Media Campaign for activities under Mid Media Component under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0	21.10	**Rs.50,000/-** through e- payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC.	3 Years
3	Digital Awareness Drive under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0	132.97	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e- payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs. 1,00,000/-** by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized/Scheduled Bank.	3 Years
4	Large Scale Events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns-Large scale events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0	166.44	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e- payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs. 1,50,000/-** by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized/Scheduled Bank	2 Years
5	Ministry based programmes under SBM 2.0 -Programmes and events created by MoHUA which includes – world toilet day, swachhta pakhwada, Indian swachhta league, 3R Promotion, swachh Diwali, swachhta hi seva et., under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0	422.03	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e- payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs. 5,33,000/-** by Bank Guarantee/FDR issued by Nationalized/Scheduled Bank	2 Years

1) Last date for uploading Pre-bid Queries : **21.12.2025 at 17:30 hrs.** 2) Tender Pre-Bid meeting: **22.12.2025 at 15:00hrs at above mentioned office. 3)** Last Date of Receipt of Tender: **31.12.2025 before 16:00 hrs. 4)** Opening of Technical Bid: **01.01.2026 after 16:30 hrs.**

More details can be downloaded from website - **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

DIPR/CP/JA/4459/2025-26

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Central Offices, Mechanical Engg. Dept., K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027. Ph: 080-22221321 Ext: 295

No: KSRTC/2025-26/IND0259(T-149) — **Date:15.12.2025**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Mode only)

(1) Short term Tender is invited through KPP Portal for supply of different types of BS-VI fully built Mofussil & double door buses for KSRTC.

Details of fully built Buses are as below:

i) 500 Nos. BS-VI fully built Mofussil buses.
ii)144 Nos. BS-VI fully built double door buses.
(2) Tender Value Approximate: **Rs. 273.50 Crores.**
(3) Last Date for Bid Submission in e-procurement portal: **30.12.2025 @ 14:00 Hours.**

Further, any addendum/corrigendum in respect of change in calendar of events, specification, scope, other tender terms & conditions etc., will be uploaded/Published through KPP Portal only.

NOTE: Interested Bidders need to register in the e-procurement (KPP) portal. Interested Bidders may log into **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for details. In case of further assistance, the bidders may contact e-procurement Help Desk for email support Ph:080-22230960 & 080-22234115 or email at **eprocurementhelpdesk@gmail.com**. Interested suppliers may also contact e-procurement cell for training on bid E-mail submission. E-mail to **eprocurement helpdesk@gmail.com** for further information if required.

Sd/- Chief Mechanical Engineer, (Tender Inviting Authority).

DIPR/CP/JA/4455/2025-26

STATE BANK OF INDIA
STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH, 3rd Floor, Upstairs of KFC, Surya Prakash Square, Gurunanak Nagar Road, N.T. R. District, Vijayawada - 520008. A.P. Ph: 0866-2546922

Authorised Officer's Details: Name: Sri Y. Mukteswara Rao (Chief Manager), Mobile No.88866 40777
For Property Inspection : 98856 03986

Appendix – II – A
[See Proviso to Rule 6(2)]

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 6(2) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES,2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s) that the below described movable property mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the **Physical Possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **State Bank of India,** the Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is Where is", As is What is" "Whatever there is" and "Without recourse basis" on 28-01-2026**, For recovery of **Rs.6,35,54,286/-** (Rupees Six Crores Thirty Five Lakhs Fifty Fourt Thousand Two hundred and eighty Six Only) as on **01.07.2024 as per demand notice dated 02-07-2024** + further interest and other expenses, costs, charges etc . thereon from **02.07.2024** (less repayments if any) due to the Secured Creditor from **Borrower: M/s New Snap Gym 24/7, Prop: Smt.Abhilahitha Patnayak,** W/o Pallisetty Pradeep Kumar, D.No.40-3-10, Ward No.13, Revenue Colony, Beside DV Manor Road, Vijayawada, NTR District, Andhra Pradesh-520010. **Smt.Abhilashitha Patnayak (Proprietrix cum Guarantor),** W/o Pallisetty Pradeep Kumar, D.No.19, Flat No.20, Sector-I, Road No.8, Land Mark Ayodhya Nagar, Vijayawada, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh-520003, **Sri.Pallisetty Pradeep Kumar (Guranator),** S/o Narayana Rao, D.No.19, Flat No.20, Sector-I, Road No.8, Land Mark Ayodhya Nagar, Vijayawada, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh-520003. **Sri.Pallisetty Narayana Rao (Guarantor),** S/o Chandra Rao, D.No.19, Flat No.20, Sector-I, Road No.8, Land Mark Ayodhya Nagar, Vijayawada, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh-520003.

SCHEDULE OF THE MOVABLE PROPERTY

Gym Equipment and Iteriors of M/s New Snap Gym 24/7, situated at D.No.40-3-10, Ward No.13, Revenue Colony, Beside DV Manor Road, Vijayawada, NTR District-520010.

Reserve Price:Rs.1,12,00,000/- EMD: Rs.11,20,000/- Bid Multiplier Amount: Rs.50,000/-

Date of E-auction : 28-01-2026, Time: 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM
With auto extension of 5 minutes for each bid till the closure of the auction

Date & Time of Inspection of above Property: 16-12-2025 to 27-01-2026 From 10.00 A.M to 04.00 P.M.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE E-AUCTION ARE AS UNDER:

1) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in **State Bank of India**, the Secured Creditor's website **www.sbi.co.in/web/sbi-in-the-news/auction-notices . For Registration, EMD, Auction Details etc., visit https://baanknet.com/eauction-psb/x-login** of the service provider : **M/s PSB Alliance and M/s. Baanknet, e-Auction Portal: https://baanknet.com & Toll free Number : + 91 - 8291220220, Mail ID : support.baanknet@psballiance.com.**
2) The purchaser shall bear the applicable GST, stamp duties/ additional stamp duty/ transfer charges, fee etc. and also all the statutory / non-statutory dues, taxes, rates, assessment charges, fees etc.
Note: Interested bidder may deposit Pre-Bid EMD with PSB Alliance before the close of e-Auction. Credit of Pre-bid EMD shall be given to the bidder only after receipt of payment in PSB Alliance's Bank acount and updation of such information in the e-auction website. This may take some time as per banking process and hence bidders, in their own interest, are advised to submit the pre-bid EMD amount well in advance to avoid any last minute problem. The sale will attract the provisions of Section-194-1A of the Income tax Act.

Date:15-12-2025, Place: VIJAYAWADA — **Sd/-Authorized Officer, STATE BANK OF INDIA**

INBRIEF

Custodial torture of ex-MP: Sunil Kumar questioned

The police questioned suspended IPS officer and Crime Investigation Department (CID) former Additional Director-General P.V. Sunil Kumar in connection with the alleged custodial torture of former Narsapuram Member of Parliament K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Vizianagaram district Superintendent of Police A.R. Damodar questioned Mr. Sunil Kumar, the prime accused in the case, for more than four hours at Central Crime Station (CCS) in Guntur on Monday.



U.S. Consul General visits Ratan Tata Innovation Hub

U.S. Consul General Ms. Laura Williams on Monday said India-U.S. collaboration is focused on advanced and frontier technology domains. Ms. Williams was speaking at an interactive session with startups at the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH), during her visit to Amaravati. She said bilateral cooperation between India and the U.S. is evolving beyond conventional technology partnerships to areas such as AI, quantum technologies, cyber security and responsible data usage. The Consul General held discussions with RTIH leadership and team members to understand the Hub's vision, ongoing initiatives and its role in nurturing innovation-led entrepreneurship in A.P., particularly startups addressing societal and public-good challenges.

MSP has gone up under PM's leadership: Vijayawada MP

Speaking in the Parliament on Monday on the first batch of supplementary demands for grants for 2025-26, TDP MP Kesineni Sivanath highlighted the Union government's commitment to welfare, agriculture, infrastructure, education, and health, while criticising the YSRCP for opposing the PPP model for medical colleges in A.P. Rejecting Opposition claims of economic disorder, the MP said India's economy had significantly strengthened under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with Foreign Direct Investment crossing USD 81 billion, minimum support prices (MSP) for major crops rising by 50 to 70%, and over 75% of the defence capital budget now reserved for Indian industry.

Exempt secretariat staff from BLO duties: CPI

The CPI has urged Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to exempt village and ward secretariat staff from duties as Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and to take steps to reduce the work pressure arising from multiple surveys and poll-related tasks. In a letter to the Chief Minister on Monday, CPI leader Gujjula Eswaraiah said as per Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines, only about 14 categories of employees are eligible to be appointed as BLOs. However, in A.P., village and ward secretariat staff alone are being assigned these responsibilities, leading to excessive workload and serious health issues. He noted that secretariat employees in the State are also burdened with Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls-.



Srinivas is Chairman of A.P. Police Housing Corporation

JSP leader Kalyanam Shiva Srinivas took charge as the Chairman of Andhra Pradesh Police Housing Corporation at the A.P. Police Housing headquarters at Mangalagiri on Monday. Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, MLC Pidugu Hari Prasad, Housing Corporation Managing Director M. Ravi Prakash and others were present. Mr. Srinivas said that projects worth about ₹1,200 crore were in the pipeline and the A.P. Police Housing Corporation will take up the works soon. He thanked Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan for giving him the opportunity. Ms. Anitha said the Greyhounds headquarters will be built at a cost of ₹412 crore, and the A.P. Police Academy will be built with ₹300 crore. Infrastructure will be developed for the police in the newly created districts, she said.

Lokesh seeks Central government's support for State's tech initiatives

The IT and HRD Minister urges Union Minister of State Jayant Chaudhary to ensure Central approval for the establishment of a National Skill Training Institute in Visakhapatnam

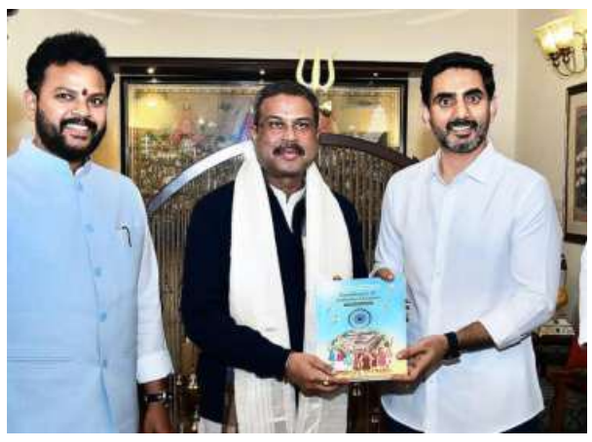
The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh met Union Minister for Electronics & Information Technology and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw in New Delhi on Monday following his recent visit to the United States and Canada.

During his visit abroad, Mr. Lokesh showcased A.P. as an emerging hub for technology, innovation and advanced manufacturing, drawing strong interest for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), R&D facilities and EMC clusters.

He briefed Mr. Vaishnaw about the outcome of his U.S. outreach and the interest shown by American technology majors in expanding their footprint in India in the areas of semiconductors, Artificial Intelligence, electronics manufacturing, digital infrastructure and emerging technologies.

He sought the Centre's support for rolling out an AI-powered Skill Census across the State and explained the pilot project conducted in Mangalagiri.



HRD Minister N. Lokesh presenting a copy of the Constitution for children to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in New Delhi on Monday. Union Minister K. Rammohan Naidu is seen.

He sought MeitY Startup Hub support to the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub, which was envisioned as a major platform for young entrepreneurs and aspiring startup founders, called for cooperation in setting up Centres of Excellence under the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) and WaveX (a dedicated startup accelerator platform launched under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting).

Mr. Lokesh also sought support under the India AI Mission for accelerating the expansion and adoption of AI across the State, particularly in governance, education, skilling and industry-driven innovation.

Later, Mr. Lokesh called on Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Education, Jayant Chaudhary and sought Central approval for the establishment of a National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) in Visakhapatnam for strengthening advanced skill training and faculty development in the State, adding that the government has identified five acres for the institute at Pedagantyada in Visakhapatnam district.

He urged the Union Minister to grant special permission for large-scale adoption of National Council for Vocational Education & Training (NCVET) qualifications through SBTET-AP.

Mr. Lokesh also met Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan in New Delhi.

'Sanction 11 JNVs'

Mr. Lokesh urged Mr. Pradhan to help approve the proposal for sanctioning 11 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas to A.P. and steps for the establishment of 12 Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) recently allotted to the State.

He sought ₹4,400 crore under the STARS (Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States) Project of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, and sanction of ₹1,270 crore towards additional funds proposed by the State for 2025-26 financial year.



Farmers watching the e-lottery process for allotment of plots on screens at the APCRDA headquarters in Amaravati on Monday.

APCRDA allocates 282 returnable plots to Amaravati farmers

The Hindu Bureau
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) on Monday allotted 282 returnable plots to farmers of the capital region through an e-lottery system at its headquarters in Rayapudi, Amaravati.

The allotment was made to farmers from villages including Krishnayapalem, Nowlur, Kuragallu, Velagapudi, Mandadam, Nidamarru, Penumaka, Thulluru, Nekkallu, Ananthavaram, Rayapudi, Venkatapalem, Dondapadu, Ainavolu, Lingayapalem, Uddandarayunipalem and Malkapuram, who had contributed land for the development of capital Amaravati.

Of the 282 plots allotted, 167 are residential and 115 commercial, benefiting a total of 177 farmers and landowners. The allocation was carried out through an online random system after conducting a trial run in the presence of farmers to ensure transparency.

APCRDA Additional Commissioner A. Bhargava Teja distributed provisional certificates to the beneficiaries.

Special Grade Deputy Collector and Director (Lands - Capital City) N.S.V.B. Vasantharayudu said GIS staff and village surveyors have been deployed to explain the exact geographical location of the allotted plots to farmers.

He urged beneficiaries to complete the registration process at the earliest, clarifying that no registration fee would be charged.

Land allotted near Nellore for autonomous maritime shipyard

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government allotted nearly 30 acres of land to Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd. (SDEPL) for the establishment of an Autonomous Maritime Shipyard and Systems Centre at Juvvaladinne fishing harbour in Nellore district with a total investment of ₹45 crore and potential to generate employment for 750 people.

As per G.O No. 97 issued by Special Chief Secretary (Infrastructure & Investments) M.T. Krishna Babu, October 2026 has been set as the date of trial production, and November 26 as the date of commencement of commercial production.

An official release from the government said the SDEPL project was a major milestone in India's maritime and defence manufacturing ecosystem, wherein the company builds unmanned and autonomous surface and underwater vessels along with intelligent maritime systems, sensors and command and control technologies.

It was stated that such shipyards play a critical role in modern maritime operations, enabling enhanced coastal surveillance, maritime domain awareness, offshore security and defence preparedness with minimal human intervention.

Construction of the shipyard is scheduled to commence in December, with machinery installation to be completed by June 2026.

Amarajeevi's house in Chennai will be developed as a memorial, says Naidu

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The house in Chennai where Amarajeevi Potti Sriramulu breathed his last will be developed as a memorial, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said after paying rich tributes to the freedom fighter on the latter's death anniversary on Monday.

Felicitating the family members of Sriramulu at a programme organised at Thummalapalli Kshetrayya Kalakshetram, Mr. Naidu said Potti Sriramulu had sacrificed his life for the honour and self-respect of the Telugu people by actively participating in the struggle for Indian Independence.

He noted that Sriramulu's fast-unto- death helped in achieving Statehood for Andhra on a linguistic basis on October 1, 1953, with Kurnool as its capital, paving the way for the subsequent formation of Andhra Pradesh.

The government is officially organising Potti Sriramulu's centenary celebrations until March 16 next year and that a *Smruthi Vanam is* being built in Amaravati where his statue would be installed and named as the 'Statue of Sacrifice', the Chief Minister said, calling Sriramulu as an asset for the people of Andhra Pradesh.



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu going around an exhibition on Potti Sriramulu at a programme on the latter's death anniversary, in Vijayawada on Monday.

Collection of funds for statue an insult: YSRCP

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The YSRCP on Monday criticised Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu over the suggestion of collecting public donations for setting up a statue of Potti Sriramulu, saying that it is 'shameful' and a 'direct insult' to a leader whose had sacrificed his life for the formation of Andhra State.

The party leaders paid tributes to the freedom fighter on his death anniversary at the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli on Monday. They reiterated their commitment to carrying forward his ideals .

Chennai-bound Vande Bharat Express chugs off from Narsapur

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Steel Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma flagged off the Narsapur-MGR Chennai Central Vande Bharat Express at Narsapur on Monday.

20678 Vande Bharat Express will halt at Bhimavaram Town, Gudivada, Vijayawada, Tenali, Ongole, Nellore and Renigunta, and reach MGR Chennai Central at 11.45 p.m.

Mr. Varma said talks were in progress with the Ministry of Railways for the halt of Bengaluru and Hyderabad-bound Vande Bharat trains at Narsapuram railway station in West Godavari district. "Train connectivity to Narsapuram will give a fillip to the trade and aquaculture. Better connectivity will accelerate economic activity and trade along the Narsapuram coast," he said.

Mr. Varma said that the Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat train is likely to halt at Tadepalligudem soon. He also promised a special train between Narsapuram and Bengaluru.

Deputy Speaker K. Raghu Ramakrishna Raju, Narsapuram MLA Bommidi Narayana Nayakar, South Central Railway (SCR) Additional General Manager Satya Prakash, Vijayawada Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Mohit Sonakiya, ADRM Srinivas Rao Konda and other officers participated in the programme.



Union Minister of State Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma flagging of Vande Bharat Express at Narsapur railway station on Monday.

QR codes, kiosks in TTD temples soon

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUMALA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is contemplating installing kiosk machines and QR codes to facilitate UPI payments in all its 60 temples spread across various States in the country.

A decision to this effect was taken at a high-level review meeting chaired by TTD Executive Officer Anil Kumar Singhal on Monday at the TTD Administrative Building in Tirupati.

Directing officials to ensure seamless implementation, he said the initiative would enable devotees to make offerings and payments in a hassle-free manner, in line with modern digital practices. He also instructed them to collect structured feedback from devotees on TTD services at Tiruchanoor and the Tirupati Govindaraja Swamy temples.

Mr. Singhal asked the Chief Engineer to prepare two to three standardised templates for the proposed construction of 5,000 temples in backward regions so as to speed up execution and maintain uniformity.

Meanwhile, TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu inspected the Pilgrims Amenities Complex-2 (PAC-2), along with trust board members Santaram and Naresh Kumar and reviewed the facilities for devotees ahead of the Vaikunta Ekadasi festivities.

Mr. Naidu inspected darshan token allotment counter, Kalyanakatta and Annaprasadam wing.

'1-cr. signature drive of YSRCP is a political gimmick'

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Describing the one crore signature drive launched by the YSRCP against the 'privatisation' of medical colleges in Andhra Pradesh as a 'political gimmick', Agriculture Minister K. Atchannaidu has said that the move was desgined to 'deceive the people'.

"Such theatrics are used for political gain. Simply collecting signatures cannot bring real change," the Minister said in a statement on Monday and urged the public to recognise the NDA government's genuine efforts for citizens' welfare and reject the YSRCP's 'hollow political stunts'.



Voters wait to cast their votes during the second phase of Telangana panchayat polls in Shivampet on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Telangana panchayat polls Phase 2 done, all results announced

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The second phase of the gram panchayat elections in Telangana concluded with results declared for every contesting post across the State, according to a report issued by the State Election Commission.

The report states that elections were held to 3,911 posts of sarpanch and 29,917 of ward member, and results for all of them were announced as of Monday.

Among sarpanch contests, Nalgonda topped with 241 posts, followed by Sangareddy (229), Siddipet (172), Ranga Reddy (165), and Khammam (160).

In ward member contests, Sangareddy led with 1,941 posts, followed by Nalgonda (1,832), Khammam (1,379), Siddipet (1,371), and Ranga Reddy.

These results reveal a remarkable generational shift in local leadership, with 21-year-old newcomers and experienced elders making their mark.

Nine 21-year-olds have been elected Sarpanches, with seven women and two men joining the ranks. In total, women won nine of the 12 seats, while men secured three.

Conversely, the oldest winners include an 86-year-old woman from Vikarabad district, and two 83-year-olds from Siddipet and Suryapet districts, showcasing a striking diversity in age and experience among the new leaders.

The gram panchayat elections are held on non-party basis.

'Rural support rising'

Having secured more than 600 sarpanch posts, up from 163 earlier, in the ongoing local body elections on Monday, the Bharatiya Janata Party in Telangana has expressed confidence that it will significantly increase its strength in the villages.

"We are confident of winning many more seats in the third phase," BJP State president N. Ramchander Rao said.

Karnataka puts on hold Bill to amend anti-cow slaughter Act

Decision was taken after some MLAs raised apprehension that though aimed to help poor vehicle owners, Bill may prompt the Opposition to attack government along communal lines, say sources

B.S. Satish Kumar
BELAGAVI

The State government is learnt to have decided to drop its earlier plan to bring the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle (Amendment) Bill, 2025, before the ongoing legislature session in Belagavi.



The Bill seeks to provide for release of vehicles seized during the illegal transportation of cattle for slaughtering. FILE PHOTO

The Bill that seeks to provide for release of vehicles seized during the illegal transportation of cattle for slaughtering on submission of "indemnity bond" instead of "bank guarantee", that is equivalent of the value of vehicle as prescribed in the Act, will not come up before the winter session, according to sources in the government.

The government had desisted from tabling it, though it had been mentioned in the Legislative Assembly's agenda last week among other Bills that were to be tabled.

Cleared by Cabinet

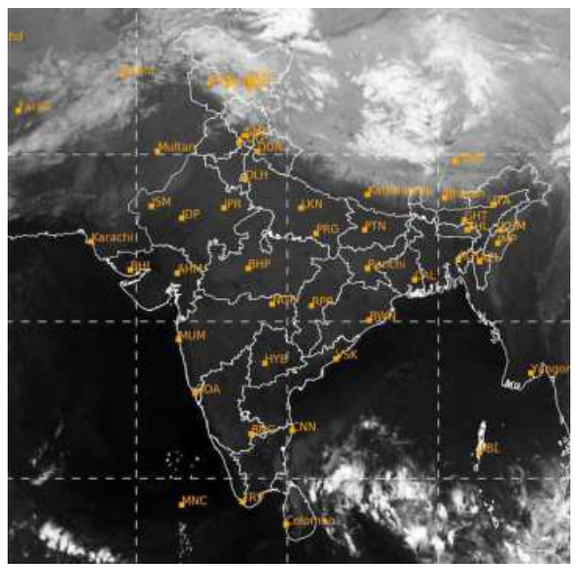
The Bill had been cleared by the State Cabinet to be brought up before the winter session, at the Cabinet meeting held in Bengaluru on December 12.

Sources in the government said that the decision to put the Bill on hold had been taken as the government did not want any controversy to erupt at this point of time.

It is learnt that a section of the ruling party MLAs have expressed a view that the Bill, though aimed at helping poor vehicle owners who earn their livelihoods by operating on a hire basis, may provide a handle to the Opposition to launch an attack at the government along communal lines.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/ gusty winds likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Dense fog likely at isolated pockets over Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Madhya Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	29.4	13.8	Kozhikode	—	33.2	22.0
Ahmedabad	—	30.6	16.2	Kurnool	—	31.2	16.8
Aizawl	—	28.3	13.0	Lucknow	—	24.6	11.0
Allahabad	—	24.0	8.0	Madurai	—	31.2	17.9
Bengaluru	—	27.2	14.6	Mangaluru	—	31.4	18.0
Bhopal	—	25.0	5.8	Mumbai	—	32.5	16.9
Bhubaneswar	—	29.6	12.6	Mysuru	—	29.0	14.0
Chandigarh	—	26.2	9.8	New Delhi	—	23.7	10.0
Chennai	—	29.6	20.6	Patna	—	25.0	14.5
Coimbatore	—	30.2	17.4	Port Blair	—	30.0	23.8
Dehradun	—	24.5	8.7	Puducherry	—	29.2	19.5
Gangtok	—	18.3	8.4	Pune	—	29.7	13.6
Goa	—	33.0	19.0	Raipur	—	28.0	13.4
Guwahati	—	26.8	12.0	Ranchi	—	23.8	10.2
Hubballi	—	28.0	14.0	Shillong	—	18.4	8.4
Hyderabad	—	28.4	13.8	Shimla	—	24.8	9.8
Imphal	—	24.3	12.6	Srinagar	—	11.4	1.9
Jaipur	—	26.6	11.7	Thiruvananthapuram	—	31.9	21.2
Kochi	—	30.4	23.2	Tiruchi	—	29.9	18.0
Kohima	—	22.5	10.1	Vijayawada	—	29.5	19.5
Kolkata	—	27.4	16.0	Visakhapatnam	—	28.4	19.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.62	..76	.45	...109	...154	
Bengaluru	...5	..20	.38	...158	...145	
Chennai	...9	2	.37	...156	...119	
Delhi	.16	105	106	...460	...416	
Hyderabad	.19	..13	.31	...244	...133	
Kolkata	...5	..21	.18	...230	...117	
Lucknow	...7	..49	.54	...230	...189	
Mumbai	.13	..72	.84	...130	...137	
Pune	..—	..42	.26	...283	...240	
Visakhapatnam	.29	..54	.20	...295	...183	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 447 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Outraging woman's modesty: Kerala Police oppose bail plea of filmmaker

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Police on Monday opposed the anticipatory bail plea of film director and former CPI(M) legislator P.T. Kunhi Mohammed in a case of allegedly outraging the modesty of a woman filmmaker.

The prosecution argued that enlarging the accused on anticipatory bail would risk influencing witnesses and destroying evidence.

Assistant Commissioner, Cantonment, Stuart Keeler said that the police have moved the court for recording the complainant's sworn statement in camera before a judicial magistrate under Section 183 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.



P.T. Kunhi Mohammed

Mr. Mohammed had chaired the jury which selected Malayalam films for the ongoing 30th International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK). On November 6, he allegedly invited the complainant to his hotel room on the pretext of discussing the selection process, where he outraged her modesty, forcing the "survivor" to flee.

On November 26, the woman petitioned the Chief Minister's Office, which forwarded the complaint to State Police Chief Ravada Chandrasekhar.

On December 2, the Cantonment police recorded the woman's statement and lodged an FIR against the director at the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court-III in Thiruvananthapuram.

Mr. Mohammed has denied the allegation. He said the accusation stemmed from a possible misunderstanding of his actions and expressed willingness to render a public apology.



Leaders at the inauguration of S.P. Balasubrahmanyam's statue at Ravindra Bharathi, on Monday. RAMAKRISHNA G.

S.P.B. statue unveiled in Hyderabad

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu, along with former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu and former Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, unveiled the statue of legendary playback singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam (SPB) at Ravindra Bharathi here on Monday.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said that SPB, who rendered more than 40,000 songs in 14 Indian languages, demonstrating the universal appeal of music, had left an indelible mark on the history of Indian film music.

The Minister described him as an artiste who transcended linguistic and cultural boundaries, noting that SPB was not only an unparalleled playback singer but also a versatile actor, music composer and dubbing artiste. He observed that SPB's singing was marked by natural expression and emotional depth.

Mr. Sridhar Babu added that SPB consistently encouraged young talent and embraced new musical trends while remaining rooted in discipline and humility.

Karnataka govt. to revive Chilume Trust case probe, amid voter fraud allegations

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

After the probe into voter fraud in the Aland Assembly constituency, in which a chargesheet was filed against a former BJP MLA as the prime accused, the Karnataka government has now turned its focus to the 2022 Chilume Trust case.

The NGO, with alleged links to the BJP, faces accusations of voter data theft after it was roped in by the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) for Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) activities ahead of the 2023 Assembly election in Bengaluru.

The State government, on November 27, appointed senior advocate Ravi Verma Kumar to represent it in a writ petition before the High Court.



A premise related to Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust at Malleshwaram in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

There were two FIRs in connection with the scandal, now stayed. Sources in the government said that it wanted to get the stay on these FIRs vacated, and Professor Kumar's appointment has been made in this context.

If the stay order is vacated, the probe into these FIRs will likely be handed over to the Special Investigation Team led by B.K. Singh, Additional Director General of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, who is probing the voter fraud in Aland.

Data theft

The Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust was roped in to conduct SVEEP activities and was active in the Mahadevapura, Shivajinagar and Chickpet Assembly constituencies in 2022.

A media expose showed that those employed by the Trust were illegally collecting voter data on a private mobile app called Digital Sameeksha. The Trust was linked to a political consultancy firm and is also allegedly linked to leaders in the BJP. Following this, the NGO was blacklisted by the BBMP and the FIRs were filed.

An inquiry by the Regional Commissioner, Bengaluru Division, found that the Trust illegally collected voter data and stored the same on a foreign server. However, the inquiry ruled out manipulation of electoral rolls in the three constituencies.

Amid allegations of voter deletions in Aland, and allegedly in several other constituencies being raised by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, sources in the police said new perspectives had emerged and that probe into the Chilume Trust case was needed.

In Kerala, Modi government is favouring Adani group for highway projects: Venugopal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress MP K.C. Venugopal on Monday questioned whether the "massive spending" on roads and bridges by the Centre was resulting in safe roads and accountable governance or creating a system where public funds were being converted into private profit for a chosen few.



> What is happening in Kerala is not an act of nature... speed and profit were prioritised over safety and scientific planning
>
> **K.C. VENUGOPAL**
> Congress MP

Citing a case in Kerala, he alleged that the government was favouring the Adani group while awarding highway road projects.

Participating in the discussion on Supplementary Demand for Grants in the Lok Sabha, he said from Kasaragod in the north to Kollam in the south, National Highway projects for two major stretches NH 66 and NH 544 were collapsing before the eyes of the public. "What is happening is not an act of nature. It is the result of a system where speed and profit were prioritised over safety and scientific planning," he said. The MP said some of the road projects had been awarded for as high as ₹45 crore per kilometre and termed it a "highway scam".

"The scam is not accidental, but it is designed and facilitated by the Hybrid Annuity Model introduced by the Modi government in 2016," he added.

He gave the example of project Azhiyoo-Vengalam stretch of NH 66, which, he said, was awarded to Adani Enterprises at ₹1,832 crore, and was sub-contracted to Wagad Infraprojects, Ahmedabad, for ₹971 crore, almost half the bid amount.

Sabarimala gold scandal eclipsed LDF's governance track record at Kerala local body election, says CPI

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The CPI on Monday signalled that the Kerala Sabarimala Ayyappa temple gold theft scandal implicating the CPI(M)'s political appointees on the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) possibly aided the Congress and the BJP in eclipsing the ruling Left Democratic Front's (LDF) track record as a pro-people government on the local body poll campaign trial.

CPI leader P. Santosh Kumar, MP, noted that the Congress and the BJP used the Sabarimala theft case to cast suspicion about the government in the minds of the electorate. "Notably, the Congress and the BJP set their campaign ditties assailing the government on the Sabarimala theft case to the tune of popular Ayyappa devotional songs," he added.



Congress leaders take part in a protest against the Sabarimala temple gold theft, in Thiruvananthapuram. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

CPI State secretary Binoy Viswam called on his CPI(M) counterpart M.V. Govindan before State secretariat meetings of the respective ruling front allies to grapple with the United Democratic Front's (UDF) local body election sweep and the BJP's emergence as a winning political force in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation.

Mr. Viswam doubted whether the uproar surrounding the Sabarimala scandal overshadowed the ruling front's narrative about the State's expanding social security net, improved public service delivery, and rapid infrastructure development. Mr. Viswam said CPI mouthpiece *Janayugam* had expounded on the LDF's setback in its editorial on Monday. Notably, the editorial underscored that the LDF failed in distancing itself democratically from leaders of social organisations championing schismatic religious and caste identity politics, primarily by demonising minorities.

Moreover, the editorial noted that welfare pension doles, the LDF's central campaign platform, were not the State's charity and an inalienable right of the beneficiaries.

President's southern sojourn in Hyderabad from Dec. 17 to 20

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

President Droupadi Murmu will be in Hyderabad from December 17 to 20 as part of her winter sojourn at the Rashtrapati Nilayam in Bolarum. According to a media release from the President's Secretariat, President Murmu will arrive at the Rashtrapati Nilayam on December 17 after concluding her visit to Tamil Nadu.

During her stay, the President will inaugurate the National Conference for the Chairpersons of Public Service Commissions on December 19. The conference is being organised by the Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) in Hyderabad and will bring together heads of public service commissions from across the country.

On December 20, the President will address a conference titled 'Timeless Wisdom of Bharat: Pathways of Peace and Progress', being organised by Brahma Kumaris Shanti Sarovar in Hyderabad to mark its 21st anniversary.

Massacre in Sydney

Australia should enhance monitoring of religious extremism

Bondi Beach in Sydney, one of Australia's most iconic locations, turned into a scene of massacre on December 14, the first day of Hanukkah, when two gunmen opened fire at a Jewish gathering. At least 16 people, including a 10-year-old girl and an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor, were killed and 40 others wounded. Police said the attackers were a 50-year-old man, who held licensed firearms, and his 24-year-old son, who had been under investigation by Australia's domestic intelligence agency for six months. The father was shot dead by police, while the son has been taken to hospital under custody. The attack was the deadliest shooting since the 1996 Port Arthur massacre in Tasmania, in which 35 people were killed. In recent years, Australia has witnessed growing antisemitic incidents, targeting its Jewish community, which makes up some 0.4% of its population. Last year, in October, a kosher-food business in Bondi was targeted, while in December, a synagogue in Melbourne was firebombed. In August this year, Australia accused Iran of directing such attacks, and expelled the Iranian Ambassador and three other diplomats. After Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel and Israel's retaliatory genocidal war on Palestinians in Gaza, antisemitic incidents in Australia rose by 316%, between October 2023 and September 2024, with more than 2,000 cases reported, according to the country's special envoy to combat antisemitism.

Australia's Labour Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, has urged unity and asked citizens to be "each other's light". The rise in antisemitic violence should be a grave concern for Australia, which hosts the world's eighth largest Jewish community. His government must swiftly investigate the attack and bring all to justice. He should also remain alert to forces, domestic and foreign, that seek to divide Australian society. While antisemitic extremists target the local Jewish community, critics of Mr. Albanese, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – under whose watch Hamas killed 1,200 people in Israel – have sought to blame Mr. Albanese's policies, including his government's recognition of Palestinian statehood earlier this year, for the Bondi shooting. Mr. Albanese should ignore such attacks and focus instead on healing society, combating hate crimes, and addressing concerns over gun violence. Australia introduced tough gun control laws after the Port Arthur massacre and enforcing a strict licensing regime, leading to a significant decline in gun-related violence and deaths. However, the Bondi shooting has again raised concerns about gun safety. Australia should now tighten regulations further, enhance monitoring of extremist ideologies and isolate and punish those who perpetrate hate crimes.

Poll position

The UDF starts as the front runner in the Kerala Assembly election

The outcome of the local body elections in Kerala last week gives the Congress-led UDF a shot in the arm going into the Assembly election next year. There is definitely a modicum of anti-incumbency at work against the CPI(M)-led LDF, in power for a decade, although the party has dismissed any such reasoning. The elections also marked an inflection point in the State's bipolar politics, with the BJP-led NDA unseating the Left from its decades-long reign at the Thiruvananthapuram municipal corporation, building a perception of gathering strike power in the State. The result, widely being read as a forerunner to the Assembly election, holds lessons for all three fronts. Contrary to what the final tally would suggest, there was no UDF wave. Rather, it would have been a consolidation of anti-Left votes in some regions, especially in the central districts of Kottayam, Idukki and Ernakulam, and Malappuram in the north where the IUML, the second largest constituent of the UDF, made a clean sweep for the alliance. This was a coming together of a fair share of traditionally anti-Left Catholic Christian votes and substantial Muslim votes for the UDF in these districts. The Left's onslaught on the IUML and the Congress for their tacit understanding with the Jamaat-e-Islami-run Welfare Party of India may have caused this. The Left's fervent efforts to arrest the erosion of its traditional vote base comprising Hindu Ezhava votes, in Kollam and Pathanamthitta, proved counter-productive, resulting in the UDF making gains. It would be far-fetched to ascribe the win entirely to the ongoing probe into the alleged pilferage of gold from Sabarimala, as the Left wrested the Pandalam municipality, which has an umbilical connection with the hill shrine, from the BJP. The Left should be more concerned about its losses in its pocket boroughs such as Kollam city and rural pockets across the State.

The BJP's election engineering stood out in Thiruvananthapuram, despite a lower vote share compared to the Left Front. The Left ascribed it to an unholy alliance between the Congress and the BJP. While the BJP made considerable gains across urban local bodies, it would have to figure out the reasons for its poor show in Thrissur, from where its first Lok Sabha member from Kerala was elected just a year ago. The party also forfeited some of its grama panchayats, but won fresh ones. The task for the Left, which uniquely recorded consecutive terms in the State Assembly, was to spur growth in the face of an increasingly parochial Centre whilst retaining its welfarist core. But its campaign was largely defensive, focusing on sundry issues. The UDF, more than the BJP, benefited from the Left's lapses.

Restoring the 'menace' of unfettered discretion



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K. Venkataramanan

is a former journalist

The top court's verdict in the 16th Presidential Reference renders the Governor's assenting power as more a 'check' than a 'balance' in the law-making process

In April 2025, the Supreme Court of India delivered a judgment that finally put an end to the sordid saga of unelected Governors stymying Bills passed by elected State legislatures by indefinitely delaying assent. In *State of Tamil Nadu vs Governor of Tamil Nadu*, the Court imposed definitive timelines for the Governors to act, and said violating the timelines could attract judicial intervention, whereby courts could deem the Governor's unexplained inaction as assent.

For Opposition-ruled States beleaguered by the obstructionist tendencies of Raj Bhavan, this democracy-affirming verdict that guaranteed legislative supremacy in the law-making process was a rare victory. It promised to end the bouts of policy paralysis caused by misusing gubernatorial powers that left State priorities in a procedural limbo.

However, before the States could meaningfully put the April verdict to use, the Court has laid the ground for a course reversal. Answering a Presidential Reference, in Special Reference No. 1 of 2025, the Court has sought to dismantle the constitutional discipline that the earlier verdict promised. It held that judicially imposed timelines on the Governor had no textual basis in the Constitution; that deemed assent was anathema to the constitutional scheme; and the discretionary powers of the Governors and the President have an elasticity that, apparently, could accommodate delays in assenting to Bills.

The (now former) Chief Justice of India, Justice B.R. Gavai, who led the Constitution Bench that delivered the opinion, said in an interview that the advisory opinion does not overrule a judgment. However, there is no denying the fact that an advisory opinion from a Constitution Bench that has sought to "clarify" the position of law on a highly contested political matter will carry great persuasive heft.

A one-sided dialogue

In responding to the Presidential Reference, the Court has presented Article 200, which deals with the Governors' power to give assent to a Bill, and its provisos, as a repository of procedures that trigger a constitutional dialogue between constitutional functionaries. What the Bench has failed to recognise is that a dialogue requires proper and timely response from both sides to be effective.

The fundamental accusation against the Governors was that they misused their powers and turned this "dialogue" into an obstructionist tactic to frustrate governments in Opposition-ruled States. The judgment in *State of Tamil Nadu* remedied exactly this problem. By setting clear timelines for the Governor to act when presented with a Bill, the Court ensured that these unelected representatives of the Union government did not convert their powers under Article 200 into a tool to dominate the legislatures.

Once the dialogue was initiated, the judgment made prolonged silence on the part of the Governor or repeated attempts to sabotage the Bills constitutionally unviable. If Raj Bhavan resorted to such tactics and violated the set timelines, a constitutional court had the option to declare that the Bill was deemed to have been assented.

While batting for constitutional dialogue in Special Reference No. 1, the Court allows kid-glove treatment for motivated silence. The limited judicial relief that prolonged inaction entails is only a direction to the Governor to make a decision. At the same time, the reference court reverses crucial limitations that the judgment in *State of Tamil Nadu* imposed, both on what Governors could do in the first instance when a Bill is presented for their consideration, and in the second instance when the State legislatures send the Bill back after reconsideration. In the former, well-reasoned timelines were deemed unacceptable. In the latter case, the Court has effectively legitimated a constitutional black hole into which the Governors could send Bills for a silent death.

An undermining of clarity

Under the first proviso to Article 200, the Governor can send a Bill back with a message to the State legislature for its reconsideration. The plain text of the proviso makes it abundantly clear that if the State Assembly returns the Bill to the Governor with or without amendments, the only option available for the Governor at this stage is to assent.

This position is undermined in Special Reference in which the option of referring the Bill to the President is afforded to the Governor under all circumstances after the Assembly returns the Bill and not just exceptionally as laid down in *State of Tamil Nadu*. In other words, the binding nature of the reiteration of a returned Bill in the matter of assent has been negated by the judgment, contrary to the explicit text of the Constitution. The removal of an explicit safeguard in the constitutional scheme militates against the apparent originalism behind the Court's overall reasoning that the Governor's immunity under Article 361 acts as a bar against legal scrutiny.

The principle that what cannot be done directly cannot be done indirectly has been given the go-by. On the one hand, the Governor's prolonged inaction on Bills is frowned upon by the Court and is termed constitutionally impermissible, but on the other, the Court facilitates the frustration of the legislative process by allowing unfettered discretion in referring any Bill to the President and even permitting it in the second instance in the event of the legislature re-enacting the Bill.

The Reference gave a rare opportunity to the Court to bring the Governors' unilateral reference of Bills to the President (a point raised by several States before the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations) under judicial scrutiny, but it has ended up conferring unfettered discretion on Governors to refer even reconsidered and re-enacted Bills to the President of India, regardless of the circumstances.

False equivalence

The Court invokes the idea of 'checks and balance' to justify its expansive interpretation. The referral of reconsidered Bills to the President is allowed because of the fear that the Assembly may introduce amendments that could create repugnancy with central laws or violate the Constitution by some other means. However, this ignores the basic tenet that the validity of laws can always be tested in courts of law, while denial of assent is left without redress.

While 'checks and balances' are part of the constitutional scheme, it is not a universal dogma that can be invoked to frustrate the functioning of any one branch. It is somewhat strange to posit the Governor's duty to 'protect and defend the Constitution' as a countervailing power against the legislature potentially breaching constitutional principles. For one thing, the power of granting assent is a procedural aspect of law-making and cannot be elevated to the level of a preliminary judicial review by Raj Bhavan. Any such conception of the assenting power will render it more a 'check' than a 'balance'.

In the ultimate analysis, the verdict, be it legally binding or inexorably persuasive, is an instance of constitutional retrogression; a retreat from a principled restraint on gubernatorial power and an unwanted fillip to the Union's domination over the States.

The Oman visit is more than a routine diplomatic trip



Rajeev Agarwal

is Senior Research Consultant, Chintan Research Foundation (CRF), and a retired colonel

There are new and promising areas for stronger bilateral cooperation between India and Oman

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Oman (as part of the three-nation tour to Jordan and Ethiopia also, from December 15-18) comes at a crucial time when both nations are seeking to strengthen their partnership amid regional uncertainties, tariff wars, conflicts, energy transitions, and emerging connectivity corridors. The Oman visit is also amid tremendous geopolitical flux in the region, especially the uncertain peace that prevails after the Gaza ceasefire.

The visit, on December 17, marks 70 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations. This is Mr. Modi's second visit to Oman, after 2018. The Sultan of Oman, Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, had visited India on December 16, 2023.

A balancing factor and a trusted partner

Oman's importance to India far exceeds its geographical proximity or historical ties. Decades ago, when the region was still ambivalent towards India and soft and supportive of Pakistan, it was Oman which kept its doors open to India. In a conflict-prone region, Oman has always been an island of peace, pursuing a foreign policy which is based on the twin strands of moderation and mediation, which includes a policy of deliberate neutrality in dealing with regional issues and conflicts.

For India, Oman is a crucial pillar of its West Asia Policy, with the partnership taking a more strategic shape in recent decades. India signed a strategic partnership agreement with Oman in November 2008, and Oman was also invited by India as a guest nation during its G-20 Presidency in September 2023.

Defence and security engagement form a key pillar of this strategic partnership and are governed by a memorandum of understanding on military cooperation, signed in 2005. Oman is the first Gulf country with which all the three wings of India's defence forces hold joint exercises. Since 2012-13, an Indian naval ship has remained on duty in the Gulf of Oman for anti-piracy operations. Oman has allowed over flight/transit facilities for Indian military aircraft. In recent years, both countries have cooperated in ensuring maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

Oman was the first Gulf country to purchase the Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) assault rifle in 2010. The logistics agreement on Duqm Port in Oman, signed during Mr. Modi's visit in 2018 is a landmark in India's security cooperation, providing basing facilities, operational turnaround and other logistics facilities to the Indian Navy. Oman's strategic location overlooking the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea also allows India to keep a discreet watch on growing Chinese PLA Naval activity in the region.

Economic and commercial relations form another pillar of engagement. Bilateral trade, though modest, has steadily increased to $10.613 billion for FY 2024-25. Investment flows too have been robust. The cumulative foreign direct investment equity inflow from Oman to India from April 2000 to March 2025 is $605.57 million.

A joint venture called the Oman-India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF), a 50-50 Joint Venture between the State Bank of India and Oman Investment Authority, has already invested $600 million in India including a third OIJIF tranche worth $300 million announced during the visit of Sultan Haitham bin Tarik in 2023.

Fintech and digital payments are another strong area of convergence. In October 2022, the Central Bank of Oman signed a landmark MoU with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to link the payment systems between the two countries and launched the Rupay debit card in Oman, a key footprint of India's initiative of promoting Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in the world.

Domains of cooperation

The visit offers a key opportunity not only to review an old friendship but also to set new benchmarks for bilateral cooperation, especially in trade, investment, defence, maritime security, energy, connectivity and technology. The India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is likely to be signed, making Oman only the second country in the region (after the United Arab Emirates) to sign such an agreement with India. This will help India to diversify trade options, especially in light of the tariffs imposed by the United States on Indian imports. There is a likelihood of increased engagement in strategic areas such as space cooperation too for which an agreement was signed during Mr. Modi's visit in 2018.

Connectivity is an important facet of discussions. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), a key project announced during the G-20 Summit at Delhi in September 2023, could see Oman playing an important role.

Energy cooperation is another area that may see convergence. As both countries navigate the global energy transition, this may expand to include green hydrogen, renewable energy and critical minerals. There could also be a discussion on Oman holding strategic petroleum reserves in India, akin to the arrangement with the UAE.

Rapidly expanding defence ties could get a further boost. Setting up joint production facilities, supply of critical weapon platforms such as the Tejas fighter aircraft, naval patrol ships and radar equipment too may be finalised. Counter-terror and anti-piracy cooperation too may get a fillip. A deal with Oman to supply spare parts of Jaguar fighter aircraft to India too is likely.

On education and health

In the field of education and health, there is likely to be close cooperation which may see the setting up of offshore campuses of prestigious Indian institutes such as the Indian Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Management in Oman.

The visit to Oman is more than a routine diplomatic visit and a reaffirmation of India's oldest strategic partnership in the Gulf in a rapidly changing region. As India expands its economic and strategic footprint in its extended neighbourhood, Oman remains a key partner. Whether through a CEPA, green energy, connectivity or defence deals, the visit has the potential to set new benchmarks in India-Oman relations.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Terror in Sydney

The targeted attack on a Jewish holiday event in Sydney is a grim reminder that gun violence is no longer a problem confined to any one nation or culture. Australia is often cited as a model for strict gun control and public safety. Yet, this episode shows how fragile that sense of security can be in an increasingly volatile world. Such acts are not merely failures of law enforcement. They are warnings about deeper fractures — alienation, radicalisation, mental health neglect, and the ease with which violence finds expression. When fear intrudes into everyday public spaces, it erodes trust far more swiftly than bullets destroy walls. Therefore, the response must go beyond condemnation and policing. It requires sustained attention to social cohesion, early intervention, and responsible media coverage that informs without sensationalising.

Gopalaswamy J.,
Chennai

The Bondi terror attack warrants unequivocal condemnation. Yet, the speed with which the incident was labelled anti-Semitic in much of the media calls for greater conceptual care. The term, anti-Semitism, is historically and linguistically imprecise. "Semitic" refers to a family of languages and peoples that includes Arabs and Palestinians as well as Jews. Coined in 19th-century Europe, the term racialised hostility toward Jews. If such hostility is established, it is more accurate to describe it as anti-Jewish hatred or racism rather than rely on a broader and misleading label. This distinction is especially important today when anti-Semitism is often invoked to conflate acts of violence with political anger or criticism of Israel and Zionism, particularly in the context of the continuing war in Gaza and the scrutiny it has drawn.

M. Jameel Ahmed,
Mysuru

Air pollution, solutions

The twin issues of pollution in Delhi and stubble burning in neighbouring Punjab and Haryana have been debated for long without results.
Experts can advise the government on reusing stubble for productive purposes. Farmers should be counselled and given reasonable compensation for not burning stubble. All this needs an iron will on the part of the government.

Veena Shenoy,
Thane, Maharashtra

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

A broad-based development model



K. R. Shanmugam

Economic consultant to the Government of Tamil Nadu and former director, Madras School of Economics

With a diversified economy, robust infrastructure, and progressive governance, Tamil Nadu (T.N.) has emerged as a national leader in economic development and inclusive growth.

According to the Reserve Bank of India, T.N., the second largest economy, has increased its GSDP at current prices from ₹26.88 lakh core in 2023-24 to ₹31.19 lakh crore in 2024-25, recording a 16% growth, the fastest among major States. The State has also maintained consistently high growth rates over the past three years – 15.91% in 2021-22, 14.47% in 2022-23, and 13.34% in 2023-24.

In real terms, T.N. recorded an impressive double-digit growth of 11.2% in 2024-25 (constant prices), making it the fastest-growing State in the country. This significantly outpaces the national average growth rate of 6.5%.

Growth in various sectors

The secondary sector, particularly manufacturing, has been the principal driver of this strong economic performance. T.N. is a major industrial power house. Over the last four years, the manufacturing GSDP of T.N. increased by ₹1.46 lakh crore, nearly double the increase recorded by the top industrial State, Maharashtra (₹0.71 lakh crore). T.N. leads all States in the four-year average real growth of manufacturing (2021-22 to 2024-25) at 9.38%.

The State hosts 40,121 factories and employs 24.75 lakh factory workers, ranking first nationally. It also ranks third in the MSME sector, with over 39 lakh Udyam-registered micro, small and medium enterprises, highlighting its strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. The construction sector too supported growth, expanding by 15.93% in 2023-24 and 11.56% in 2024-25.

The services sector, accounting for 53.6% of State's GVA, registered a robust real growth of 11.3% in 2024-25. Several sub-sectors posted double-digit growth, including real estate (12.42%), public administration (14.2%), transport, storage and communication (11.29%), and other miscellaneous services (12.49%), reflecting broad-based expansion.

T.N. has the largest number of technical institutions in India (955 as of 2024-25), producing a highly skilled workforce that supports both manufacturing and services. The availability of a disciplined and technically proficient labour force continues to attract multinational corporations. The State is actively investing in research parks, incubation centres, and innovation clusters to promote a knowledge-driven and technology-oriented economy, complemented by forward-looking industrial and export policies.

T.N. consistently ranks first in exports of electronic, textiles, and leather products, and second in engineering exports. Its total merchandise exports nearly doubled from $26.15 billion in 2020-21 to $52.07 billion in 2024-25. T.N. is a major hub for the automobile industry. It is also a pioneer in renewable energy. In a significant achievement, every district in T.N. is now covered under one or more industrial corridor projects, making it the only State with such extensive industrial integration. Its installed power capacity substantially increased during the 2021-22 to 2024-25 period (35,139 megawatt to 42,772 megawatt).

T.N. consistently ranks among the top States in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). While India's total FDI equity inflows declined from $46.03 billion in 2022-23 to $44.42 billion in 2023-24 amid global investment uncertainties, T.N.'s FDI inflows rose from $2,169 million to $2,436 million and further to $3,681 million in the subsequent year.

This performance reflects the State government's proactive investment promotion strategy. At the Global Investors Meet 2024, T.N. signed 631 MoUs worth ₹6.64 trillion, signaling strong investor confidence. Additionally, the Chief Minister's investment promotion visits to the U.S., the U.K. and Germany during 2024-25 secured new industrial commitments amounting to ₹23,000 crore.

Welfare measures

The State has implemented several innovative welfare schemes focused on education, health, women's empowerment, and social inclusion, including Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam, Magalir Vidiyal Payanam Thittam, Mudhalvarin Kaakkum Karangal Scheme, Naan Mudhalvan Thittam, and the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme for children.

With successful implementation of these schemes, T.N. has achieved a low infant mortality rate (12 per 1,000 live births in 2023), low birth rate (12 in 2023), and one of the lowest rates of multidimensionally poverty (1.43% in 2022-23). It ranks third in life expectancy at 73.4 years.

T.N. ranks first in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education at 47%, compared to the national average of 28.4% and the third in female GER at 47.3%. It also ranks first in the Export Preparedness Index, second in the credit-deposit ratio (120.5%), third in total exports ($52,073.59 million), and third in per capita (NSDP) income (₹3.62 lakh) in 2024-25. These data demonstrate the success of T.N.'s welfare-led growth model in achieving broad-based development.

On the fiscal front, T.N. remains stable, despite a decline in the Centre's transfers. The fiscal deficit is projected at 3% of GSDP in 2025-26 BE, while the debt-GSDP declined from 27% in 2021-22 to 26% in 2024-25 BE.

T.N.'s strong growth performance, low inflation, rising FDI inflows, and robust export growth provide a solid foundation for achieving its $1 trillion economy goal by 2031. Even in the face of global tariff pressures, currency volatility, and reduced Central fiscal support, T.N. is on track to reach this milestone.

A balanced development strategy, integrating rapid industrialisation with strong social welfare and sustainability initiatives, has positioned T.N. as a role model for other States

Rewiring child protection

Child protection is being treated as a governance priority in Odisha

STATE OF PLAY

Shubha Sarma
Anu Garg

India's child protection systems have oscillated between benevolent welfare and post-violation enforcement; neither is equipped to prevent harm. Odisha is pioneering a third pathway: a preventive, adolescent-centred governance model rooted in hyper-local vigilance and real-time data. The State Strategy and Action Plan to End Child Marriage (SSAP 2024), ADVIKA, Jashoda, and SUBHADRA together institutionalise rights-based governance as the norm.

The urgency is clear. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 shows that Odisha's total fertility rate has dropped to 1.8, down from 2.1 in 2015-16, below replacement level. The 2011 Census pegged the population at 4.1 crore; this is projected to reach 4.9 crore by 2036. Over these 25 years, the State will see 25% fewer births, which roughly translates to 70 lakh fewer children. This demographic contraction, coupled with an ageing population, alters the policy landscape.

These shifts intersect with entrenched inequities: women constitute 49.46% of the population; 83% of citizens live in rural areas, and 83.6% of women live in these spaces. About 40% of Odisha belongs to the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste communities. Policy cannot afford to be reactive; it must anticipate vulnerability.

Despite measurable progress in several areas, Odisha's journey towards gender justice faces structural headwinds. The sex ratio at birth has declined to 894 (NFHS-5).

Odisha ranks high nationally in cyber-crimes against women, with 542 cases (2.4 per lakh). In 2022, 1,120 people were trafficked, including 140 minor girls. The State registered 5,581 missing children. These statistics signify a deeper malaise.

Odisha's recent reforms reflect this recognition. The revised SSAP 2024 reorients child-marriage prevention around family strengthening, community surveillance, institutional convergence, and accountability. The outcomes are noteworthy: between 2019 and 2024, the State prevented over 14,000 child marriages; 13,536 villages and 954 Gram Panchayats declared themselves child-marriage-free. The institutional architecture has expanded accordingly. In 2024, Odisha appointed over 10,000 child marriage prohibition officers and more than 63,000 child marriage information officers, creating a decentralised vigilance system.

If SSAP is the protective framework, ADVIKA is its empowerment engine. Reaching 23.14 lakh adolescents, the programme promotes leadership and agency. It has cultivated 90,000 sakhis and saheli and 84,000 sakhās and bandhus, who function as peer educators and first responders to prevent child marriage, trafficking, and abuse.

Meanwhile, the integration of Child Helpline 1098, Women's Helpline 181, and ERSS (112) has reduced response times. Child Help Desks at 10 major railway stations serve as frontline defence against trafficking and unsafe migration. The Amari Shishu dashboard links multiple databases to track vulnerable children and ensure scheme convergence.

Prevention cannot succeed without social protection. The Ashirbad scheme has supported over 51,000 COVID-orphaned children, preventing distress-induced early marriage, or labour. Jashoda supported 1,486 children in 2024-25. A renewed emphasis on family-based care – kinship, foster care or adoption – has led to 278 adoptions in 2024-25, indicating reduced reliance on institutional care.

Complementing these measures are the Orphan Survey and Disability Survey, which identify the State's most invisible children and ensure timely linkage to services.

Economic agency completes Odisha's empowerment architecture. Subhadra has enabled over 1.1 crore women to open digital bank accounts, asserting financial independence as a right, not a privilege. Subhadra Plus interventions further safeguard the girl child across every stage, keeping her in school, connecting her to skills and enterprise, and surrounding her with networks of peers and protection. Collectively, these initiatives turn finance into freedom. Odisha's experiment shows what can be achieved when child protection is treated not as a welfare obligation but as a governance priority.

Shubha Sarma is Principal Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Odisha. Anu Garg is Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary, Planning and Convergence Department, Government of Odisha

One in six people exposed to conflict worldwide in 2025

ACLED's latest report indicates that civilians do not just face more violence, but more state violence this year

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

According to a new report from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), an estimated 831 million people, or 10% of the world's population, were exposed to conflict this year. That means roughly, one in six people globally were exposed to conflict in 2025.

The report says that conflict was characterised by less restraint and increasing violence targeting civilians. That is, armed actors around the globe were more likely to use force and disregard the consequences that came with it. Not only did the number of conflicts increase, but also, nearly three out of four such events directly involved state forces.

ACLED has recorded nearly 2 lakh violent events worldwide this year – nearly twice the number of events recorded just four years ago. A region-wise analysis shows that Europe recorded the greatest increase in violence, largely driven by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which has affected the highest number of people since the invasion in 2022. While conflicts persisted in West Asia, the end of Syria's civil war and a series of ceasefires in Lebanon and Gaza decreased the number of violent events significantly **(Chart 1)**. Compared to 2024, there was 48% decrease in violent conflicts in the region. Also, the decreases in air campaigns by Israel and Türkiye in Lebanon and Iraq, respectively, drove a 17% drop in aerial warfare globally compared to 2024.

Global trends indicate that civilians now do not just face more violence, but they also face more state violence. More than 56,000 incidents of violence directed at civilians were recorded in 2025. This is the highest in the last five years.

Government forces were involved in 74% of violent events worldwide in 2025. **Chart 2** shows the share of violence by state actors in all recorded violent events since 2020.

Data show that state-led violence targeting civilians has increased since 2020. Where state forces were responsible for 20% of global violence directed towards civilians in 2020, they now make up 35% of such events.

While Israel and Russia were collectively responsible for about 90% of violent incidents that targeted civilians outside their borders, the Myanmar military accounted for nearly a third of violence committed by state forces against its civilians this year.

However, in terms of fatalities, about 60% were due to the actions of non-state armed groups and mobs. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF), Sudan's paramilitary group locked in a years-long conflict with the Sudanese army, killed more than 4,200 civilians in attacks till November this year. This is much higher than any other non-state armed group **(Chart 3)**.

This figure makes up about 11% of all recorded fatalities caused by non-state armed groups and is likely to be a severe undercount. The Allied Democratic Forces, an armed group of former Ugandan rebels which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, was responsible for at least 1,370 reported civilian fatalities. The March 23 Movement (M23) is one of 120 insurgent groups active in the same conflict, and was responsible for more than 1,100 civilian deaths.

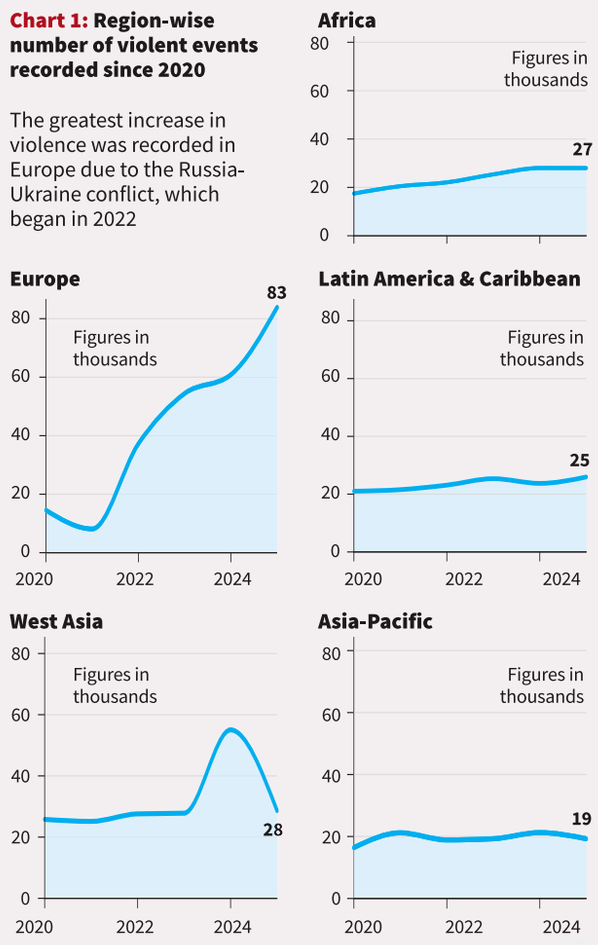
The report also highlights that the repurposing of readily accessible commercial drones as weapons in recent conflicts reflects changes in contemporary warfare. Data show that 469 non-state armed groups have deployed drones at least once in the past five years. This is a 14% rise compared to last year **(Chart 4)**. ACLED says this indicates that non-state armed groups are either able to access technology previously reserved for states or adapt and use minimal resources to expand their arsenal.

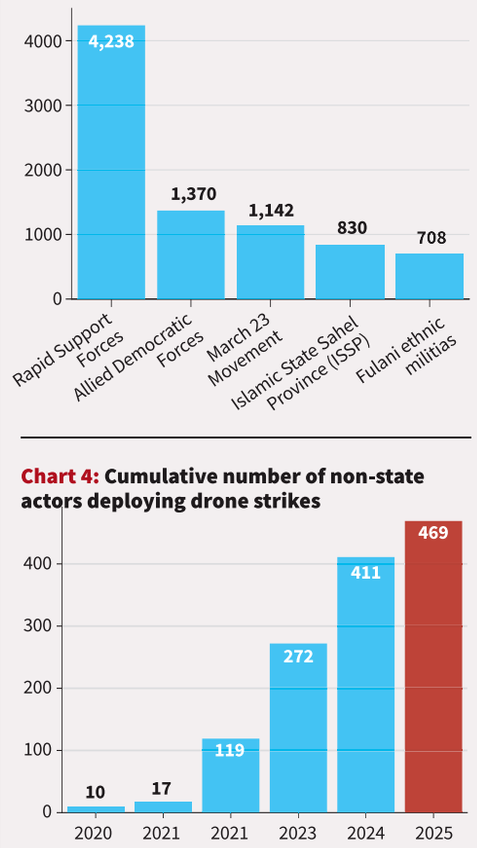
Tracking conflict

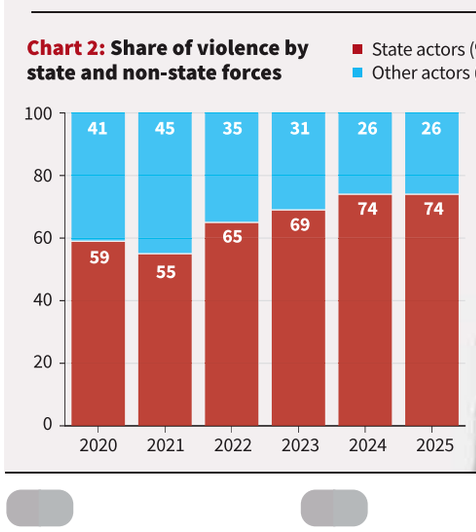
The data for the charts were sourced from ACLED's report 'What's driving conflict today?' , published on December 11, 2025. The report was authored by ACLED's Head of Analysis Andrea Carboni and Associate Analysis Coordinator Ciro Murillo

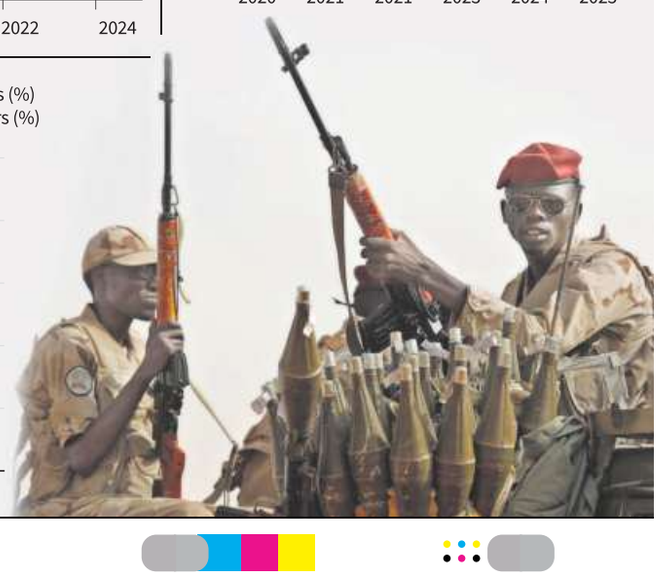
Chart 1: Region-wise number of violent events recorded since 2020

The greatest increase in violence was recorded in Europe due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which began in 2022









FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 16, 1975

Plan to develop managerial talent in public sector

New Delhi, Dec. 15: The Bureau of Public Enterprises is now actively considering a nine-point action plan to speedily develop managerial talents from within the enterprises to man the top posts.

The action plan, drawn up by a recent seminar on internal training in the public sector undertakings, aims at reducing the dependence of these companies on other Government sectors for their top managerial posts.

At present, the public sector in India has over 50,000 managers of whom those in the senior category number about 3,000. Proper training to this large section of managers would solve the problem of managerial resources the seminar pointed out.

At present, 13 major public sector companies like the Hindustan Steel, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd, Indian Airlines and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. have their own training institutes. The seminar discussions were aimed at finding out how these facilities could be used to the maximum for training personnel for all the undertakings.

One of the points stressed in the action plan finalised by the seminar is the need for greater inter-company utilisation of training resources. The seminar thought that it was not necessary for each public sector undertaking to set up its own training institute.

For this purpose, the seminar asked the Bureau of Public Enterprises to nominate certain training institutes among the present 13, which could be developed for the purpose of inter-company collaboration.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 16, 1925

Empire leprosy relief

London, Dec. 15: Mr. Frank Oldrieve, who starts for West Africa on 6th January to form branches of the Empire Leprosy Relief Association in Nigeria, Gold Coast Colony and Sierra Leone, thereafter proceeding to West Indies in connection with the All-Empire campaign, was today received by the Prince of Wales who is deeply interested in the work of ridding the Empire of leprosy. It will be recalled that he was greatly moved on the occasion of his visit to the leper settlement at Basutoland. He was gratified to hear that a number of lepers were recently allowed to return to their homes cured by the latest treatment.

From Page One

New Bill set to shift job scheme to supply-driven

In practice, this translated to a 90:10 cost share between the Centre and the States. However, Section 22(2) of the Bill says "the fund-sharing pattern between the Union government and the State governments shall be 90:10 for the north-eastern States, Himalayan States/Union Territories (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir), and 60:40 for all other States and Union Territories with legislature".

While this increases the financial burden on States, the new Bill gives the Centre greater control over where and how the scheme will be implemented. Section 4(5) says: "The Central government shall determine the State-wise normative allocation for each financial year, based on objective parameters as may be prescribed by the Central government." The MGNREGA was demand-based and allowed flexibility to increase the budget based on need.

The Centre will not only set the budget for each State but also decide where it will be spent. Section 5(1) empowers the Union government to "notify rural areas in a State" where the scheme will be implemented.

The new Bill allows for pausing the programme during peak agricultural seasons to "facilitate availability of labour". Technological interventions introduced under the MGNREGA – such as mobile app-based attendance, Aadhaar-based payment systems, and geotagging of worksites – are now codified into law.

Nikhil Dey, a founder member of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and one of the architects of the MGNREGA, criticised the move, calling it a retreat from the rights-based framework enjoyed for two decades.

Opposition raises many questions over new Bill

The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill, 2025, was listed in the supplementary list of business of the Lok Sabha on Monday.

Congress MP Saptagiri Ulaka, who chairs the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, said that the government had always intended to end the programme, citing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks that MGNREGA was a monument to the Congress-led UPA's failure and was a scheme for digging pits. "I don't know what problem they have with Bapu's name. They wanted to finish it because it was a Congress scheme," he said and added none of the recommendations made by the panel were reflected in the new Bill.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi questioned the intention behind removing the 'Mahatma Gandhi' prefix. She said, "Whenever the name of a scheme is changed, there are so many changes that have to be made in offices, stationery... for which money is spent. What is the benefit and why is it being done?"

Senior Trinamool Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien termed the government's move "an insult to Mahatma Gandhi." "But then, are you surprised! These are the same people who hero-worshipped the man who killed Mahatma Gandhi," he said.

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor called the controversy over renaming MGNREGA "unfortunate". "The concept of Gram Swaraj and the ideal of Ram Rajya were never competing forces; they were the twin pillars of Gandhiji's consciousness. Replacing the Mahatma's name ignores this profound symbiosis," he said in a post on X.

CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby said that the Centre's grandstanding over a total revamp of the scheme was an attempt to hide the startling fact that the basic rights-based framework under which it operates is being dismantled.

RJD Rajya Sabha member Manoj K. Jha said that it was one scheme that saved the rural poor from starvation during the pandemic.

SC concerned about roads turning death traps in winter

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday drew the attention of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to the fact that the dark months of winter, lack of streetlights along long stretches, and vehicles parked haphazardly along the tarmac invite tragedy and loss of lives, like in two recent accidents on highways in Telangana and Rajasthan claiming nearly 40 lives.

A Bench of Justices J.K. Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi did not appear happy with an affidavit filed by the NHAI in response to the Court's questions on road accidents. Justice Maheshwari said the Court did not want to treat the *suo motu* case as an adverse litigation, but only wanted solutions to the problem.

"The NHAI is just throwing mud at police and local authorities. We want to know about the powers of the NHAI and the corresponding action it can take if the administration is not doing anything," the Bench said.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta assured the Court of studying the statutory scheme and responding to the court.

Eight arrested in Bihar over mob lynching of cloth vendor

Mohammad Athar Hussain was tortured for hours over his religious identity at Bhattapur village in Nawada district; he later died during treatment; police on the hunt for the remaining accused

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

The Bihar police have arrested eight people in connection with the alleged mob lynching of Mohammad Athar Hussain (40), a cloth vendor from Gagan Dewan locality in Nalanda district who died at Pawapuri Hospital in Nalanda on December 12.


Mohammad Athar Hussain

Mr. Hussain was allegedly tortured and lynched over his religious identity on December 5, at Bhattapur village under Roh police station limits in Nawada district.

The police registered a case on December 6, based on a statement from Mr. Hussain's wife Shabnam Parveen. The complainant named 10 people in the FIR and stated that they had lynched her husband on charge of theft.

According to the police, the case was registered under Sections 190, 191(2) and 191(3) (unlawful assembly and rioting), Sections 126 (2), 115(2), 117 and 118 (grievous hurt and use of dangerous means), Sections 109 and 74 (abetment and common intention), and Sections 303(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), with murder charges added after Mr. Hussain died ofi njuries.

Mr. Hussain's brother Mohammad Shakib shared the details of the incident with the media, saying Mr. Hussain's in-laws live in Marui village under Roh police station limits in Nawada district.

"He used to stay with his family there and travel by bicycle to earn a livelihood by selling cloth. On the evening of December 5, at around 7 p.m., while he was returning home, his bicycle tyre got punctured near Bhattapar village. On the way, he approached some people sitting by bonfire, asking about any puncture shop nearby," Mr. Shakib said.

He further said, "Those people asked his name and as soon as he revealed his name, Mohammad Athar Hussain, they began hitting him with a burning piece of wood. They dragged him to a room and beat him up brutally, hitting him on the head and chest. When he got unconscious due to excessive beating for hours, they threw him on the roadside at midnight."

Mr. Hussain had also recounted his trauma before being taken to the Primary Health Centre (PHC) in Roh, from where he was referred to Nawada Sadar Hospital and later to Pawapuri, where he died.

"He was the sole bread winner for the family, and I have three small children. How will I now take care of my children? There is no source of income. The way he was beaten up was inhumane; even animals are not beaten up like that. All the criminals should be hanged to death," Ms. Parveen told the press on Monday.

In a press note issued on Saturday, December 13, he office of Nawada Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinav Dhiman stated, "In view of the seriousness of the incident, a special team was formed under the leadership of the Sadar SDPO [sub-divisional police officer] and directed to arrest the accused. The constituted team arrested four named accused involved in the incident under 24 hours and sent them to judicial custody."

It further stated, "On December 13, based on further investigations, four more accused involved in the case were arrested. To date, a total of eight accused have been arrested in the case. All of them have subsequently been remanded to judicial custody."

The police said that continuous raids were being conducted to arrest the remaining accused.

Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) spokesperson Ejaz Ahmed slammed the State government, saying Home Minister Samrat Choudhary often talked big about law and order, while in reality, mob lynchings were being carried out based on religion and caste, and people were being beaten to death in inhumane ways.


Raj Kumar Goyal

Raj Kumar Goyal takes oath as CIC; 8 more sworn in

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday administered the oath of office to former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Raj Kumar Goyal as the Chief Information Commissioner of the Central Information Commission. Mr. Goyal took charge and administered the oath of office to eight new Information Commissioners in the presence of two incumbent Information Commissioners, Anandi Ramalingam and Vinod Kumar Tiwari

The new appointees are Surendra Singh Meena, Ashutosh Chaturvedi, Swagat Das, Sudha Rani Relangi, P.R. Ramesh, Khushwant Singh Sethi, Jaya Varma Sinha, and Sanjeev Kumar Jindal. The Central Information Commission, set up under the RTI Act with up to 10 members, now has a full panel for the first time in nine years.

PM Modi arrives in Jordan, says his visit will boost bilateral linkages

Press Trust of India
AMMAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that his visit to Jordan will boost bilateral linkages between the two nations. He was speaking after arriving in Amman on the first leg of his three-nation trip aimed at further strengthening ties.


Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Jordan counterpart, Jafar Hassan, as he receives a ceremonial welcome in Amman. PTI

In a special gesture emblematic of the close ties between the two countries, Mr. Modi was warmly received by Jordanian Prime Minister Jafar Hassan at the airport and accorded a ceremonial welcome.

"Landed in Amman. Thankful to Mr. Jafar Hassan, Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for the warm welcome at the airport," Mr. Modi said in a post on social media.

"I am sure this visit will boost bilateral linkages between our nations," he added. This full-fledged bilateral visit to Jordan is taking place after 37 years, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Jordan is the first leg of Modi's four-day, three-nation tour, which will also take him to Ethiopia and Oman.

"It is an honour to welcome Prime Minister @narendramodi of the Republic of India to Jordan today, as a valued guest, in a visit that reflects seventy-five years of close and enduring relations," the Jordanian Prime Minister said in a post on social media.

"We look forward to broader horizons of cooperation between our two countries, particularly in the economic, investment, and technological fields," he added.

Modi will meet King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein for a one-on-one talk followed by a delegation-level meeting. On Tuesday, the Prime Minister and the King would address an India-Jordan business event, which will be attended by leading businessmen from both countries.

The Prime Minister, along with the Crown Prince, is scheduled to visit Petra, the historic city that shares ancient trade linkages with India, subject to weather conditions.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, this is Prime Minister Modi's first full-fledged bilateral visit to Jordan.

Modi had transited through Jordan in February 2018, while on his way to Palestine. India and Jordan share strong economic ties, with New Delhi being Amman's third-largest trading partner.

Trade deficit falls to $6.6 bn. in Nov. due to merchandise export growth

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's trade deficit plummeted by more than 61% in November to $6.6 billion, due to strong growth in merchandise exports and a fall in merchandise imports. Notably, India's exports to the U.S. in November 2025 were higher than in October 2025, as well as in November last year.

Data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry showed that total exports grew 15.5% to $74 billion in November, while total imports slid 0.6% to $80.6 billion. The data showed that merchandise exports grew 19.4% to $38.1 billion in November. Merchandise exports had fallen 11.8% in October. "In terms of merchandise exports, November 2025 has seen the highest exports out of any November in the last 10 years," Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said. "The November data takes care of the worries that arose after the October data."

The data show that India's exports to the U.S. grew 22.6% to $6.98 billion in November compared to November 2024. This was also 10.7% higher than in October 2024. "...the November data shows our trade relations with the U.S. are going on well, and this is a positive sign," he said. Merchandise imports fell 1.9% to $62.7 billion in November. These were 17.6% lower than in October. Gold imports fell nearly 60% to $4 billion in November.

Govt. to send higher education Bill to JPC

Opposition MPs from Kerala and Tamil Nadu objected to the nomenclature of the legislation, arguing that by choosing to name the Bill and the new authorities proposed in it in Hindi, the Union government was "imposing Hindi" on non-Hindi-speaking States.

After hearing the objections to the introduction of the Bill - which will subsume the functions of the UGC, the All India Council for Technical Education, and the National Council for Teacher Education - Mr. Pradhan moved to introduce the Bill amid uproar. Following this, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju rose and said the government had decided to propose that this Bill be sent to a joint committee constituted by the Speaker.

Mr. Rijiju said that in the meeting of the Lok Sabha's Business Advisory Committee, "Many members have requested that this is an extensive Bill and we need further deliberation on it."

The Coordination Committee Against HECI (VBSA) on Monday held a press conference in New Delhi, insisting that the Bill was a "revived" version of the 2018 Higher Education Commission of India Bill, which had received thousands of adverse reactions and was subsequently put on hold. The committee, a coalition of over 30 teacher and student associations and unions, argued that this Bill was a "structural shift to dismantle public-funded higher education in India".

Encounter begins in Udhampur

Peerzada Ashiq
JAMMU

Security forces on Monday encircled a group of terrorists and engaged the trapped terrorists in a fierce gunfight in Jammu's Udhampur.

One policeman is reportedly injured in the ongoing Udhampur encounter.

"On a precise input from J&K Police, a contact was established with terrorists at Village Soan, Majalta, Udhampur. A joint team of SOG (Special Operation Group) along with the Army and CRPF are on job," a police spokesman said.

Officials said that the terrorists are believed to be affiliated with Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit.

(*With inputs from PTI*)

SHANTI Bill to allow private sector to make, run nuclear power plants

Jacob Koshy
Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The Centre introduced in the Lok Sabha on Monday the SHANTI Bill that aims to incentivise private sector participation, both Indian and foreign, into nuclear power production. It does this by replacing India's existing laws – the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act, 2010, – with the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025.

The latter creates an atomic energy regulatory structure that is answerable to Parliament, removes the Nuclear Power Corporation of India's monopoly over operating nuclear plants, and restricts the instances under which nuclear power plant operators can claim compensation from suppliers of equipment in case of an accident. Simultaneously, it also buffers operators by introducing limits on the extent of their liability, in case of violating the laws under the Act, based on the size of the plants they operate, and limits the maximum penalty on them to ₹1 crore even in the case of a "severe breach".

"The Bill proposes a revised and pragmatic civil liability framework for nuclear damage, confers statutory status on the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), and strengthens mechanisms related to safety, security, safeguards, quality assurance and emergency preparedness," a statement by the Union Ministry of Science and Technology said. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology, introduced the Bill.

Privatising the nuclear power sector, which currently makes up 1.5% of India's installed power capacity, and 3% of the electricity produced, has been on the government's agenda in recent years to boost clean energy production, improve grid stability, and move towards its 2070 net-zero (zero net-carbon emissions) targets.

This includes scaling-up installed nuclear power to 100 GW, up from the current 8.8 GW, by 2047; a ₹20,000 crore mission launched in the Union Budget this year to develop 'small modular reactors'; and a slew of customised 220 MW pressurised heavy water reactors.

"The Bill gives hope for large-scale innovation in nuclear technology through amendments in patent laws, aligns with global liability conventions, and proposes the expansion of nuclear energy projects through private sector participation. Any explanation regarding the CNLD Act of 2010 seemed inadequate to foreign and domestic suppliers and vendors," M.P. Ram Mohan, Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, told *The Hindu*.

Supreme Court grants interim bail to journalist

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday granted interim bail to journalist Mahesh Langa in a money laundering case linked to accusations of fraud against him.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant directed the Special Court hearing the case to take it up on a day-to-day basis for considering the charge and recording the statements of witnesses.

The court ordered Mr. Langa and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to cooperate for the trial and not take any adjournments.

The court posted the case for January 6, 2026.


Piyush Goyal

BJP names Piyush Goyal in-charge of 2026 T.N. polls

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday made Union Minister Piyush Goyal the poll in-charge of Tamil Nadu and put Lok Sabha MP Baijayant Panda in charge of its campaign in Assam.

An earlier notification had said that Mr. Panda would handle Tamil Nadu, but he has been replaced by Mr. Goyal and given charge of Assam, where he had been the in-charge during the 2021 Assembly polls.

Mr. Goyal has experience in handling Tamil Nadu having facilitated the BJP-AIADMK alliance before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Union Ministers Arjun Ram Meghwal and Muralidhar Mohol have been appointed co-in-charge with Mr. Goyal for the election scheduled to be held next year.

SIR process is based on Constitutional framework: Centre

Citing precedence, Law Minister says EC's revision took place earlier too under various governments; Opposition continues criticism over exercise

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI


Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal speaking in the Rajya Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament on Monday. SANSAD TV

The Union government on Monday defended the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, and said the guiding principle for the exercise was universal adult franchise.

During a discussion on electoral reforms in the Rajya Sabha, the Opposition continued to attack the Centre over the SIR.

Congress leader Digvijaya Singh said elections were not being held in a transparent manner as the BJP wanted to establish a 'fascist state' without elections. Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda said the Opposition would continue to get defeated in elections if it tarnished the image of the Election Commission every time.

Senior Congress MP Randeep Singh Surjewala demanded that the Chief Justice of India continue to be a part of the committee to select the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.

Participating in the debate, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the SIR was based on the constitutional framework created by B.R. Ambedkar. Quoting Dr. Ambedkar, he said the revision of the voters' list was based on the principle of 'one person, one vote', which was a major pillar of election reforms.

"Our Constitution and electoral process is based on this principle. So, when under SIR, the same is being undertaken to take out people who are not eligible from voter lists, why are they [Opposition parties] opposing it?" the Minister asked, and cited precedence that SIR took place under various governments earlier.

Mr. Gowda said every party had lost elections, but never mocked any Prime Minister or public institution. "India is a very big country... Remember my friends, please, by using the words 'vote *chori*' (theft) you are going to suffer in the coming days," he added. Mr. Surjewala said the SIR was a 'selective ideological removal' and added that Dr. Ambedkar had wanted the EC not to be under the executive and that right to vote should be a fundamental right.

Mr. Digvijaya Singh demanded removal of the ceiling on electoral expenses to ensure transparency in the election process.

BJP MPs force adjournment in both Houses over alleged threat to PM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI


Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, while speaking in the Lok Sabha, urged the Congress to tender an apology for the threat. SANSAD TV

Proceedings in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha witnessed disruptions on Monday following protests by the Treasury benches over an alleged threat by some Congress workers to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's life.

In the Lok Sabha, the charge was led by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, while Union Health Minister Minister J.P. Nadda took on the Congress in the Upper House.

In the Upper House, proceedings were adjourned till noon amid an uproar after Mr. Nadda condemned the Congress over slogans raised against the Prime Minister.

"With pain and an agitated heart, I want to share before the House that yesterday at the Congress rally, slogans were shouted: '*Modi teri kabr khudegi, aaj nahi to kal khudegi*' (Modi's grave will be dug, if not today, then tomorrow). This type of slogan reflects the Congress's thinking and mindset," he said, immediately after papers were laid in the House.

Describing the slogans as "condemnable", Mr. Nadda said shouting such slogans against the Prime Minister and wishing his death was unacceptable and demanded that Congress president and Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge, and senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, who were present in the House, apologise to the nation.

As the House witnessed an uproar, Deputy Chairman Harivansh adjourned the proceedings until noon.

In the Lok Sabha, Speaker Om Birla paid tributes to three former members of the House who passed away recently as soon as the House convened. Soon after, Treasury bench members were quick on their feet to protest against the alleged threat to Mr. Modi. "We are rivals but not enemies. But Congress workers have threatened to dig the grave of the Prime Minister at the Congress rally [on Sunday]. This is the most unfortunate incident to happen. PM Modi is the leader of 140 crore people of the country and the most strong leader of the world. Congress party must tender an apology for the threat," Mr. Rijiju said.

The Union Minister said when an MP made certain remarks against the Opposition, the Prime Minister had directed him to tender an apology and accordingly he did that. "Congress should now tender an apology for giving threat to the Prime Minister," he added. As the uproar continued, the Speaker adjourned the House till noon within minutes of the proceedings.

On Sunday, the Congress held a rally titled "Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod (vote thief, quit the throne)" in Delhi, protesting against alleged electoral malpractices.

In generational change, Nitin Nabin becomes BJP working president

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI


Nitin Nabin, BJP working president, greeted by supporters at the party headquarters in New Delhi on Monday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

The BJP's new national working president, Nitin Nabin, took charge on Monday at the party's headquarters in New Delhi in the presence of senior leaders, including Union Home Minister Amit Shah, party president and Minister J.P. Nadda, and Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dharmendra Pradhan.

Before leaving Bihar, Mr. Nabin visited the Mahavir temple in Patna and offered homage at the statue of his father, the late BJP leader Nabin Kishore Prasad Sinha, at a park in the city.

"I have always worked on the ideas of my father, who considered the party as his mother and prioritised the nation over everything. I think that is the reason the party has blessed me with this opportunity to continue working with BJP workers," he said.

On poll prospects

He expressed confidence over the BJP's prospects in the coming Assembly polls in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Mr. Nabin's elevation as possibly the youngest ever BJP president at 45 years of age took many by surprise even as it has ended more than 18 months of suspense over who would replace Mr. Nadda at the helm of affairs in the party.

The generational shift effected by this move comes after nearly a decade of such changes being made in the BJP at the block, mandal and district levels, to reduce the average age of the office-bearers of the party to below 50.

Even before the formal election of Mr. Nadda, this push was made before 2020, as a result of which nearly all the 700 district presidents of the party had been chosen below 50 years of age.

Mr. Nabin's immediate challenges, after his formal election as the BJP's national president, would be to face the Assembly elections due in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

But a more delicate balancing act would be the putting together of his new team, whether he continues this trend of a generational change in his choice of office-bearers at the national level or opts for more senior colleagues.

Why full audio clip on Manipur not sent to forensics, asks SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the government why the entire leaked audio clip, allegedly pointing to the role of former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in the 2023 ethnic violence, was not sent to Gujarat's National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) for examination.

The top court said it was a "little disturbed" by the affidavit filed on behalf of the petitioners on November 20 that "states to the effect that only select clippings were sent" for forensics. The NFSU had virtually given a clean chit, saying the leaked audio clip was "tampered with".

Mr. Singh resigned as the Chief Minister of Manipur on February 9.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioners, said the tapes were roughly 56-minute long and the petitioners had filed 48 minutes in the court. He said the remaining part identified the person who made the recording, and if his identity was disclosed, his life could be in danger.

Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati sought a week's time to respond to the affidavit.

Army celebrates Vijay Divas, hails indigenous tech

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Indian Army organised the Vijay Divas 'At Home' at the Army House on Monday to commemorate Vijay Divas, marking the decisive victory of the Indian armed forces in the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

The event was attended by President Droupadi Murmu.

The Defence Ministry said the celebrations featured a showcase of indigenously developed technologies and niche capabilities, highlighting the Indian Army's steady transformation into a self-reliant force. The displays reflected the growing synergy between Indian soldiers, engineers, startups and academic institutions in developing cutting-edge solutions to strengthen national security.

A wide range of homegrown equipment and innovations was exhibited, underscoring the Army's journey towards becoming a future-ready force.

Several of the showcased technologies demonstrated dual-use potential, contributing to disaster response, infrastructure development and sustainability, the Ministry said.

Sanjay Saraogi made BJP's new Bihar unit president

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

A day after naming Nitin Nabin as the working president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Sanjay Saraogi, MLA, was on Monday appointed the Bihar BJP State president replacing Dilip Kumar Jaiswal.

The letter issued by the party's national general secretary Arun Singh stated that the national president of the BJP, J.P. Nadda, has made the appointment which would be effective immediately.

The 56-year-old leader is a popular face in the Mithilanchal region and has been MLA for five consecutive terms from the Darbhanga Sadar Assembly constituency.

Hailing from the Vaishya community, a core vote base of the party, he earlier served as the coordinator of the Bihar State BJP Cow Protection Cell. Last year, Mr. Jaiswal was appointed Bihar BJP president replacing Samrat Choudhary who is now Deputy Chief Minister of the State.

Reacting to his appointment, Mr. Saraogi said, "The party has given me a big responsibility and I will take everyone along and work to strengthen the party."

AICC expels ex-MLA for anti-party activities

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) has expelled Mohammed Moquim, a former Congress MLA from Odisha, for demanding a change in leadership and calling for the transfer of party president Mallikarjun Kharge's responsibilities to younger leaders, citing his age.

In a letter addressed to former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, he expressed dissatisfaction over the selection of Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC).

Mr. Moquim said the youth were waiting for Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to take active leadership role.

India cannot afford to pollute its way to prosperity: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI


Jairam Ramesh

The Congress asserted on Monday that India cannot afford to pollute its way to prosperity, emphasising that faster economic growth must not come at the cost of public health and environmental degradation.

The principal Opposition party said rising pollution levels need not and must not be the price citizens are compelled to pay for development.

Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said, in a statement, that India's current clean air strategy relies excessively on Graded Response Action Plans (GRAP), which are largely reactive in nature.

He argued that these measures focus on managing pollution crises after they occur, rather than preventing them through sustained policy interventions.

"We need tough, multi-sectoral actions with scale and speed throughout the year, not just during the winter months of October to December," Mr. Ramesh said, calling for a comprehensive and continuous approach to tackling air pollution.

The Congress communications chief criticised the Centre for stating in the Rajya Sabha on December 9 that there was no conclusive data establishing a direct correlation between air pollution and deaths or disease. He described this as a display of insensitivity, noting that the government had made a similar claim in July last year.

The Congress leader noted that the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, last revised in 2009, are outdated and require urgent revision and strict enforcement.

"India simply cannot afford to pollute its way to prosperity...," Mr. Ramesh said.

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SREE MAHALAKSHMYAI NAMAHA
SREE CHANDRASEKARA GURUBHYO NAMAHA

APPEAL

The MAHASWAMI OF KANCHI ordained this Public Charitable Trust in 1986 for providing financial aid to Archakas who live in poor conditions, upholding our religious and cultural heritage in ancient temples in rural areas. Many of them do not have any means of sustenance and we should deem it our duty to provide them with minimal financial aid to ensure that they continue to perform their important role in the rural communities.

MAHA PERIYAVA had instructed that the Trust should seek donations primarily from individual devotees; and provide financial assistance to these Archakas from the income derived from investing the donations. He had further desired that those with gross income of over Rs. 4,000/- per month could contribute their one month's gross income.

The Trust currently provides a monthly honorarium to 467 poor Archakas, (168 Poojaries, 135 Bhattacharyas and 164 Sivacharyas) spread over rural Tamil Nadu. The Trust also has a Group Life Insurance Policy for the benefit of eligible Archakas.

We earnestly request all the devotees to donate liberally for this noble cause, keeping in mind **MAHA PERIYAVA's** desire. By His Grace and the generous contribution from his devotees, it has been possible to enhance the monthly honorarium progressively to **Rs. 2,800/- (Rupees Two Thousand Eight Hundred) per month.** However, with the increasing number of beneficiaries and reduction in the interest rates, it is necessary to enhance the Corpus fund significantly to maintain the current level of financial aid to the poor Archakas.

Online Donations (via Payment Gateway) can be made at www.kmawt.com.

Also, Crossed Cheque or Demand Draft payable at Chennai drawn in favour of **'KACHCHI MOODOOR ARCHAKAS WELFARE TRUST'** can be sent to the Trust office. Please do mention that the donation is towards **CORPUS FUND** in the covering letter, and do include Donor's Name, PAN number, Address, Cell/Phone Number, and Email-Id (if available).

Please note that Income Tax Section 80G Benefit is available to the Donors.

16.12.2025

S. RAGHUNATHAN
Advocate, Chennai
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INBRIEF



SC declines to hear petition on IndiGo flight cancellations

The Supreme Court on Monday said the recent spate of cancellations by IndiGo airline was a "grave and public" concern, but declined to intervene on the ground that the Delhi High Court was already hearing the case and the Director General of Civil Aviation had formed a committee to investigate the lapse. A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant addressed petitioner, Narendra Mishra, that it did not want a parallel proceeding, which may dissuade the High Court from continuing to hear the case before it. "We know that the Government of India has taken timely action and cognisance of the issue," said Chief Justice Kant.

Calcutta HC to hear PIL pleas on violence at Messi event

The Calcutta High Court will hear three public interest litigation (PIL) petitions seeking the transfer of probe from the West Bengal Police to Central investigating agencies into the violence and vandalism that unfolded during an event featuring Argentinian footballer Lionel Messi in Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium on Saturday. A Division Bench on Monday allowed the filing of the PIL petitions by Leader of the Opposition and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, advocate Sabyasachi Chattopadhyay, and advocate Mainak Ghosal. Till Monday, at least five spectators have been apprehended by the police in connection with the chaos and violence.

Two security personnel injured in IED blast in Bijapur

Two security personnel were injured in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur on Sunday, said a senior police officer. The two victims were out of danger, the officer added. Earlier on Sunday morning, a joint team of District Reserve Guards, Special Task Force, and CoBra (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) launched an operation in the Pillur-Kandlaparti area. "During the operation, two Cobra personnel sustained minor injuries in an IED blast. Both injured personnel have been sent to Raipur for better treatment," said the police officer.

Court extends NIA custody of two in Red Fort blast case

A Delhi Court on Monday extended the NIA custody of Delhi bomb blast accused Soyab and Dr. Naseer Bilal Malla for four more days. The two were produced before the Principal and Sessions Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna, who allowed the probe agency to question Soyab and Naseer in its custody for four more days. Soyab, a Faridabad resident, and Dr. Naseer Bilal Malla, a resident of Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, were brought to the court amid tight security on expiry of their previous custody. Mediapersons were barred from covering the proceedings. As per the probe by the NIA, the two had provided logistical support to Umar-un-Nabi before the Delhi bomb blast.

Attracting youth to classical concerts a challenge: Rahman

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI



Music director A.R. Rahman presents the M.S. Subbulakshmi Award to R.K. Shriramkumar, the Sangita Kalanidhi-designate for 2025, at the Music Academy in Chennai on Monday. N. Murali, President, Music Academy, and Carnatic vocalists Bombay Jayashree and T.M. Krishna are present. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Oscar-winning music director A.R. Rahman on Monday said one of the challenges today was how to bring in younger audiences to concert halls to enjoy classical music.

Mr. Rahman, who inaugurated the 99th annual music conference and concerts of the Music Academy in Chennai, said he had expected to see many young people in the audience, but found most were of his own age group.

"How do we get them in? This has been my task for the last 10 years. I have been working on script ideas, how to make a movie, and all kinds of crazy ideas I have not told anyone about," said Mr. Rahman, who presented the M.S. Subbulakshmi Award and the cash prize instituted by *The Hindu* to violinist R.K. Shriramkumar, the Sangita Kalanidhi-designate for 2025.

Mr. Rahman said music had to travel around the world and be experienced in a way that enthralled and immersed audiences. "It is not just the performer or the mastery of singing, but also the hall and the way spaces are designed so that people can enjoy music in a much better way," he said.

Pointing out that people today were constantly "seduced by social media", artificial intelligence, and many other unbelievable influences – both good and bad – the music director said all of this could happen on a screen.

"But can you sing with the *tambura* in tune and hold an audience for three hours? That is the question. At the same time, how can we expand the experience? The human experience is irreplaceable. Performing arts have a major role to play and must be reinvented again and again to bring in audiences, generate an economy, and instil pride in our traditions," he said.

Mr. Rahman added that while the creation of music was one aspect, marketing it in a way that allowed the world to enjoy it was equally important. "My musical experience is that I learnt from everyone. I do not draw borders between traditions. I appreciate and respect tradition. Everything comes from *bhakti*, from devotion – whether it is Sufi music, Carnatic music, Hindustani music, or gospel music. Everything comes from surrendering to tradition," he said.

Describing himself as an "outlaw" as a musician, Mr. Rahman said, "I learnt music, but moved away from tradition to rediscover it, so that I gained the freedom to innovate and collaborate, and the freedom not to feel guilty about breaking rules. I have discovered more beauty as I grow older, and now we face a serious challenge."

'Beautiful soundscape'

Mr. Shriramkumar recalled his first concert at the Music Academy, for which he had borrowed both his instrument and his attire. "From then on, my performances at the Academy have been an unbroken sequence," he said.

He noted that Carnatic music as a genre was characterised by its unique soundscape, *gamaka* structures, compositional masterpieces, and rhythmic intricacies. "It is of paramount importance that this beautiful soundscape is never sacrificed in performance," he said.

N. Murali, President of the Music Academy, said Mr. Rahman had incorporated multiple classical elements from both the Carnatic and Hindustani streams.

Quoting Australian director Baz Luhrmann – "the more of AR's music I encountered, the more I was amazed at the sheer diversity of styles, from swinging brass bands to triumphant anthems, from joyous pop to West End musical" – Mr. Murali said Mr. Rahman "remains a man of humility and an ambassador of our wonderful city".

Mr. Murali added that a new, world-class, top-of-the-line audio and acoustics system from the leading international brand L-Acoustics of France had been commissioned at the Academy in June 2025.

Sangita Kalanidhis T.M. Krishna and Bombay Jayashree were present. R. Srinivasan, vice-president of the Academy, proposed a vote of thanks.

Heavy fog disrupts flight operations at Delhi airport

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The season's first intense fog on Monday threw operations into disarray at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi as 228 flights, including 131 departures and 97 arrivals, were cancelled, hundreds delayed, and five diverted.

Departures were halted for nearly six hours till 10 a.m., and landings occurred intermittently as visibility dropped below permissible levels and parking bays had no space for arriving aircraft.

IndiGo announced cancellation of 145 flights and Air India cancelled over 100 flights.

Passengers remained stranded inside the aircraft for four to 10 hours at parking bays and taxiways, waiting for departure.

The runway visual range (visibility with runway lights on) was between 75 metres and 100 metres at 7 a.m. at the airport, which was below the minimum permissible level of 125 metres needed for take-offs. Though landings are permitted, there were some diversions as some flights did not have a crew trained for such landings and parking bays were full.

NIA charges four LeT-TRF terrorists in Pahalgam attack

Chargesheet names three Pakistani terrorists killed by security forces during Operation Mahadev at Dachigam; two local people also charged

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR



Army personnel keep vigil near the encounter site at Lidwas Meadows following 'Operation Mahadev' in Dachigam. ANI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday charged seven persons in the Pahalgam terror attack case in a Jammu court, including Pakistani handler and terrorist Sajid Jatt of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and The Resistance Front (TRF) terrorist organisations, and traced the conspiracy to Pakistan.

"Through a meticulous scientific probe spanning the past almost eight months, it had traced the conspiracy in the case to Pakistan, which has been unabatedly sponsoring terrorism against India," an NIA spokesperson said.

The NIA invoked a penal section of the law against the accused for "waging war against India".

The 1,597-page chargesheet submitted to a special court named three Pakistani terrorists killed by Indian security forces during Operation Mahadev at Dachigam, Srinagar, in July 2025. They were identified as Faisal Jatt alias Suleman Shah, Habeeb Tahir alias Jibran, and Hamza Afghani, besides Jatt.

Jatt is a Pakistani national from Pakistan's Punjab. Officials said his original name is Habibullah Malik.

The chargesheet details the conspiracy by Pakistan and the roles of the accused. "With supporting evidence in the case, [the NIA] has charged the banned LeT/TRF as a legal entity for its role in planning, facilitating, and executing the Pahalgam attack," the NIA said.

The attack left 25 tourists and one local civilian dead.

The LeT and TRF, and the four accused terrorists, have been charged under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023; the Arms Act, 1959; and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The NIA also charged two locals for allegedly harbouring terrorists.

Unemployment rate dips to 4.7% in November: PLFS

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The overall LFPR increased to 55.8% in November, the highest since April, the survey found

The unemployment rate (UR) among people aged 15 years and above declined to 4.7% in November, the lowest level since April, when it stood at 5.1%, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report for November released on Monday.

The PLFS, conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO) of the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), stated that the overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) increased to 55.8% in November, the highest level recorded since April.

According to a MoSPI statement based on the PLFS report, the rise in LFPR was primarily driven by rural areas, where it increased to 58.6% in November from 58% in April.

On a month-on-month basis, the rural LFPR rose from 57.8% in October, while the urban LFPR decreased marginally from 50.5% to 50.4%.

Overall, the female LFPR showed a steady rise from June 2025 to November 2025, the MoSPI said.

"It increased from 32% to 35.1% during this period, driven mainly by higher labour force participation in rural areas, while urban female LFPR remained relatively stable. Rural female LFPR recorded a consistent upward movement, rising from 35.2% in June 2025 to 39.7% in November 2025," it added.

The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for persons aged 15 years and above in rural areas increased from 55.4% in April 2025 to 56.3% in November 2025, while the overall WPR rose from 52.8% to 53.2%.

"Urban WPR remained largely stable. Notably, rural female WPR improved from 36.8% in April 2025 to 38.4% in November 2025, driving the rise in overall female WPR from 32.5% to 33.4% over this period," the Centre said.

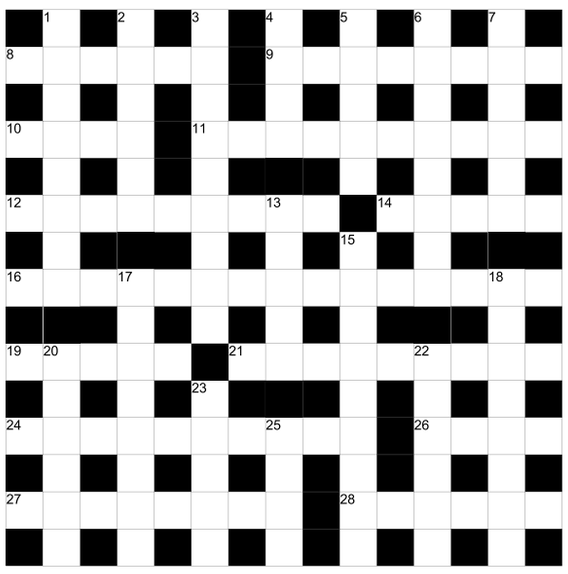
The NSO surveyed 3,73,229 people for the PLFS. 2,13,337 from rural and 1,59,892 from urban areas were surveyed in this round.

TH CROSSWORD + 14666

(set by Crossant)

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SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8. City's popular event primarily for Chinese martial art (6)
9. Novel about a girl in love (8)
10. Tailender finally dismissed, that's a comprehensive defeat (4)
11. Behind bars post essentially nasty criminal activities (6,4)
12. Outline of America's stupid tariff (9)
14. Restless in Seattle perhaps, about to leave without child (5)
16. Resource for training module? (9,6)
19. Not a method of flushing out unknown adversary (5)
21. Notes about technocrats needing finances from the centre (9)
24. Careful - online criminals ensnaring old men in cybercrime basically (10)
26. Nothing is obvious in the beginning perhaps (4)
27. Accept role and participate (4,4)
28. Country's right to occupy? Certainly not. (6)

Down

1. Boat transporting old injured pet (8)
2. Something expressed orally? (6)
3. Confusion about one new, fancy, red outfit (9)
4. Chuck Norris agrees to act, at last making a comeback (4)
5. Nervous in a city like Chicago perhaps (5)
6. One female leaving Fuji entertained by just extravagant martial art (3-5)
7. Money to get boy a castle in North Africa (6)
13. What belonged to them finally went to the next in line (5)
15. Expert tensely working to disconnect lead from strapped explosive material (9)
17. Note - America is exiting. What's left? (8)
18. Weekend stay duration cut by half unfortunately (8)
20. Money mostly kept back by sailor for drink (6)
22. Difficult to control an unknown danger (6)
23. Mark's wearing brown coat (5)
25. Name of place is mentioned (4)

SUDOKU

	8				3			7
		6						2
	3	2	6		5			1
		7		8		3		
6								9
		9		5		1		
1			3		9	5	2	
8						7		
2			8				9	

No.SS6732 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

S	T	A	I	R	S		B	E	A	T	I	T
M		L		E			R		O		E	
M	A	L	A	I	S	E		I	R	O	N	O	R	E
R		R		I		S		E		E		M	
S	T	I	M	U	L	A	T	E	D		S	A	I	L
		E		I		E				U		N		
S	E	D	G	E			A	U	T	O	P	L	A	Y
P				N		M		O				T		
C	A	N	A	S	T	A	S		U	N	C	L	E	
C		B				H		C		O				
P	E	E	D		S	L	I	T	H	E	R	I	N	G
S		O		C		P		D		D		I		
C	H	A	M	B	E	R		P	O	T	I	O	N	S
I		E		N				W		A		E		
P	I	N	C	E	R		A	N	G	L	E	S		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	6	5	4	1	3	7	9	2
1	3	9	2	5	7	8	4	6
7	2	4	8	9	6	5	3	1
9	4	8	3	7	2	6	1	5
6	7	1	5	8	4	3	2	9
2	5	3	9	6	1	4	7	8
5	1	6	7	4	9	2	8	3
4	9	2	6	3	8	1	5	7
3	8	7	1	2	5	9	6	4

FAITH

Efficacy of Tiruppavai

Margazhi, hailed as the best among months by Lord Krishna, is also the month in which Andal presented Tiruppavai to mankind to help them connect with Perumal. When Perumal rescued Bhu Devi from the depths of the ocean, He found her despondent. When asked, She responded that while He had saved Her, She was worried over how mankind would navigate the ocean of births and rebirths. Perumal advised Her to manifest on earth and guide them towards bhakti. Accordingly, she manifested as a baby in the tulsi garden of Vishnu Chittar in Srivilliputtur, said Damal Perundevi.

Like a tulsi plant spreading fragrance from the time of its sprouting, the child too was extremely devout. Vishnu Chittar named her as Goda and raised her in devout surroundings. When garlands were prepared as offerings to the deity, she wore them and then put them back. When her father caught her doing this, he refrained from presenting the garland to Perumal; but the Lord appeared in his dream and instructed him to present the garland worn by Andal. With her love and bhakti, she came to be known as Andal.

Andal relived every moment of Krishna's life and composed Tiruppavai. She embarks on the fast on a Pournami day and enlists everyone to come together in *satsang* and experience true bhakti. To this end, she wakes every friend and neighbour early morning and takes them along on the journey.

Tiruppavai, the essence of the vedas, shows the way to attain Perumal's feet and emphasises the importance of *saranagati* (total surrender).

INBRIEF



INR depreciates to another all time low of ₹90.78 a dollar

The Indian rupee depreciated to a new low of ₹90.78 a dollar amid continuous foreign investment outflows and elongated period of uncertainty around tariffs. The rupee opened at ₹90.5 and depreciated to ₹90.79, before settling at a new all-time low of ₹90.78 against the U.S. dollar. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) had sold Indian equities worth ₹17,821 crore between December 1 and December 15 alone.

WPI inflation in negative for second month in Nov.

Wholesale price inflation stayed in the negative for the second consecutive month in November at (-) 0.32%, even though there was an uptick in prices of food articles like pulses and vegetables on a month-on-month basis, government data showed on Monday. Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was at (-) 1.21% in October and 2.16% in November last year. PTI

Thermal power requirement projected to grow to 307 GW

The projected thermal power requirement is expected to grow to 307 gigawatts (GW) by 2035, Union Minister for Commerce Piyush Goyal said in response to a question from *The Hindu*. Speaking to reporters he said progress was being constantly made to meet the energy requirement of the country. He informed that in the previous fiscal 7.2 GW-worth capacity was commissioned.

FM seeks House approval on supplementary demands

There is increased demand for urea from farmers because of good monsoons, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the Lok Sabha while seeking its approval for incurring additional expenditure during the ongoing financial year. Increased spending on fertilisers comprises 45%, or ₹18,525.1 crore of the additional cash outgo being sought in the latest demand for supplementary grants.

India, Mexico in talks to mitigate tariff hike impact, says Agrawal

Commerce secretary says the proposed 50% tariffs would impact $2 bn worth of exports, moots preferential trade pact for quick resolution

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI



Trade wall: The tariffs are expected to impact among other things, India's automobile, textiles, and footwear exports to Mexico. AFP

India and Mexico are discussing ways to mitigate the impact of Mexico's proposed tariff increases on countries it does not have a free trade agreement with, which includes India, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday. A quick way to resolve the issue would be through a Preferential Trade Agreement, he said, adding that the proposed tariffs would impact about $2 billion worth of exports from India to Mexico.

The Mexican government had on December 3 re-submitted to its Parliament a previous proposal to hike tariffs to 50% on imports from countries which it had accorded Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status and had not signed a trade agreement with.

"Tariffs have been increased on a most-favoured nation basis, within the World Trade Organization framework," Mr. Agrawal said at a press briefing on Monday.

"When MFN tariffs are increased, it impacts non-Free Trade Agreement and non-Bilateral Trade Agreement partners. That is how it will impact India as well."

He added that due to the tariffs being on an MFN basis and within the legal framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), India would not have recourse at the WTO to challenge the decision. However, it is engaging bilaterally with Mexico to find a way forward.

"According to the initial proposal that was supposed to come into effect from August 2026, the impact on Indian exports would have been $3.8 billion," Mr. Agrawal said.

"Subsequently, we have been engaged with them and we flagged that, though this was within their legal rights to raise these tariffs, it would not be good for trade. The final plan they have come out with will have an impact of $2 billion on India exports." The tariffs are expected to impact India's automobile, two-wheelers, auto parts, textiles, iron and steel, plastics, and leather and footwear exports to Mexico.

"The Embassy of India raised immediate concerns with Mexico's Ministry of Economy on September 30, which clarified that the measure is not directed against India and reaffirmed its commitment to the bilateral relationship," Mr. Agrawal said.

He added that, from what "he has heard", Mexico's move is primarily aimed at reducing imports from China.

"The only fast way forward is to get into a Preferential Trade Agreement, because a Free Trade Agreement would take a lot of time."

India-U.S. 'very close' to finalising initial framework deal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Rajesh Agrawal

India and the U.S. are "very close" to finalising an initial trade agreement on reciprocal tariffs, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said, although he declined from specifying a deadline for it.

On the negotiations with the European Union, Mr. Agrawal said both sides are at the final stage where all that is left are the topics where the two sides have differences, which are gradually being resolved.

"On the India-U.S. trade deal, we have done six formal rounds of negotiations where we have discussed both the full-fledged Bilateral Trade Agreement for which we signed the Terms of Reference in March and also an interim framework deal that can address the reciprocal tariffs," Mr. Agrawal said at a press conference. "We are very close on at least the framework deal which we feel can be done in a short period of time, but I would not like to put a time period to it," he added.

In the case of the negotiations with the European Union on a Free Trade Agreement, the Commerce Secretary said that the two sides are consistently narrowing down their differences.

"What happens when you reach the closure of a deal, there are a set of differences on the table where we are not able to agree," Mr. Agrawal said. "Every meeting helps us reduce those differences. Every day our teams are engaged on some issue or the other."

"I will not say there will be formal rounds from now, but there will continue to be physical and virtual meetings to take this forward towards conclusion," he explained.

On the negotiations with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which includes Russia, Mr. Agrawal said that talks are still in an early stage but that the next round of negotiations are proposed to be in February 2026.

"With New Zealand, we did the fourth round in November 2025, which was a formal round," he said. "After that some physical meetings have taken place as well as virtual."

"On the India-Chile FTA, the fourth round happened in early December and we are progressing well there," he said

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	85,213	-0.06
US Dollar	90.78	-0.32
Gold	1,37,600	2.99
Brent oil	60.41	—

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2278.90	-3.50
Adani Ports	1512.60	-10.20
Apollo Hosp	7086.50	-14.50
Asian Paints	2780.20	15.40
Axis Bank	1284.80	-1.30
Bajaj Auto	8940.00	-75.00
Bajaj Finserv	2070.50	-12.60
Bajaj Finance	1012.70	-4.60
Bharat Elec	390.75	1.30
Bharti Airtel	2069.70	-13.70
Cipla	1508.00	-9.40
Coal India	384.45	1.10
Dr Reddys Lab	1280.60	1.30
Hindustan Unilever	40.20	0.00
Eicher Motors	7121.50	-107.50
Eternal Ltd.	298.45	0.40
Grasim Ind	2821.00	-15.70
HCL Tech	1684.00	10.80
HDFC Bank	996.10	-5.40
HDFC Life	772.70	-4.80
Hindalco	847.85	-4.25
Hind Unilever	2293.50	32.90
ICICI Bank	1365.20	-0.80
IntGlobeAvi	4965.50	105.00
Infosys	1606.80	8.60
ITC	402.30	2.20
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	299.60	-1.15
JSW Steel	1114.80	-10.70
Kotak Bank	2181.30	4.70
L&T	4092.30	18.20
M&M	3608.00	-71.60
Maruti Suzuki	16415.00	-107.00
Max Healthcare	1085.40	4.10
NestleIndia	1243.50	5.20
NTPC	323.95	-1.10
ONGC	235.35	-2.67
PowerGrid Corp	262.20	-1.40
Reliance Ind	1556.20	-0.30
SBI Life	2034.90	9.00
State Bank	967.25	4.10
Shriram Finance Ltd.	855.35	7.35
Sun Pharma	1797.10	3.60
TataConsumerProduct	1157.40	8.10
Tata Steel	172.87	0.98
TCS	3230.20	9.70
Tech Mahindra	1575.40	-3.00
Titan	3866.20	-14.00
Tata Motors PV	347.15	-0.30
Trent Ltd.	4109.00	33.60
UltraTech Cement	11728.00	5.00
Wipro	261.74	1.14

India holds road shows to explore share sale in GIC

Reuters
NEW DELHI

The Indian government held road shows in London to assess investor interest for a minority stake sale in state-run General Insurance Corp of India (GIC), two government sources familiar with the matter told *Reuters*.

Lawmakers set to debate 100% FDI in insurance proposal

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

India's proposal to permit 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in insurance that figured in Budget FY26 announcements is set to be debated by lawmakers as the Bill mooting this and a clutch of a few other amendments to key insurance laws was circulated to Members of Parliament on Monday.

The aggregate holdings of equity shares by foreign investors, including portfolio investors, in an Indian insurance company may extend up to 100% of the paid-up equity capital. The investment will be subject to "such conditions and such manner as may be prescribed," per the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Bill, 2025, seeking to raise the FDI limit from 74%. The move is aimed at accelerating the growth in the insurance sector, according to the Bill to amend the Insurance Act, 1938; the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956; and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PWD CIRLCE KOTA
No. 3072 Date :- 09/12/2025

Short Term Notice Inviting Bid
(NIT No. 14/2025-26)

Bid for Construction of Various Road work in Distt. Kota (22 Works) is Invited from interested bidders up to 06.00 PM of 09.12.2025 (Tuesday). Other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rj.nic.in) of the Rajasthan State. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 2792.43 Lacs.
UBN No. (PWD2526WSOB18569), (PWD2526WSOB18570), (PWD2526WSOB18586), (PWD2526WSOB18588), (PWD2526WSOB18589), (PWD2526WSOB18590), (PWD2526WSOB18593), (PWD2526WSOB18594), (PWD2526WSOB18603), (PWD2526WSOB18604), (PWD2526WSOB18605), (PWD2526WSOB18606), (PWD2526WSOB18607), (PWD2526WSOB18611), (PWD2526WSOB18613), (PWD2526WSOB18614), (PWD2526WSOB18615), (PWD2526WSOB18617), (PWD2526WSOB18618), (PWD2526WSOB18619), (PWD2526WSOB18620), (PWD2526WSOB18622)

(J. P. Gupta)
Superintending Egnineer
P.W.D., Circle Kota
DIPR/C/18471/2025

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583
Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com

TENDER NOTICE

For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

Sl No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2025_KMML_821689_1	Fabrication, Welding, Painting and Erection of Structural housing associated with Iron Oxide Storage godown facility for ARP

Chavara 15.12.2025 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

PUNJAB STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION
SCO 74-75, BANK SQUARE, SECTOR-17B CHANDIGARH
PBX: 172-5197847, 5197846

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

PSWC invites online tenders through GeM Portal for creation of 0.65 LMT godown capacities at 2 locations in the State of Punjab for guaranteed lease of 10 years on Build, Own and Operate/Lease basis for storage requirements of FCI under two bid system 'Technical Bid' and 'Financial Bid'.
NIT (alongwith GeM Bid IDs) is available on Department's website i.e. **https://pswc.in**
PSWC reserves the right to scrap the tender at any stage without assigning any reason and PSWC will not be held liable for any costs and consequences incurred by the intending bidders.
Note: Any corrigendum(s)/Notification(s) to this Notice Inviting E-Tender shall be published Department's website & GeM Portal.

1004/12/2025-26/5938 Managing Director, PSWC

PARBHANI CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (MS)
फो.नं. ०२४५२-२२३२३२ email-pcmcparbhani@gmail.com

e-Tender Notice No.5737 for 2025-26

Parbhani City Municipal Corporation invites e-tender for the work of Underground Sewerage Project for Parbhani City Under AMRUT 2.0. The cost of tender is Rs.343,36,51,231.00/- (Excluding Tax). The detailed tender document is available at **www.mahatenders.gov.in** from 15/12/2025. The right to accept and cancel the tender has been reserved by the Commissioner, Parbhani City Municipal Corporation.

Date: 15.12.2025
-Sd/-
Dy.Commissioner
Parbhani City Municipal Corporation

NMDC Ltd.
(A Govt. Of India Enterprise) (ISO 9001 Company)
Bailadila Iron Ore Mine, Bacheli Complex
Bacheli, Distt. - South Bastar (Dantewada), CG-494553
Phone No.: 07857-230210, Mob.: 8085559082

//e-Tender Notice //

BIOM/BC/Contracts/Publication/2025-26/100/ Date: 16/12/2025
Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bacheli Complex, NMDC Ltd. invites e-bids for the following works. Intending tenderers may visit and download Tender Documents from CPP Portal or www.nmdc.co.in or http://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/nmdc/. Any corrigendum/addedum to be issued, the bidder must visit the online protal from time to time to notice the same. Corrigendum/addedum will not be published in any newspaper. The offer has to be submitted online at the given MSTC portal only till 03:30 PM and will be opened on 04:00 PM on respective last dates.

MSTC Ref. No. NMDC/ Bacheli/Contract/ 25-26/ET/		NMDC Tender. No. BIOM/BC / CONTRACTS /OTE(100) /25-26/	Short Description of Work	EMD (Rs.)	Last Date of Sub'n
1	73/541	C-427	CONSTRUCTION OF 05NOS. CLASS ROOMS AT BALAK ASHRAM DUGELI, CHATTISGARH.	29,941/-	15/01/2026
2	75/550	C-431	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE WORKS IN ALLOTTED QUARTERS AT BACHELI TOWNSHIP NORTH BLOCK FOR YEAR 2025-26	86,500/-	15/01/2026
3	76/551	C-432	MISCELLANEOUS CIVIL REPAIR WORK FOR CISF WATCH TOWERS AT MINES AND PLANT AREA, BIOM BACHELI COMPLEX	35,900/-	15/01/2026

HOD (M&S and Contracts)
BIOM, Bacheli Complex

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thycaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600, 2945646)
E-mail : edrugs.kmscl@kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616

No.KMSCL/ED/18/2025 Date : 11.12.2025

E-TENDER NOTICE

Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers / loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the procurement of following categories of drugs / supplies for the year 2026-27.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	Category	No. of Items
1.	KMSCL/ED/I&II/RC/2025/027 dtd. 11.12.2025	Drugs	419
2.	KMSCL/ED/III-VIII/RC/2025/028 dtd. 11.12.2025	Consumables & Surgical items	163
3.	KMSCL/ED/SPL/RC/2025/029 dtd. 11.12.2025	Specialty Drugs	153
4.	KMSCL/ED/ACD/RC/2025/030 dtd. 11.12.2025	Anti Cancer Drugs	52

Schedule of dates

	Date	Time
Pre-Tender meeting	Will be published in the official website of the Corporation	
Last date of online uploading of tenders	07.01.2026	05.00pm.
Date of technical bid opening	12.01.2026	11.00 am.

Tenders shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.**
(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

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HONG KONG

Jimmy Lai convicted in landmark national security trial in Hong Kong



AFP

Jimmy Lai, the 78-year-old pro-democracy former Hong Kong media mogul and outspoken critic of Beijing, was convicted in a landmark national security trial in the city's court on Monday, which could send him to prison for the rest of his life. He pleaded not guilty to all charges. AP

SANTIAGO

Victory for Kast gives Chile its most right-wing President in 35 years



REUTERS

Chile's ultra-conservative former lawmaker José Antonio Kast secured a stunning victory with 58.2% of the votes in the presidential election on Sunday, defeating the candidate of the centre-left governing coalition and setting the stage for the country's most right-wing government in 35 years of democracy. AP

RAMALLAH/JERUSALEM

Israeli forces kill Palestinian teen in West Bank, says Health Ministry



AP

The Israeli military shot dead Ammar Yaser Sabbah, a 16-year-old Palestinian during a raid on the town of Tuqu' on Monday, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. The boy was shot after Israeli military forces gathered in the centre of town late on Monday and began firing "indiscriminately", according to a report. REUTERS

MOSCOW

Russia seeks $230 bn in damages from Belgium's Euroclear: court



AP

Russia's central bank has filed a lawsuit seeking 18.2 trillion roubles ($229.36 billion) in damages from Belgian central securities depository Euroclear, a Moscow court said on Monday. Euroclear holds most of the assets that were frozen by the European Union after Russia launched military action in Ukraine. REUTERS

Father-son duo behind Australia shooting that killed 15, say police

Home Minister Tony Burke said the father arrived in Australia in 1998 on a student visa, while his son is an Australian-born citizen; the suspects were identified as Sajid Akram and Naveed Akram; PM Albanese vows to overhaul gun control rules

Reuters
Associated Press
SYDNEY

Two alleged gunmen who killed 15 people at a Jewish celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach were a father and son, the police said on Monday, as Australia began mourning victims of its worst gun violence in almost 30 years. The father, a 50-year-old, was killed at the scene, taking the number of dead to 16, while his 24-year-old son was in a critical condition in hospital, the police said at a press conference on Monday. The father and son were identified as Sajid Akram and Naveed Akram, respectively, by state broadcaster ABC and other local media outlets.



Mourners gather at a tribute at the Bondi Pavillion in memory of the victims of a shooting at Bondi Beach in Sydney on Monday. AFP

Officials have described Sunday's shooting as a targeted anti-Semitic attack.

Forty people remain in hospital following the attack, the police said. The victims were aged between 10 and 87. Witnesses said the attack at the famed beach, which was packed on a hot evening, lasted about 10 minutes, sending hundreds of people scattering along the sand and into nearby streets.

The police said around 1,000 people had attended the targeted Hanukkah event, which was held in a small park off the beach. A bystander captured on video tackling and disarming an armed man during the attack has been hailed as a hero whose actions saved lives. 7News Australia named him as Ahmed al Ahmed, citing a relative, who said the 43-year-old fruit shop owner had been shot twice and had undergone surgery.

Police did not release the shooters' names, but said the father had held a firearms licence since 2015 and had six licensed weapons. Home Minister Tony Burke said the father arrived in Australia in 1998 on a student visa, while his son is an Australian-born citizen. Police did not provide details about the firearms, but videos from the scene showed the men firing what appeared to be a bolt-action rifle and a shotgun.

Australian leaders promised on Monday to immediately overhaul already-tough gun control laws.

Among the new measures proposed would be a limit on the number of guns someone can own and a review of licences held over time. Those and other actions would represent a significant update to the landmark national firearms agreement, which virtually banned rapid-fire rifles after a gunman killed 35 people in Tasmania in 1996.

"The government is prepared to take whatever action is necessary. Included in that is the need for tougher gun laws," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said.

Ukraine resists U.S. push to cede Donbas, says official

Agence France-Presse
BERLIN

U.S. negotiators still want Ukraine to cede control of the eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions as a condition for peace talks with Russia, an official briefed on the discussions said on Monday.

Kyiv is pushing back against Washington's demand that it pull troops from the two regions collectively known as Donbas, which Russia has been unable to capture since invading in February 2022.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "wants territory," the official said, adding the United States was demanding that Ukraine "withdraw" from the regions and that Kyiv was refusing.

"It's a bit striking that the Americans are taking the Russians' position on this issue," the official added.

Moscow controls almost all of the Luhansk region and about 80% of the Donetsk region, according to the U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War.



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

A poll by published on Monday by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) based on 550 responses showed that 75% of Ukrainians oppose giving up Donbas.

Talks to end the war between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and U.S. envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner continued for a second day in Berlin on Monday.

Ukraine's NATO ambitions, the future of the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, and elections were also discussed, the official said.

The official refuted German media reporting that Ukraine had dropped its bid to join NATO during the Berlin talks: "That part about NATO is not true," the source said.

"They aren't providing details on security guarantees yet; that's one of the issues Ukraine is trying to clarify. If not NATO, then what? Without an answer to that, there can be no answer about NATO," the source said.

Commenting on U.S. President Donald Trump's calls to hold elections, the official said that "we can hold elections if they insist. But that's a security issue."

"Are the Americans ready to pressure Mr. Putin so that he agrees to a ceasefire? Because so far he has been refusing it."

When it comes to the Zaporizhzhia, "Overall, the concept is that, in one form or another, America could take part in managing the plant, restoration, and electricity supply," the official said about Europe's largest nuclear plant, under Moscow's control.

The source added that the proposal for a general amnesty for all parties involved in the war was dropped from the peace plan.

Reiner's son arrested after director, wife found dead

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES

Rob Reiner's younger son, Nick Reiner, was in custody on Monday after being booked for what investigators believe was the fatal stabbing of the director-actor and his wife at their Los Angeles home a day earlier, authorities said.

It was not immediately clear what charges Nick Reiner, 32, would face. Online records show he remained in jail on Monday. Police Chief Jim McDonnell said he is being held on $4 million bail.

Rob and Michele Singer Reiner were found dead on Sunday at their home in Los Angeles, and investigators believe they suffered stab wounds, an official said. He confirmed that Nick Reiner was being held but could not publicly discuss the details.

The Los Angeles Fire Department said it responded to a medical aid request shortly after 3.30 p.m. and found a 78-year-old man and 68-year-old woman dead inside. Reiner turned 78 in March.

Detectives with the Robbery Homicide Division were investigating an "apparent homicide" at Reiner's home, said Capt. Mike Bland with the Los Angeles Police Department.



Gone too soon: Rob Reiner met his wife Michele while he was directing *When Harry Met Sally*. AP

Prolific director

Reiner was long one of the most prolific directors in Hollywood, and his work included some of the most memorable movies of the 1980s and 1990s, including *This is Spinal Tap*, *A Few Good Men*, *When Harry Met Sally* and *The Princess Bride*.

His role as Meathead in Norman Lear's 1970s TV classic *All in the Family*, as a liberal foil to O'Connor's Archie Bunker, catapulted him to fame and won him two Emmy Awards.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass called it a devastating loss for the city.

"Rob Reiner's contributions reverberate throughout American culture and society, and he has improved countless lives through his creative work and advocacy fighting for social and economic justice," Ms. Bass said in a statement.

"An acclaimed actor, director, producer, writer, and political activist, he always used his gifts in service of others."

The son of comedy legend Carl Reiner, Rob Reiner was married to photographer Michele Singer Reiner since 1989. The two met while he was directing *When Harry Met Sally* and have three children together.

'Thailand's air strikes hit home province of heritage temples'

Agence France-Presse
PHNOM PENH

Renewed fighting between neighbours has killed at least 28 people and displaced 8 lakh

Cambodia accused Thailand on Monday of striking deep inside its territory, bombing areas less than a two-hour drive from the country's main tourist draw, the centuries-old Angkor temples, in a reignited border conflict.

Renewed fighting between the Southeast Asian neighbours this month has killed at least 28 people, including soldiers and civilians, and displaced around 8 lakh people, officials said.

Cambodia, which is outgunned and outspent by Thailand's military, said Thai forces had expanded their attack "deep into" Cambodian territory on Monday morning.

Cambodia's Defence Ministry said in a statement that a Thai fighter jet had bombed "near a displaced civilians camp in the area of Srei Snam district, Siem Reap province".

Information Minister Neth Pheaktra said it was the first time during the renewed clashes that Thailand's military had bombed areas of Siem Reap province, the home of the Angkor temple complex and the UNESCO heritage site Angkor Wat.

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Central Coalfields Limited
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(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

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THE HINDU GROUP
THE HINDU
REWIND 2025
TRIVIA QUIZ
DAY 11

1. What historic change did Wimbledon implement in 2025 for the first time in its 148-year history?
2. Which Karnataka-based writer won the 2025 International Booker Prize for her short story collection Heart Lamp, translated from Kannada into English by Deepa Bhasti?
3. Which ancient Buddhist relics, taken during the colonial period, were recently brought back to India after Sotheby's cancelled their Hong Kong auction?

*T&C apply.

Scan QR code or visit
bit.ly/Rewind2024TriviaQuiz
take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz:
1. Delhi Legislative Assembly
2. Aryabhata
3. Integral Coach Factory, Chennai

Yesterday's Winners:
1. M. Purusothaman, Chennai | 2. Nishtha Tiwari, New Delhi | 3. Ajita Thakur, Kanpur

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IN & OUT

Shahbaz replaces Axar for the remaining two T20Is against SA



FILE PHOTO

Axar Patel was on Monday ruled out of the remaining two T20Is against South Africa due to illness with Shahbaz Ahmed named as his replacement. Axar had missed the third T20I in Dharamshala on Sunday. "He (Axar) is with the team in Lucknow where he will be further medically assessed," a BCCI statement said.

WELL-EARNED RECOGNITION

Shafali, Harmer named ICC Players of the Month for Nov.



FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

Shafali Verma's match-winning knock in Women's World Cup final and Simon Harmer's performance in the two Tests against India (17 wickets) earn them their maiden ICC 'Player of The Month' award for November. Shafali beat Thipatcha Putthawong and Esha Oza while Harmer edged out Taijul Islam and Mohammad Nawazto.

SOLE CHANGE

Ashes: Tongue comes in for Atkinson in Adelaide Test



FILE PHOTO

Gus Atkinson was dropped with Josh Tongue replacing him for the third Ashes Test against Australia in Adelaide on Wednesday as the tourists battle to keep the series alive. It was England's lone change in a must-win match, with off-spinning all-rounder Will Jacks keeping his place ahead of Shoaib Bashir.

COUNTDOWN BEGINS

Under-19 Men's World Cup 2026 Trophy unveiled in Harare



ICC

The countdown to the ICC U-19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2026 officially began as Zimbabwe unveiled the trophy in Harare. Co-hosted by Zimbabwe and Namibia, the tournament will run from January 15 to February 6 and feature 16 teams, including debutant Tanzania.

Lights, Camera, Auction – IPL 2026 edition

Australia all-rounder Green is expected to be one of the costliest buys; KKR (₹64.30 crore) and CSK (₹43.40 crore) will have a busy day shopping

Amol Karhadkar
ABU DHABI

The Etihad Arena – adjacent to the picturesque Yas Marina Formula One circuit – was illuminated by football superstar Cristiano Ronaldo's presence only last week.

On Tuesday, the iconic venue will once again be at the centre of global sporting attention when franchises splurge lakhs and crores at the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) Player Auction.

Since the IPL's inception in 2008, the auction has evolved into a spectacle that is followed as keenly as – if not more than – the two-and-a-half months of on-field action that follows in the Indian summer.

Palpable anticipation

Despite divided opinion on whether the auction has lost some of its sheen with stalwarts like Andre Russell, Glenn Maxwell and Faf du Plessis either retiring from or opting out of the league, anticipation has been palpable ever since franchise think-tanks began arriving in the United Arab Emirates over the past few days.

Cameron Green is expected to be one of the costliest buys, particularly after the Australia all-rounder confirmed his availability to bowl despite being listed as a batter in the opening set.

Sri Lanka pacer Matheesha Pathirana, who was released by Chennai Super Kings, could also trigger a bidding war, notwithstanding concerns over his fitness.

Among Indian players, Venkatesh Iyer and Ravi Bishnoi – both released after commanding hefty sums last season – will be hoping to inch closer to their previous pay cheques of ₹23.75 crore and ₹11 crore, respectively.

While Mumbai Indians, with the smallest purse (₹2.75 crore), and Punjab Kings, with the fewest slots to fill (four), are likely to play a relatively subdued role, the spotlight is expected to remain on Kolkata Knight Riders and CSK.

Together, the two franchises account for more than 40% of the total auction purse and have opted for significant overhauls after underwhelming IPL 2025 campaigns.

Both could target Green and Venkatesh, though their choices among overseas pacers will be closely watched.

CSK, meanwhile, is also in the market for a proven Indian spinner.

Another intriguing subplot is whether Prithvi Shaw finds a second lease of life after going unsold at last year's mega auction. Shaw is understood to have reached out to multiple franchises, with team owners weighing the balance between his undeniable talent and disciplinary concerns.

Most franchise representatives will participate via teleconference, with Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer set to be the most prominent player present inside the auction room.

The A(u)ction Plan

The franchises are expected to go hammer and tongs at the mini-auction for IPL 2026 to be held in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday

MAXIMUM SLOTS AVAILABLE	TOTAL PURSE AVAILABLE	TOTAL PLAYERS SHORTLISTED
77 (46 Indian, 31 overseas)	₹237.55 crore	369 (251 Indian, 118 overseas)

TATA IPL AUCTION 2026

CAPPED PLAYERS TO WATCH OUT FOR: Cameron Green, Venkatesh Iyer, Matheesha Pathirana, Liam Livingstone, Ravi Bishnoi (base price: 2 crore for all)

BREAKING IT UP

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Remaining purse: ₹43.40 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **9** (4 overseas)

DELHI CAPITALS
Remaining purse: ₹21.80 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **8** (5 overseas)

GUJARAT TITANS
Remaining purse: ₹12.90 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **5** (4 overseas)

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS
Remaining purse: ₹64.30 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **13** (6 overseas)

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Remaining purse: ₹22.95 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **6** (4 overseas)

MUMBAI INDIANS
Remaining purse: ₹2.75 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **5** (1 overseas)

PUNJAB KINGS
Remaining purse: ₹11.50 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **4** (2 overseas)

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Remaining purse: ₹16.05 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **9** (1 overseas)

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU
Remaining purse: ₹16.40 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **8** (2 overseas)

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Remaining purse: ₹25.50 crore
■ Maximum slots remaining: **10** (2 overseas)



Overseas players won't be paid more than ₹18 crore

Amol Karhadkar
ABU DHABI



Green. FILE PHOTO

Mini-auctions ahead of an Indian Premier League (IPL) season have often produced record bids, particularly for overseas cricketers. In a move aimed at preserving the value of Indian players – and discouraging foreign stars from targeting mini-auctions for inflated paydays – the IPL authorities have introduced a rule that caps the amount an overseas player can earn at a mini-auction.

As a result, Cameron Green – or any other overseas cricketer – will not be paid more than ₹18 crore at the auction at the Etihad Arena on Tuesday, irrespective of the final bid amount.

Franchises such as Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai Super Kings, who possess the largest purses, are free to bid beyond that figure. However, the player's take-home amount will be restricted to ₹18 crore. The provision was communicated to franchises ahead of last year's mega auction in a document titled 'IPL Player Regulations 2025-27: Key Points'.

"Any overseas player's auction fee at a small auction will be the lower of the highest retention price of ₹18 crore or the highest auction price at the Big Auction," the document states. It further clarifies that while the auction will continue until the player is sold and the full bid will be deducted from the franchise's purse, any incremental amount above ₹18 crore will be deposited with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and utilised for players' welfare.

The mechanics of the rule are straightforward. In the 2025 mega auction, Rishabh Pant went to Lucknow Super Giants for ₹27 crore. Should Green – or any other overseas player – attract a similar bid at the mini-auction, the player would receive ₹18 crore, while the remaining ₹9 crore would be transferred to the BCCI, with the franchise's purse reduced by the full ₹27 crore.

Uncapped Indians to watch out for

Amol Karhadkar
ABU DHABI



Auqib.
FILE PHOTO: DEBASISH BHADURI

Here's a look at the uncapped Indian players to watch out for in the IPL mini-auction on Tuesday.

Prashant Veer
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 50)

The Uttar Pradesh all-rounder, a big-hitting left-hander who also bowls orthodox spin, has been a consistent performer and is expected to draw interest from multiple franchises. Don't be surprised if the 20-year-old fetches an eight-figure bid.

Ravi Singh
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 134)

The 24-year-old left-handed wicketkeeper-batter has emerged as a T20 find for Railways. His match-winning knock against Vidarbha in the SMAT league stage was closely watched by several scouts. With his finishing ability and wicketkeeping skills, Ravi is being considered as a valuable back-up option.

Naman Tiwari
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 62)

An uncapped left-arm pacer who consistently clocks 140 kph, Tiwari has impressed with his pace and control. It remains to be seen whether the interest converts into a significant bid.

Auqib Nabi
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 41)

A seasoned swing bowler on the domestic circuit, Auqib has underlined his value in T20 cricket with a steady stream of wickets in the SMAT. Previously overlooked due to questions over pace and effectiveness under lights, Tuesday could offer the 29-year-old a change in fortunes.

Yashvardhan Dalal
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 131)

A hard-hitting top-order batter and wicketkeeper, Yashvardhan shot into the spotlight last season after smashing 400 in a Col. C.K. Nayudu (U-23) Trophy knockout tie for Haryana against Mumbai. Having carried that form into the SMAT, he will be hoping to attract serious attention at the auction.

Krains Fuletra
(Base price: ₹30 lakh | Auction Serial No. 275)

A specialist left-arm wrist-spinner, who consistently lands the ball in challenging areas, Krains has drawn interest from multiple franchises. Spotted during the Saurashtra Premier League, his potential was evident early, and while Sunrisers Hyderabad has tracked him closely, competition at the auction table is expected.

Arshdeep-led Indian attack holds fort

SA IN INDIA

Ashwin Achal
DHARAMSHALA



Seizing the initiative: Arshdeep and Harshit rocked the South African top-order. R.V. MOORTHY

A wayward spell in the second T20I at New Chandigarh, which included a worrying nine wides, turned out to be a blip. The best of Arshdeep Singh was back on view on Sunday, setting the tone for a dominant Indian win.

Arshdeep was near unplayable in the third T20I here, landing his seamers on a dime.

Under helpful conditions at the picturesque HPCA Stadium, the left-arm pacer trapped Reeza Hendricks in front of the wicket in the first over and then kept Aiden Markram and Dewald Brevis guessing with deliveries which darted away from a good length.

Perfect partner

Arshdeep found the ideal new-ball partner in Harshit Rana.

Harshit's heavy ball kept the South Africans on the back foot, and when he pitched one up to Brevis, the feet went nowhere and an airy drive was chopped back onto the stumps.

Arshdeep and Harshit bowled three overs each to complete a tight Power-Play, leaving the Proteas shackled on 25 for three.

Arshdeep's reputation as a death-over specialist came to the fore when he deceived Markram in the 19th over. Markram, who in the previous over had hit Harshit for two sixes, could not get into a good power stance when Arshdeep cleverly changed the line to well outside off. Arshdeep and Harshit's good show made up for the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, who returned home for personal reasons.

Banter with Morkel

The 26-year-old Arshdeep indulged in some banter with bowling coach Morne Morkel, who received unwanted attention during Arshdeep's poor performance at New Chandigarh.

"After the last game, he (Morkel) told me that I gave him a lot of screen time. This is because every time I bowled a wide, the television cameras turned to the bowling coach, giving the impression that he gave me wrong plans or he did not have practice sessions with me. So I would like to apologise to Morne. I'll try to minimise his screen time from now on," Arshdeep told *bcci.tv*.

Harshit, whose selection in the Indian team is often questioned by pundits, made the most of his chance. Playing his first game of the series, Harshit reaped the rewards of Arshdeep creating pressure at the other end.

Varun Chakaravarthy served another reminder of his class. The top-ranked T20I bowler in the world, Varun stuck to his stump-to-stump formula to great effect.

With Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube and Kuldeep Yadav chipping in with wickets, it was a perfect night out for the Indian bowling attack.

While the side awaits the return of spearhead Bumrah, this crew is more than capable of holding fort.

Mumba Masters pip American Gambits

GCL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI



The right moves: Mamedyarov's win over Rapport proved crucial for Mumba Masters. GCL

There is hardly any home advantage in chess, but upGrad Mumba Masters is making it seem there is. The Masters posted a second successive win at the Global Chess League, overcoming Fyers American Gambits 9-7 at the Royal Opera House here on Monday.

The team may not have been as dominating as it was in the 17-4 demolition of Ganges Grandmasters on the opening day, but in these early days, they are looking good. The win in the second round was impressive enough, despite the defeat of Maxime Vachier-Lagrave to Hikaru Nakamura on the top board.

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov's win against Richard Rapport proved crucial. With white pieces, the Azerbaijan player prevailed over his Hungarian rival in 37 moves. Mamedyarov built a potent attack on the queen-side, making use of some weak moves from black, who gave up when checkmate wasn't far away.

There was also an important win for Baridya Daneshvar, who stunned the reigning World rapid champion Volodar Murzin. All the other games in the match were drawn.

Firouzja beats Gukesh

Triveni Continental Kings, the winner of the league's both editions so far, also posted a second straight win. The champion was too good for PBG Alaskan Knights, triumphing 15-3, with Alireza Firouzja leading from the front yet again, as he turned the tables on the World champion D. Gukesh. There were also wins for Zhu Jiner, the women's World No. 2, and MarcAndria Maurizzi.

Sindarov shines

The day also saw Ganges Grandmasters bounce back, with a 13-7 victory against Alpine SG Pipers. The match produced five decisive results and just one draw.

Javokhir Sindarov, fresh from his recent victory at the World Cup in Goa, defeated R. Praggnanandhaa, Polina Shuvalova surprised the women's World No. 1 Hou Yifan and Raunak Sadhwani beat Leon Mendonca in an all-Indian battle.

The results: Second round:
upGrad Mumba Masters bt Fyers American Gambits 9-7
(Maxime Vachier-Lagrave lost to Hikaru Nakamura; Wesley So drew with Vladislav Artemiev; Shakhriyar Mamedyarov bt Richard Rapport; Koneru Humpy drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva; D. Harika drew with Teodora Injac; Baridya Daneshvar bt Volodar Murzin.
Alpine SG Pipers lost to Ganges Grandmaster 7-13
(Fabiano Caruana bt Viswanathan Anand; Anish Giri drew with Vincent Keymer; R. Praggnanandhaa lost to Javokhir Sindarov; Hou Yifan lost to Polina Shuvalova; Nino Batsiashvili bt Stavroula Tsolakidou; Leon Mendonca lost to Raunak Sadhwani).
PBG Alaskan Knights lost to Triveni Continental Kings 3-15
(D. Gukesh lost to Alireza Firouzja; Arjun Erigaisi drew with Wei Yi; Leinier Dominquez drew with Vidit Gujrathi; Kateryna Lagno lost to Zhu Jiner; Sarasadat Khademalsharieh drew with Alexandra Kosteniuk; Daniel Dardha lost to MarcAndria Maurizzi)
(The writer is in Mumbai at the invitation of Tech Mahindra).

INBRIEF



Jay Shah meets Messi, presents WC ticket, jerseys

ICC president Jay Shah, who interacted with Lionel Messi during his visit to New Delhi, extended an invitation to the Argentine superstar for the T20 World Cup to be held in India next year and handed over a ticket for the India-USA match. Shah also gave Messi, Luis Suarez and Rodrigo de Paul customised Team India jerseys and presented the World Cup winner with an autographed bat.



Chhetri shares an emotional post on meeting with Messi

Indian football great Sunil Chhetri shared a heart-warming post on Instagram, describing his emotions after meeting Lionel Messi during his GOAT India Tour. "I almost didn't make the trip to Mumbai, till the fan in me rebelled and went anyway. Turned out, meeting the man who makes me very happy, and whose art is my antidote for all the times I am sad, was exactly what I needed. To be able to express my gratitude to Leo Messi in person for everything that he has done for our sport, felt like both – a dream and a duty," the post read.

Manu, Simranpreet clinch 25m pistol gold

Manu Bhaker and Simranpreet Kaur Brar clinched the senior and junior women's 25m pistol titles respectively at the National shooting championships in New Delhi on Monday. Manu shot 36 in the final to secure the gold, finishing four points clear of T.S. Divya of Karnataka. Anjali Choudhary (28) bagged the bronze. Simranpreet shot 39 to claim the gold in junior women's 25m pistol event. D. Pranavi won silver, while Palak of Haryana took the bronze.



Delhi Aces clinches maiden Tennis Premier League title

GS Delhi Aces registered a 51-36 win over Yash Mumbai Eagles to clinch its maiden Tennis Premier League title in Ahmedabad on Sunday. Belgian Sofia Costoulas beat Riya Bhatia 18-7 in the women's singles. Aces continued the momentum in mixed doubles with Costoulas and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan getting past Riya and Niki Poonacha 16-9. The men's singles saw Eagles' Damir Dzumhur down Billy Harris 16-9. However, Harris and Jeevan beat Poonacha and Dzumhur 8-4 in the men's doubles to seal the triumph.

IIM-A to conduct assessment studies for 2030 CWG

Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad has been asked to conduct the economic, social and environment impact assessment studies for multi-sport events in the country, including the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY, TUESDAY'S MATCHES

Madhya Pradesh vs Punjab (9 a.m.), Mumbai vs Rajasthan (11 a.m.), Andhra vs Jharkhand (1.30 p.m.), Hyderabad vs Haryana (4.30 p.m.).

LIVE TELECAST

SMAT: JioHotstar, 9, 11.30 a.m. 1.30 & 4.30 p.m.

Men's U-19 Asia Cup: India vs Malaysia, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 10.30 a.m.; Pakistan vs UAE, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 10.30 a.m.

IPL Auction: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 2.30 p.m.

The Ashes: 3rd Test, day 1, Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 5 a.m. (Wednesday)

Messi mania concludes on a bright note

The Argentine superstar, along with Suarez and De Paul, spends around 40 minutes at the Arun Jaitley Stadium; the World Cup-winner plays with academy trainees, kicks footballs into the stands, acknowledges the fans and gives away the trophy to the winners of the exhibition match

GOAT TOUR

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

What began in the most shambolic way in a football-crazy city ended the best way it could, in the most unexpected of venues, as Lionel Messi wrapped up his three-day GOAT India Tour at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here on Monday with kids and fans and barely any celebrity presence.



Magician at work: Messi shows off his skill during a clinic with budding talent on Monday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Big on smiles

For a city that thrives on power and visibility, Messi's final stop on the tour was big on smiles and short on display of VIP culture as the Argentine, accompanied by compatriots and Inter Miami teammates Luis Suarez and Rodrigo De Paul, spent around 40 minutes walking around the ground, meeting trainees from a football academy and kicking the ball with kids on two mini fields created in the cricket ground with a massive poster in the middle.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta entered only at the end, accompanied by ICC president Jay Shah.

The duo was joined by Bhaichung Bhutia and his family and left unobtrusively, ensuring the spotlight remained on the players.

Former India star Aditi Chauhan was also present, getting her jersey signed by the three international stars.

Patiently waiting

The footballers were expected to leave Mumbai at 9.15 a.m. but were delayed by adverse weather conditions, reaching Delhi only around 2.15 p.m.

The 22,000 strong crowd had no complaints – people had been lining up since 9 a.m. and were willing to wait, dressed in jerseys belonging to Messi's clubs, both FC Barcelona and Miami, and cheering his name.

The trio reached the stadium at 4.30 p.m. after an exclusive paid meet-and-greet at a five-star hotel, by which time a 30-minute exhibition match between Celebrity All Stars and Minerva All Stars was won by the latter 6-0.

They got clicked with both teams, the academy kids beaming at meeting their idols, walked around the ground kicking footballs into the stands and acknowledging the fans with only the security cordon and broadcasters around.

Carrying the love

They then proceeded for a short clinic with two groups of 15 kids each on either field before handing over the trophy to the winners of the exhibition match.

"We carry all this love with us, and we will definitely return, hopefully one day to play a match or on another occasion," Messi said in a short speech in Spanish before wrapping up.

I really felt my career wouldn't be the same after pregnancy: Fraser-Pryce

ATHLETICS

Jonathan Selvaraj
PUNE

With 26 medals at the world level, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce is perhaps the most accomplished female sprinter. The 38-year-old called time on her career earlier this year after competing for the final time at the 2025 World Championships in Tokyo, where she won silver in the women's 4x100m.

In India last week to flag off the Bajaj Pune Marathon, she spoke to *Sportstar* about life after retirement and what she expects from her son when he gets older.



Legendspeak: Fraser-Pryce says Jamaica is probably the greatest sprint nation. EMMANUAL YOGINI

You started your career in Waterhouse (a poor neighbourhood of Kingston, Jamaica) and have gone on to become probably the greatest of all time. What is the moment that seems the most unreal to you?

It has to be when I came back after becoming a mother and winning the World Championships in Doha. I remember that when I got pregnant, I was still training at the time. I was nervous and genuinely scared. I didn't say it, but I really felt that my career would not be the same after my pregnancy. I never thought I would have my son, come back and still win. Then, when I turned 35, that was another time when people said my career was over. And then I went on to run the fastest time I ever did in my whole career. I won a World championship and ran 10.60 over the season. That blew my mind because it was an accomplishment that came in the face of everything I had believed.

Your son is clearly a very important part of your life. What's something you'd like him to know when he gets older?

I think what's going to be really important for him is to trust his instinct. If you really have faith and the right support, anything is possible. That's really what my career has been – pairing faith with talent and making those things work. Sometimes people have the talent but lack faith, or they might lack support. It's important to have the right support, the right team and the right people in your corner.

If you have that, and if you work hard and remain consistent, driven and focused, then, if my career is an example, you will have a lot of wins. You will have losses as well, but it's what you do with those losses that matters.

What makes Jamaica so special in track and field?

We are probably the greatest track and field, or sprint, nation. We have a rich heritage, and it is that heritage we use as our stepping stone. If we see our fellow countrymen and women excelling with limited resources, it tells us that within our DNA we too are meant to rise. We are meant to overcome challenges and succeed.

Nakamura starts prepping up for Candidates, eyes challenger spot

CHESS

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

The Candidates tournament is more than three months away, but Hikaru Nakamura has already started preparing for it. And the World No. 2 is determined to train harder than he did in the past for the tournament that decides the challenger for the World chess champion.

He is so focussed, he is even going to sacrifice some of his streaming. With more than three million subscribers on YouTube he is one of the world's most popular chess streamers.

He even put out content from here after the first round of the Global Chess League, in which he is the Icon player of the American Gambits.

He titled the video, 'I am a daddy and I played the World champ," referring to his drawn game with D. Gukesh of PBG Alaskan Knights.

"I would say I have already started preparing for the Candidates at this point in time," Nakamura said, shortly after beating Maxime Vachier-Lagrave on the top board in the match against upGrad Mumba Masters.



In the future: Nakamura believes that India will soon become the centre for world chess. GCL

"It actually has very little to do with having a child, but what I would say is that there are a couple of very big differences. When I look at the candidates in 2022 or 2024, I was still streaming a lot more than I currently am."

He feels it is going to be an exciting Candidates, to be held in Cyprus in March to April next year. "I am looking forward to it," he said. "It should be a great event, and it will be really exciting with all the strong players competing."

This is Nakamura's second Global Chess League. "It is great to see the event happening here in India," he said.

"I didn't play the first edition in Dubai, which I didn't compete in. I played in London last year, and I was always wondering why it hadn't been held in India yet. I think that India, without a doubt, if I look into the future beyond the next couple of years, is definitely going to be the hub or the centre of world chess."

(The writer is in Mumbai at the invitation of Tech Mahindra)

Ojas and Aditi bag compound gold



Ojas.



Aditi.

ARCHERY

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

Maharashtra's Ojas Pravin Deotale brought his A-game to the Senior National Archery Championship here at the Hyderabad Public School, beating Delhi's Abhishek Verma to win gold in the men's individual compound event.

Ojas stayed focused throughout his battle with veteran Abhishek, the pair going toe-to-toe at every step of the way. Cheered on by fellow archers and coaches from all teams, they did not drop a single point after five rounds, finishing with 150 points apiece.

In the shootout, Abhishek faltered by the smallest of margins – 28 points to Ojas' 30 – to miss the podium top step.

In the bronze-medal clash, Sahil Rajesh Jadhav (RPSB) beat Mohit Dagar (Haryana) 149-145.

In women's individual compound event, Aditi Swami (Maharashtra) and Sakshi Chaudhary (Uttar Pradesh) were locked in a closely fought contest for the gold. Aditi bagged a slew of 10s in the first three rounds, while Sakshi dropped three points.

Aditi, however, gave Sakshi an opening in the fourth round, with the deficit narrowing to a single point. Each managed 29 points in the final round, with Aditi relieved to come out on top (146-145).

Other results:

Men's Team: Gold: Abhishek Verma, Priyansh, Aman Saini and Ritik Chahal (Delhi, 237(30)); **Silver:** Ojas Pravin Deotale, Mihir Nitin Apar, Prathamesh Samadhan Jawkar and Prathamesh Balachandra Fuhe (Maharashtra, 237(29)). **Bronze:** Kushal Dalal, Rishab Yadav, Mohit Dagar, Ayush Rao (Haryana, 237).

Women's Team: Gold: Samaina Basumatary, Anshu, Raj Kaur and Sukhpreet Kaur (AIPSCB, 232); **Silver:** Pragati, Kumud Saini, Akshita and Drishti (Delhi, 228); **Bronze:** Aditi Gopichand Swami, Madhura Dhamangaonkar, Pathan Mahek Jakirkhan and Tejal Rajendra Salve (Maharashtra, 230).

Mixed Team: Gold: Abhijot Singh and Avneet Kaur, (Punjab, 158); **Silver:** Ojas Pravin Deotale and Aditi Gopichand Swami (Maharashtra, 156). **Bronze:** Sahil Rajesh Jadhav and Jasveer Kaur (RSPB, 154).



Ajaz Patel. FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

NZ calls up Ajaz for third WI Test

Agence France-Presse
WELLINGTON

New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel is in line to play his first Test match in more than a year after being recalled ahead of the third Test against the West Indies, beginning in Mount Maunganui on Thursday.

The 37-year-old has not played a Test in New Zealand since February 2020.

The squad:

Tom Latham (Capt.), Tom Blundell (wk), Michael Bracewell, Kristian Clarke, Devon Conway, Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes, Daryl Mitchell, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Michael Rae, Rachin Ravindra, Kane Williamson and Will Young.

Real beats Alaves; Inter edges Genoa, goes top

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies
MADRID

Kylian Mbappe led Real Madrid to a 2-1 win at Alaves in LaLiga on Sunday. Real moved back within four points of Barcelona.

In Serie A, Inter Milan moved to the top with a 2-1 victory at Genoa.

Inter has a one-point lead over AC Milan.

Top results: Premier League: Brentford 1 (Henderson 70) drew with Leeds 1 (Calvert-Lewin 82). **LaLiga:** Alaves 1 (Vicente 68) lost to Real Madrid 2 (Mbappe 24, Rodrygo 76). **Serie A:** Genoa 1 (Vitinha 68) lost to Inter Milan 2 (Bisseck 6, Martinez 38); Bologna 0 lost to Juventus 1 (Cabal 64). **Bundesliga:** Bayern Munich 2 (Karl 29, Kane 87-pen) drew with Mainz 2 (Potulski 45+2, Lee 67).



Mbappe. REUTERS

‘Tough situations are like solving puzzles’



After being out of action from November 2023 to February 2025, Digvijay is finding his feet again. With two titles and a final appearance in his last three ITF tournaments, the 25-year-old from Haryana has finished the season on a high. He is now hoping that 2026 will be fruitful and he can quickly rise up from his current ranking of 600

The goal for this year was to play well, be in better competitive shape, and be stronger physically. I will need more strength and power to compete well in the Challengers

SANDEEP SAXENA

Kamesh Srinivasan

It has been an unforgettable end to the season for Digvijay Pratap Singh. The 25-year-old Chandigarh lad won two titles from three finals in the three back-to-back ITF men’s tournaments in Bhubaneswar, Bhopal and Gwalior.

For someone who had missed about 500 days of tennis owing to ill-health, Digvijay has really rebuilt his tennis career in superb fashion.

Defining moment

The defining moment in the three tournaments was when Digvijay was staring at defeat at 2-5 in the third set against the top seed Aryan Shah in the semifinals in Gwalior.

Recovery from that position against the 20-year-old Aryan, who was strong with his game and movement, was slim. But Digvijay survived five match-points, and things opened up.

“It was the toughest match in three weeks,” said Digvijay, who trains at Roundglass and is coached by Aditya Sachdeva. “My experience in the past weeks kept me calm and helped play the match without worrying about the result. When you do that, you tend to play the best.”

“When he [Aryan] took one step backward, I was taking two steps forward. Competition brings out the best. This level of success is unmatched in my career so far. I had never done well in two consecutive weeks, let alone three weeks,” Digvijay pointed out.

Showing mettle

Equally important was the way he competed in the first round in Bhopal against his friend Freek Van Donselaar from the Netherlands, after losing the final in two tie-breaks to S.D. Prajwal Dev in Bhubaneswar the previous week.

“I was a set down, and almost a break down, against my friend but I told myself that I was not done yet,” Digvijay stated. “I was willing to fight and enjoyed the match. It was perhaps that mindset that helped me do well over three weeks. It was also a signal that my hard work was paying off.”

He was not happy losing the final to Prajwal Dev, but Digvijay was understandably proud to have improved on that performance over the next fortnight. In fact, three years ago, Digvijay was inconsolable when he lost the Fenesta National Championship final to Niki Poonacha three years ago. The next year, he lost the final to Manish Sureshkumar.

Learning from a loss

“The loss to Niki in the National final hurt me a lot as I had three match-points,” Digvijay recalled. “It was hard to digest but that was a breakthrough performance for me then. I did well later and won the title in the ITF event in Delhi.

“I have played tough matches against Niki. It is not pleasant playing him but I have a lot of respect for him. I am happy that he has qualified for the Australian Open [doubles]. I am confident that I would also play the Grand Slams some day,” he added.

Digvijay is prepared to work harder and do whatever it takes to grow in the international circuit.

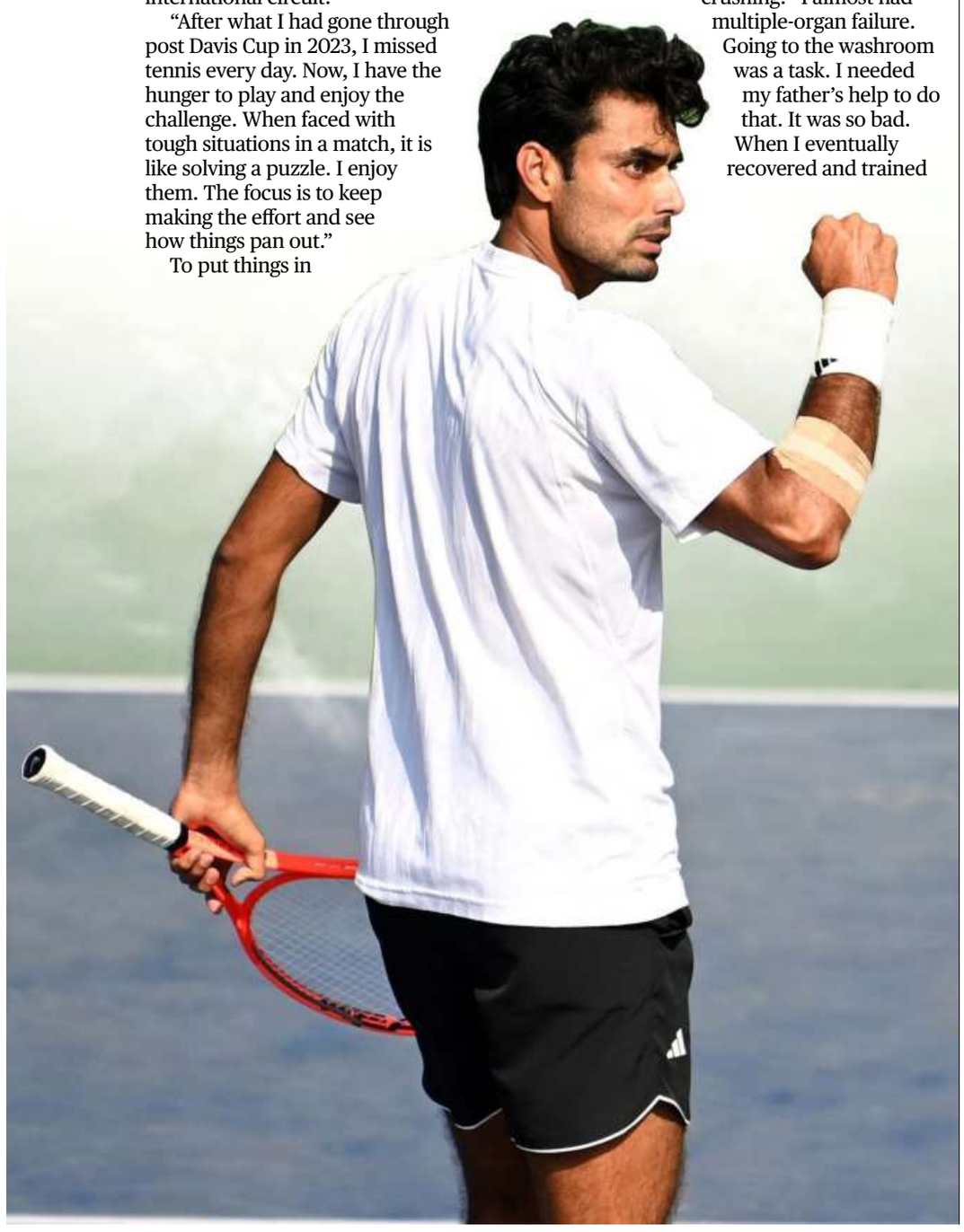
“After what I had gone through post Davis Cup in 2023, I missed tennis every day. Now, I have the hunger to play and enjoy the challenge. When faced with tough situations in a match, it is like solving a puzzle. I enjoy them. The focus is to keep making the effort and see how things pan out.”

To put things in perspective, Digvijay had a 14-1 win-loss record over three weeks in singles. Before the three tournaments, he was 13-16 for the season. He lost in the first round in the first five tournaments after his return to tennis.

Reaching out

“I have known Digvijay for a long time. He was with us when he reached his best rank. It was no-brainer for me when he sought help,” said coach Aditya.

Digvijay’s health issue was absolutely crushing. “I almost had multiple-organ failure. Going to the washroom was a task. I needed my father’s help to do that. It was so bad. When I eventually recovered and trained hard, the coach believed that I deserved the support, and to be sent for tournaments abroad when there were no tournaments at home”, recollected Digvijay.



Apart from long-time coach Aditya Sachdeva and Roundglass, Digvijay has also been groomed remarkably well from a very young age by Javier Sansierra and Luis Zapata in Madrid. It was on an exchange programme with the Chandigarh Lawn Tennis Association that the player first visited Madrid, and that ensured a European exposure

At one stage, Digvijay told Aditya that he would stop playing and start coaching. The coach assured that he still had a long and bright playing career ahead. Digvijay then travelled to South Africa, Congo, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Angola, Chinese Taipei and Thailand, before the last three tournaments at home in India.

Feeling blessed

“I am grateful for my current position. I am blessed to have the best people around me. Adi sir kept telling me not to worry about results and to keep playing the matches to the best of my ability. As if all the earlier struggles were not enough, I also had to endure staying away from tournaments for a month owing to an elbow injury after the first few events,” said Digvijay.

“I am happy with how Digvijay has played these three weeks,” said Sachdeva. “I know that he has a big game. He is becoming more solid now. Physically, he still has a long way to go to be ready for the grind of the Challengers. But the next few weeks will form a training block for him. We have the French trainer Gerald Cordemy here. Digvijay and Karan Singh will work with him.”

Grinding it out

A tough task master, Aditya understands the nuances of competing at a high level in tennis. “Sport at the higher level is about your toughness and fitness, both physical and mental. It is less about skill. You have to maintain a high standard and can never slow down.

“We knew that he [Digvijay] needed a certain number of matches. He had trained hard and prepared well. It was time to give that exposure and get him the matches at any cost.

“There were disappointing losses. But we did not back out. We made him travel irrespective of the results. His confidence and performance grew as he knew that he had people caring for him,” opined Sachdeva.

Madrid magic

Apart from the long-time coach and Roundglass, Digvijay has also been groomed remarkably well from a very young age by Javier Sansierra and Luis Zapata in Madrid, Spain. It was on an exchange programme with Chandigarh Lawn Tennis Association (CLTA) that Digvijay first visited Madrid, and that ensured a European exposure.

“Javier is in touch with me every single day,” said Digvijay. “Along with him, Luis Zapata as the coach was very passionate about making me better. I had great trust in them from a young age, and they shaped me as a player and person.

“They did a lot for me. My parents were spending money on me, but Javier and Luis ensured that I got the best deal all the time. My parents were my backbone and these guys understood me when I was struggling to perform,” Digvijay added.

Beating into shape

Javier had visited Chandigarh as part of the officiating group for the Davis Cup tie against New Zealand. From that time, the bond has grown stronger for Digvijay.

“I have benefited a lot from my Spanish stint,” he stated. “I had bad technique; was bad at movement; was very erratic and never liked to play more than two shots in a rally. I was impatient and wanted to win the points quick.

“They never tried to change my basic strength, the aggressive attitude. They worked a lot on my game to make it solid. Over ten years, they changed me completely, as a player and person.”

Future plans

Looking at the road ahead, Digvijay said that he would work hard and improve in every aspect of his game.

“The goal for this year was to play well, be in better competitive shape, and be stronger physically. I will need more strength and power to compete well in the Challengers. I have to improve my defence. The game has become so physical. So I have a lot of things to work on.

“But with time, everything will be done. I have the desire to keep improving. If we work hard and make the effort, results will come,” Digvijay signed off.

THE GIST

- For someone who had missed about 500 days of tennis owing to health issues that are still being studied in the medical world, Digvijay has really rebuilt his tennis career in superb fashion
- The defining moment in the three tournaments was when Digvijay was staring at defeat at 2-5 in the third set against the top seed Aryan Shah in the semifinals in Gwalior
- Admitting that time does not wait for anyone, Digvijay assured that he would make the best use of time on hand, to get better and prosper

How is Asia-like artemisinin resistance emerging in Africa?

Any place with heavy artemisinin use and favourable conditions could become a new hotspot for resistance, and in some regions of Africa, the frequency of resistance markers is gradually increasing; however, there might be a window of time to act before the problem becomes widespread

Arun Panchapakesan

In the late 1960s, at the height of the Vietnam War, the Vietnamese government was facing a serious crisis. It was losing more soldiers to malaria than to the war itself. Chloroquine, the antimalarial drug used for decades, had lost its effectiveness because *Plasmodium falciparum,* the malaria parasite, had become resistant to it. Desperate for a solution, Vietnam appealed to China for assistance. The Chinese government thus launched Project 523, a national effort to screen for new antimalarial compounds that could combat this parasite.

As part of Project 523, hundreds of scientists from across China were brought together to search for a new drug. They screened thousands of substances including synthetic compounds, minerals, and extracts from traditional medicinal plants in the hope of finding something that might work. During this massive effort, one detail kept resurfacing in the old medical texts that researchers consulted: repeated references to a plant called *qinghao* (*Artemisia annua*). However, while extracts from this plant did show some ability to mitigate malaria symptoms, the results were weak and inconsistent. And yet, there was the fact that *qinghao* appeared again and again in traditional remedies.



A malaria clinic in Tanzania. Several mutations previously seen only in Southeast Asia are emerging independently in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea, Sudan, and Ethiopia. OLYMPIA WEREKO-BROBBY (CC BY)

The breakthrough

The breakthrough came when a researcher named Tu Youyou, a pharmaceutical chemist at the Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Beijing, was asked to lead the team studying herbal remedies. Tu did not have a PhD or a medical degree, which was unusual for a scientist leading such an important project, but she had deep training in both modern pharmacology and classical Chinese medicine.

While reviewing the medical texts, she came across a prescription in an ancient, 1,630-year-old Chinese text titled *Zhouhou Beiji Fang* (Emergency Prescriptions Kept Up One's Sleeve): "Take a handful of qinghao, soak it in water, wring out the juice and drink it." This was striking because most traditional extraction methods relied on boiling herbs. Tu realised that if ancient physicians specifically used cold water, it might be because heat destroyed the plant's active ingredient. This could also explain why earlier hot-water extracts had had such inconsistent results.

Acting on this insight, she switched to a low-temperature extraction process using a cold organic solvent, ether. For the first time, the team obtained a clear, highly active extract containing the compound that would later be named artemisinin.

Artemisinin showed astonishing results in laboratory tests and early clinical use. It cleared malaria parasites from the blood with unprecedented speed, often within a day. It was far more potent than existing drugs and worked even against the chloroquine-resistant strains that were devastating Vietnam.



Tu Youyou. AFP



An *Artemisia annua* crop in West Virginia, the USA, in 2005. JORGE FERREIRA

Rising tide

For several years, however, China kept the discovery largely secret because Project 523 was a military programme. It was only in 1981, at a World Health Organisation meeting in Beijing, that Chinese scientists finally presented their data to the international community. Once other researchers confirmed its effectiveness, the compound, later refined into modern artemisinin-based combination therapies, became the cornerstone of global antimalarial efforts, and Tu Youyou etched her name into the annals of history by becoming the first Chinese woman to be awarded the medicine Nobel Prize in 2015.

However, in the late 2000s, the world began to notice the same problem with artemisinin that Vietnam had once faced with chloroquine. After years of repeated and widespread use, especially in regions where malaria transmission was relatively low, frequent use of the drug had allowed resistant parasites to develop, and the first signs of treatment failure began to appear.

Around 2007-2010, clinicians in western Cambodia noticed that patients treated with artemisinin-based therapies were no longer clearing their parasites by the third day of treatment. Soon, medical workers were documenting similar cases across Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar. Scientists eventually traced this decline in responsiveness to specific genetic mutations in the parasite, most commonly in a gene called *kelch13*. Artemisinin normally works by generating reactive molecules inside the parasite's cells that damage essential proteins, but *kelch13* mutations allowed the parasite to temporarily enter a kind of slow-growing survival mode, buying time until the short-lived artemisinin component had gone.

Fortunately, the countries affected responded rapidly: they intensified surveillance, changed treatment policies when drug combinations began to fail, strengthened community-level diagnosis and treatment, and launched targeted malaria elimination campaigns. While these coordinated efforts didn't eliminate artemisinin resistance, they did succeed in containing its spread and preventing the crisis from escalating further or spreading globally. As a result, artemisinin-based combination therapies have remained effective in most regions, buying the world valuable time to respond to resistance emerging elsewhere.

Gene mutations

Now, however, a new study published in the journal *eLife* has documented the rise of artemisinin resistance in Africa, showing early warning signs strikingly similar to what Southeast Asia experienced 10-15 years ago. In this large analysis, researchers compiled the *kelch13* gene sequences from a total of 1.1 lakh malaria parasite samples from 73 countries and across 43 years from various databases. To identify geographic spread patterns, the team classified these countries into 13 population groups: South America, West Africa, Central Africa, North Africa, Northeast Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Western Asia, Eastern South Asia, Far-Eastern South Asia, Western Southeast Asia, Eastern Southeast Asia, and Oceania. The group then analysed genetic information, treatment outcomes across time and geographic locations to identify which regions in the world were beginning to show the mutations linked to artemisinin resistance and how these mutations were spreading.

Artemisinin showed astonishing results in clinical use. It cleared malaria parasites from the blood with unprecedented speed. It was far more potent than existing drugs and worked even against the chloroquine-resistant strains that were devastating Vietnam

Based on this analysis, the researchers discovered that *kelch13* mutations associated with resistance to artemisinin were heavily concentrated in Southeast Asia, where the prevalence was in fact very high: 52% of samples in Eastern Southeast Asia and 35% in Western Southeast Asia carried a *kelch13* mutation of concern. Equally, the study also identified rising frequencies of artemisinin resistance mutations in Northeast Africa, where around 10% of samples had a *kelch13* mutation, particularly in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea, Sudan, and Ethiopia. The other regions on the other hand had very low levels of resistance markers: around 2% in West and Central Africa, 1% in Southern Africa, and typically below 1% in most other areas, including South America, Western Asia, and South Asia.

In addition to the well-known markers of artemisinin resistance, the team identified 492 unique mutations in *kelch13* that could potentially influence artemisinin resistance.

The researchers also examined how this resistance was appearing and spreading across different parts of the world, especially Africa. They observed that several *kelch13* mutations which were previously seen only in Southeast Asia were emerging independently in East Africa, including in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea, Sudan, and Ethiopia. These mutations hadn't been "imported" from Asia but rather seemed to be arising on their own.

Drop in samples

This is concerning because it means any place with heavy artemisinin use and favourable conditions – such as a lack of adherence, using a single drug, small number of circulating strains, and/or weak surveillance – could become a new hotspot for resistance. The paper also noted that in some of these regions, the frequency of resistance markers was gradually increasing. However, the authors added that since most other parts of Africa still showed very low levels of resistance, there might be a window of time to act before the problem becomes widespread.

Using this data, the paper also explained how the spread of drug resistance followed evolutionary principles. Artemisinin-resistant parasites survive longer during treatment, which increases their chances of being transmitted to mosquitoes and then to new people. Once these resistant strains start to dominate in the environment, the effects become harder to reverse, as seen before with chloroquine.

Importantly, while a dataset of this size allowed the researchers to spot clear trends in how artemisinin-resistance mutations were spreading, it also revealed important gaps and biases. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent reduction in malaria funding caused the number of malaria samples to drop sharply after 2019. Notably, there were no Southeast Asian samples after 2019, even though this region has historically been the epicentre of resistance. And in samples from Africa and Southeast Asia, some countries and years were far better represented than others.

Further, because different laboratories used different genetic testing methods, some of which are less sensitive, certain rare mutations could have been missed. These limitations mean that while the dataset is large enough to reveal meaningful patterns, the findings need to be interpreted with caution.

A critical period

That said, based on their findings, the researchers have outlined several urgent priorities for the future. They include improving genetic surveillance across Africa, rapidly sharing data, monitoring for resistance to partner drugs, and preparing for changes in treatment policy if certain mutations become more common. The team also called for more investment in malaria control, since strong surveillance and timely interventions depend on sustained funding.

The paper adds its voice to a growing consensus in the malaria research community that Africa is entering a critical period where decisive action could still prevent the kind of large-scale resistance crisis previously seen in Southeast Asia. Earlier this year, in a *Science Advances* article, another research group also warned that the early patterns now appearing across East Africa closely mirror the rise of artemisinin resistance in Southeast Asia more than a decade ago. And they have argued that without timely intervention, particularly introducing more diverse classes of drugs into the treatment regimen, these resistant strains could spread and threaten the effectiveness of artemisinin-based therapies – the world's current anti-malaria backbone.

The collective consensus? There is a need for urgent coordinated action. That is, countries need to diversify drug use, improve surveillance, and be able to change treatment strategies in an agile way. Otherwise the crisis of resistance could become unmanageable.

The story of artemisinin's is the stuff of legend: a piece of ancient wisdom that rescued the world from the chloroquine crisis. But if that story teaches us anything, it is how complacency can erode progress. Today, the world stands at a similar crossroads with artemisinin, and this time it would be foolish to hope for another miracle and not act.

(Arun Panchapakesan is an assistant professor at the Y. R. Gaitonde Centre for AIDS Research and Education, Chennai. arun.panchapakesan@gmail.com)



Titas Chanda (left) and Sthitadhi Roy. INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS

2025 ICTP Prize awarded to Titas Chanda, Sthitadhi Roy

Vasudevan Mukunth

The 2025 ICTP Prize has been awarded to Titas Chanda of IIT-Madras and Sthitadhi Roy of the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences, Bengaluru, the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) has said.

A statement said the award "recognises the winners' exceptional and original contributions to the theory of quantum many-body systems, at the interface of condensed matter and quantum information science," and that their work has "opened new directions in the understanding of non-equilibrium dynamics of quantum systems, quantum correlations, and measurement-driven phase transitions."

That is, the physicists study many interacting quantum particles using ideas from both condensed matter physics and quantum information science.

This work is relevant to problems in keeping quantum devices – like quantum computers and sensors – under control and understanding what they do when they're not in equilibrium.

Quantum many-body systems are those with lots of quantum 'pieces', e.g. electrons in a solid or atoms in an ultracold gas, whose collective behaviour is dominated by how they interact. Because the particles influence each other, physicists can't usually understand the whole system by solving for one particle at a time.

The ICTP Prize has been awarded annually since 1982 to young scientists from developing countries

Condensed matter is the branch of physics dealing with collective behaviour in materials and engineered matter, including magnets and superconductors. It tries to answer questions like: what phases exist? Why do they magnetise? How do they conduct heat? What happens near a phase transition? And so on. Likewise quantum information science treats quantum states as information and uses quantities like entanglement and entropy to characterise and manipulate them.

Mr. Chanda, an assistant professor at IIT-Madras, shared the prize for contributions to quantum information science and quantum many-body physics, including work on quantum correlations and open quantum systems as well as applications such as "quantum batteries, communication protocols, and resource theories." His work includes the development of numerical tools and results across areas that the release listed as quantum optics, cold atoms, and strongly correlated systems, the statement added.

Mr. Roy, an assistant professor at the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences in Bengaluru, under the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, shared the prize for contributions to "the non-equilibrium dynamics of quantum many-body systems," including work on "measurement-induced phenomena, many-body localisation, and emergent phases of quantum matter." In its release, the ICTP said his research includes results on "hybrid quantum circuits" and "protocols that harness measurements to prepare exotic topological and dynamical phases".

The ICTP Prize is an annual affair and has been awarded since 1982 to young scientists from developing countries. It carries a certificate and a cash component. Past winners from India include Mohit Kumar Jolly, Narendra Ojha, Aninda Sinha, Shiraz Minwalla, Ashoke Sen, and G. Baskaran.

The ICTP was founded by Pakistani physicist and Nobel laureate Abdus Salam in 1964 to support scientists from developing countries.

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For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Wholesale price inflation level in the month of November

-0.32 In per cent. Wholesale price inflation remained in negative territory for the second consecutive month, registering (-)0.32 per cent in November. Deflation narrowed from (-)1.21% in October, even as food items saw price increases. PTI

The rupee closes at record low against the U.S. dollar

90.74 The rupee closed at a record low of 90.74 against the U.S. dollar, weakening by 25 paise in a single session. It had touched an intra-day low of 90.80. The fall was driven by uncertainty over an India-U.S. trade deal, foreign fund outflows etc. PTI

The growth rate of India's merchandise exports to China

32.83 In per cent. India's merchandise exports to China rose by 32.83% during April-November 2025 compared to the same period last year, government data showed. Exports increased to $12.22 billion from $9.20 billion a year earlier. ANI

The value of illegal liquor seized in Navi Mumbai

1.82 In ₹ crore. The Maharashtra Excise Department seized Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) worth over ₹1.82 crore during a Christmas-New Year enforcement drive in Navi Mumbai. The operation is part of a special enforcement drive. PTI

Estimated value of drugs and equipment seized in Rajasthan

100 In ₹ crore. Maharashtra Police's Anti-Narcotics Cell busted an illegal MD drug manufacturing unit in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan, seizing contraband, chemicals and equipment worth about ₹100 crore. One person was arrested from the unit. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why were IndiGo operations disrupted?

Why were there 'planning gaps' in rostering pilots for IndiGo flights? How many passengers were affected by the flight delays and cancellations? Why were the 2011 Flight Duty Time Limitations rules revised in 2019? Why did airlines such as Air India, Akasa, and SpiceJet not face any problems?

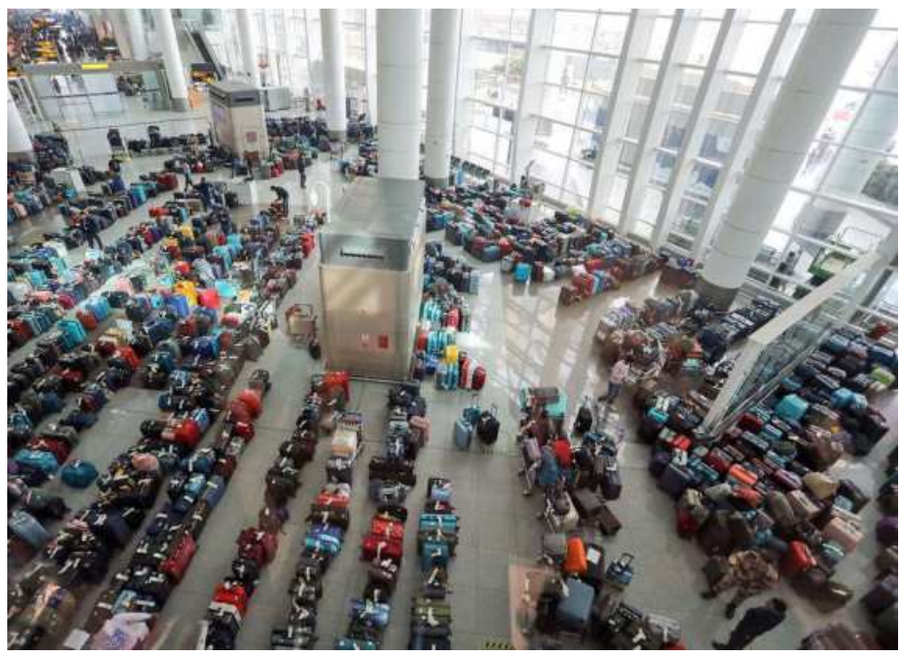
EXPLAINER

Jagriti Chandra

The story so far:
In the first few days of December, IndiGo saw a near-total meltdown of its operations, with over 5,000 flights cancelled in the first 10 days, carrying on from delays and nearly 900 flights cancelled in November.

What happened?
The flight disruption at IndiGo was so severe that crew ended up at the wrong stations, passengers' bags reached destinations even after their flights were cancelled, pilots waited at airports without duty assignments, call centres crashed, and tempers flared at boarding gates as passengers shouted slogans against IndiGo and even held protest marches inside terminals. The airline informed India's aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), that there were "planning gaps" in rostering pilots and misjudgement in assessing pilot availability, as per the new DGCA rules for pilot rest and duty hours that came into effect from November 1. These issues combined with minor technical glitches, winter schedule changes, adverse weather, and aviation system congestion. The airline informed the regulator that they were short of 65 pilots-in command and requested for exemptions from the new rules to restore flight operations. Given the massive flight disruptions affecting lakhs of passengers, the DGCA granted exemptions until February 10 for the new rules. As many as 12.5 lakh passengers were impacted due to the cancellations until December 9, with the airline releasing ₹1,100 crore in refunds. It has also offered ₹10k vouchers to severely impacted passengers from December 3 to 5.

What was the backdrop of new rules?
IndiGo's recent meltdown revives a decades-old clash between airlines and pilots over Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) that govern their rest and duty hours. This latest tiff goes back to April 2019, when the DGCA brought new rules that reversed some of the pilot-friendly provisions in the 2011 rules, especially those governing night duties. The 2011 rules followed the May 22, 2010 Mangalore crash, where the probe report cited cockpit snoring and deep breathing for 1h40m of the 2h5m flight and noted that the pilot-in-command would have been affected due to flying in the 'Window of Circadian Low' or the period between 2 am to 6 am when the ability to stay awake reduces. The flight took off from Dubai at 2.30 am IST.



Price of delays: Luggage piles up at Indira Gandhi International Airport Terminal as mass flight cancellations lead to logistical chaos in New Delhi on December 7. ANI

They were also an outcome of the 2011 report of the Nasim Zaidi Committee on FDTL, which was necessitated as Air India for the first time started non-stop services in August 1, 2007 from Mumbai to New York. The report cited evidence from a NASA study and delved in great detail into the impact of fatigue and night flying on one's body and how sleep debt accumulates and impacts fatigue levels. The 2011 rules specifically barred utilising pilots for night duties on consecutive nights as well as stated in unambiguous language that night landings were capped at 2 hours and that maximum duty hours (which is flight duty combined with and pre and post flight duties) could not exceed nine hours.

But these were reversed in the 2019 rules, which allowed upto two consecutive nights of duty, and used vague language to define maximum flying hours and duty hours for night shift. After pilot bodies went to Delhi High Court, DGCA notified revised norms in January 2024. These were widely welcomed as it raised weekly rest from 36 to 48 hours, and restricted night flying by capping landings to two hours, as well as maximum flying time to eight hours and duty time to 10 hours. But their rollout was paused amid airline warnings of cancellations and the need to recruit more pilots. Pilot bodies once again returned to the Delhi High Court, which in April 2025 ordered phased enforcement from July 1 for most clauses, while those governing night duties were to be implemented from November 1. It is the latter that IndiGo has obtained exemptions on. Airlines like Air India, Akasa, and SpiceJet didn't face cancellations due to excess pilots as a result of groundings, delayed aircraft deliveries or unavailability of aircraft. IndiGo's tight cost controls and hyper-efficiency squeeze their pilots the hardest – leaving razor-thin margins.

What next?
Data indicates that though IndiGo's market share has consistently increased from 47% pre pandemic to 65% now, its employee cost have dropped from 11% to 8%. So, bridging the leadership-employee disconnect and rebuilding employee morale is crucial, not just with pilots but also cabin crew and ground staff that faced angry passengers.

From the regulator's side there is a need to expand the understanding of human factors responsible for aviation safety and not dismiss labour issues as employee-employer issues. A deeper malaise is pilot training, where the training programmes of IndiGo and Air India which cost ₹1.2 crore and ₹1.5 crore respectively – 50% higher than market prices and often on par with fees at foreign schools – trap young pilots in decade-long debt bondage often pressuring them to skip incident reports or give up rest for duty.

The government must seize this crisis to strengthen the Passenger Charter of Rights on entitlements for air travellers during flight cancellations and delays. The regulator's website should transparently list delay, cancellation, and baggage policies in simple formats – like the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's airline-specific tables – for informed booking. Finally, fostering market competition and tackling drivers of operational costs for airlines is essential.

THE GIST

- The disruption was so severe that crew ended up at the wrong stations, passengers' bags reached destinations even after their flights were cancelled, pilots waited at airports without duty assignments, call centres crashed, and tempers flared.
- IndiGo's recent meltdown revives a decades-old clash between airlines and pilots over Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) that govern their rest and duty hours.
- Data indicates that though IndiGo's market share has consistently increased from 47% pre pandemic to 65% now, its employee cost have dropped from 11% to 8%

Does India need to upgrade its biosecurity measures?

What is the Biological Weapons Convention? Are non-state actors also pursuing biological tools?

Shambhavi Naik

The story so far:
New age biotechnologies endow powers to understand biology better and, consequently, harness biological agents to target humans. Thus, biosecurity measures need to be upgraded.

What is biosecurity?
Biosecurity refers to the set of practices and systems designed to deter the intentional misuse of biological agents, toxins or technologies. In other words, it covers everything from safeguarding labs handling dangerous pathogens, to detecting and containing an intentional outbreak of a pathogen. Biosecurity is not only about protecting human health from pathogens, but extends to agricultural and animal health too. Biosecurity differs slightly from biosafety, which is a set of practices meant to prevent the accidental leakage of pathogens. A robust biosafety protocol feeds into biosecurity.

After a few instances of bioweapons development, the Biological Weapons Convention came into existence in 1975. It became the first international treaty that not only prohibited the use and development of biological weapons of mass destruction, but also asked its signatories to destroy existing stockpiles.

Why does India need biosecurity?
India's geography and ecology make it vulnerable to cross-border bio-risks. India's dependence on agriculture and large population makes the threat more dangerous. While India has not had any explicitly known biosecurity attack, there have been reports of the alleged preparation of the toxin Ricin (derived from castor oil) for potential use in a terror attack. This incident underscores how non-state actors are pursuing biological tools, reinforcing the urgency of robust biosecurity. Further, the rapid spread of biotechnologies have endowed humans with increased control over biology, increasing the chances of malicious actors experimenting with bioweapons development.

The Department of Biotechnology oversees research governance and safety frameworks for labs. The National Centre for Disease Control manages outbreak surveillance and response. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying monitors livestock biosecurity and transboundary diseases. The Plant Quarantine Organisation of India regulates agricultural imports and exports. India's biosafety and biosecurity laws include the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, which governs hazardous microorganisms and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005, which criminalises biological weapons. India has also developed Biosafety Rules (1989) and specific guidelines were released in 2017 for the purposes of Recombinant DNA Research and Biocontainment. The National Disaster Management Authority has a detailed guideline on the management of biological disasters.

India is also part of international platforms that emphasise biosecurity, such as the Biological Weapons Convention and Australia Group.

Although India has multiple agencies engaged in bio-risk reduction, lab regulation, public-health surveillance, agriculture protection, a unified national biosecurity framework is still evolving. India is currently ranked 66 on the Global Health Security Index, and while its score for detecting biothreats has increased, its score for being able to effectively respond to threats has reduced.

What are the risks ahead?
The risk of an inadequate biosecurity apparatus is profound. It jeopardises the lives of billions of Indians. It is therefore necessary that a national biosecurity framework that coordinates actions across various government agencies is developed. Such a framework would also be able to identify infrastructure and capability gaps that need to be addressed.

Shambhavi Naik is chairperson, Takshashila Institution's Health & Life Sciences Policy

THE GIST

- Biosecurity refers to the set of practices and systems designed to deter the intentional misuse of biological agents, toxins or technologies.
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- The risk of an inadequate biosecurity apparatus is profound. It jeopardises the lives of billions of Indians.

CACHE

Why Mokyr's story of science becoming tech is incomplete

While receiving his Nobel Prize, Joel Mokyr highlighted the interplay between science and technology in economic growth. However, there needs to be a broader understanding of innovation's societal influences

Vasudevan Mukunth

On December 8, economic historian Joel Mokyr delivered his lecture in Stockholm as part of the ceremony in which he received his share of the special Nobel Prize for economics, for "having identified the prerequisites for sustained growth through technological progress". His talk recapitulated his long-standing argument that a self-reinforcing relationship between science and technology has sustained modern economic growth, with the support of particular institutions and of a small intellectual elite. As he put it, "Scientific and technological advances are not made by the population at large. They are made by what I have called the upper tail of the human capital distribution. These are the smartest, most creative people in society, who come up with these ideas, and the vast bulk of people just watch this and maybe they carry out the ideas, but the actual insights come from very few people and they have to be incentivised."

Many economic historians and historians of science have accepted parts of this picture but they've also questioned the way he has assembled these elements into a virtuous cycle.



More to the tale: Laureate of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences 2025, Joel Mokyr, poses with his award during the Nobel Prize award ceremony in Stockholm, Sweden on December 10. AFP

Innovation through negotiation

First, consider what Mokyr called the "curse of concavity". In standard economics, each extra unit of capital or labour yields smaller gains, so growth should eventually slow down. Mokyr has argued that knowledge can escape this curse because more science produces better tools, which enables more science. Scholars such as Robert Gordon and Tyler Cowen have however pointed out that the great "general-purpose technologies" of 1870-1970 produced a singularly exceptional jump in productivity that recent information and communication technologies haven't matched, and that the U.S. may already have harvested their "low-hanging fruits". That is to say: a knowledge system can be highly dynamic even as its benefits are increasingly hard to turn into broad-based growth.

The second issue concerns the role of instruments. In his talk Mokyr narrated a sanitised story about how new tools – including telescopes, microscopes, barometers, vacuum pumps, steam engines, and X-ray crystallography – unlocked new scientific knowledge with which scientists developed yet more tools, in an accelerating positive loop. But the limits of this picture are clearer when we zoom out.

In his 1997 book *Image and Logic*, for instance, Peter Galison studied the large detectors scientists use in particle physics experiments (for example, the CMS detector at the then-futuristic Large Hadron Collider). In particular Galison attempted to trace how the apparatuses emerged from negotiations between engineers, theorists, funding agencies, and existing experimental traditions rather than simply appearing as "better tools" that stood ready to answer old questions.

In *The Shock of the Old* (2006), British historian David Edgerton argued that histories of technology have focused too much on spectacular new inventions and too little on maintenance, repair, incremental modification, and the long life of supposedly obsolete technologies – like cycle rickshaws and water handpumps in India. Mokyr spoke about how Joseph Lister's microscope led to the germ theory of disease by revealing the existence of bacteria to scientists. He then called germ theory "the greatest welfare enhancing discovery in history until then", treating it as an instance of how frontier science generates welfare gains. Edgerton and other historians have however stressed that its impact on public health depended on sewers, clean water, vaccination campaigns, organised healthcare, and state capacity.

In *The Pasteurization of France* (1984), the French philosopher Bruno Latour made a similar point by studying how alliances between farmers, bureaucrats, veterinarians, and public health officials also helped spread the virtues of the theory.

'Enlightenment without empire'

The third point of contention is his story about the institutions of early modern Europe. Mokyr asked, "What kind of institutional environment supports innovation?", then said institutions have to meet four conditions to this end: (i) strong incentives for an innovator elite, (ii) a competitive "market for ideas", (iii) freedom of movement for talent, and (iv) a moderately activist state.

The California School of historians, including Kenneth Pomeranz, has complicated this picture by showing that until the late 18th century, some parts of China and India were also commercially sophisticated and had complex markets and their own knowledge elites. Instead, according to this School, Britain was special because it was endowed with coal and imperial trade.

A historian of the Industrial Revolution Robert C. Allen developed this idea further in his "high wage, cheap coal" thesis: he said the British Industrial Revolution was profitable because high wages and cheap energy led to inventions that saved labour, for example, the steam engine, and that the price environment induced both invention and diffusion. Jan de Vries's *The Industrious Revolution* (2008) has likewise stressed household labour and changing consumption as having enlarged the markets for new products.

Read these together with Mokyr's and it should be clear that technological progress as we know it is already more than a matter of a society cleanly adapting ideas conceived by an intellectual elite. In fact this is the principal issue with Mokyr's work: it reprises a Eurocentric and supply-side narrative that marginalises imperialism and everyday labour as important engines of progress.

More broadly even, Mokyr's story is problematic because it's too coherent to resemble European history as it happened. The continent lurched through coercion, dispossession, war, guild conflicts, state monopolies, and several episodes of political and religious repression before it had its "market for ideas".

As Jindal School of International Affairs assistant professor Rohith Jyothish wrote in *The India Forum*: "The world Mokyr reconstructs is an idealised Europe, a republic of reason unshadowed by the colonial and extractive circuits that sustained it – the Atlantic slave economies, the plunder of Asian trade, the appropriation of raw materials and labour from distant colonies that fed the very industries he celebrates. His 'useful knowledge' is an Enlightenment without empire."

Not just the 'upper tail'

The question of the elite also raises a fourth issue. In his lecture Mokyr used the label "upper tail" to refer to a thin stratum at the very top of the distribution of skills and knowledge and he placed most of the weight of innovation on them. In his books however he has long argued that major "macro-inventions" are ineffectual without a broad stream of "micro-inventions" and skilled artisans who can develop and implement them. Historians such as Alessandro Nuvolari and Allen have gone further to stress the importance of "collective invention" and the adoption of new tools by industry. In their account innovation is socially embedded and distributed and forms the substrate for the "upper tail" itself.

Fifth, and finally: the role of the state. To quote Mokyr, "... the government should not be too controlling, as it is for instance in China and certainly as it was in the Soviet Union, but also not too absent, which is the direction in which the U.S. is moving, but a government that sort of sits in the middle and it guides and it advises and it regulates a little bit, but it still lets the forces of free markets operate."

While he's right to beware churches or autocracies that monopolise thought, Mokyr gives less weight than he ought to to the idea that knowledge and social order are really "co-produced". *Why Trust Science?* (2019) by Naomi Oreskes is for instance a book-length argument that science is trustworthy because of institutional practices like peer review and organised criticism rather than because of the brilliance of individuals. Sheila Jasanoff has described how the ways in which states fund, administer, regulate, and use science shape what counts as a legitimate idea in the first place and how scientific claims in turn stabilise particular political arrangements. In India itself, the Green Revolution had the state's backing to deploy seeds with high yield and fertilizer subsidies as "scientific farming", eventually entrenching an inefficient agrarian order.

Mariana Mazzucato has also applied the label "entrepreneurial state" to governments that actively shape markets by funding high-risk research and long-term missions such as lunar exploration and decarbonising the economy. If the state is simply a referee, per Mazzucato, we wouldn't have the Internet, several life-saving drugs or spaceflight.

In the final analysis, Joel Mokyr has done well to force economists to take technology and culture seriously as historical forces, yet the picture he offers of protected incentives and a competitive market for knowledge yielding sustained improvements in welfare isn't borne out by the facts of history. Innovation can't be narrated only from the vantage point of the "upper tail" if it needs to explain modern growth. Instead we need to piece it together as a social process in which labour, infrastructure, administration, and imperial power 'apply' ideas but also shape what counts as an idea and who can benefit from it.

The author thanks Jahnavi Phalkey for her inputs.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"You're back early. How was the movie?"

"It was a real sleepfest."

"A what?"

"A sleepfest. When you say that something was a sleepfest, it means that it was so boring that it put you to sleep."

"I see. So in your case, the movie that you saw was so boring that it put you to sleep."

"Exactly! Here's another example. I...."

"....the talk that the Principal gave yesterday was a sleepfest."

"That's a good example. I watched the impeachment proceedings against Clinton. It was a sleepfest."

"Maybe it was a sleepfest for you, but I'm sure it wasn't for Bill Clinton and millions of people in America."

"That's true. By the way, the word sleepfest is considered slang."

"I see. While we are on the subject of Clinton, how do you pronounce s..t..o..o..g..e?"

"What's the word have to do with the American President?"

"Tell you later. You first tell me...."

"....OK, OK! The 'oo' is pronounced like the 'oo' in 'fool', 'pool', and 'cool'. The final 'ge' sounds like the 'j' in 'jam', 'jet' and 'jump'."

"What does the word mean?"

"When you say that somebody is your stooge, it means that he/she is completely under your control."

"In other words he/she is a pawn in my hands!"

"Exactly! For example, my boss says that he is sick and tired of being the Chairman's stooge. He is seriously thinking of starting his own business."

"Can I say that I am nobody's stooge?"

"You certainly can, but I don't know if anybody will believe you. But tell me, what's the connection between Clinton and the word 'stooge'?"

"You see, while the U.S. and Britain were bombing Iraq, I heard several people say that Richard Butler..."

"....Richard Butler? You mean the UN weapons inspector?"

"Yes. I heard some people remark that he was Clinton's stooge."

"Well, if you ask me, Richard Butler wasn't the only one dancing to America's tune. Several European leaders were doing the same. But let's not talk about politics. The word 'stooge' can also be used as a verb. For example, I can say, the convict agreed to stooge for the warden."

"I am not going to stooge for anyone."

"Good for you! Did you introduce your friend to Sujatha yesterday?"

"Yes, I did. She called him a 'slick operator.' What did she mean by that?"

"The word 'slick' has several different meanings. When you refer to a person as being a 'slick operator', it indicates disapproval. It means that the person is a clever talker, but doesn't mean what he says."

"In other words, he is not being sincere."

"Exactly! For example, my friend Gopa is well known for his slick sales talk."

"I mistrust men who give slick talks."

"So do most people."

"Politicians are famous for their slick talk. My friend is actually... "

"...don't worry about what Sujatha said about your friend. If I'm not mistaken, Clinton is sometimes called 'Slick Willey' by people who don't like him."

Published by The Hindu on December 29, 1998.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A dramatic act of defiance in colonial Boston on December 16, 1773, now known as the Boston Tea Party, turned into a revolution. A quiz on the event

Prathmesh Kher

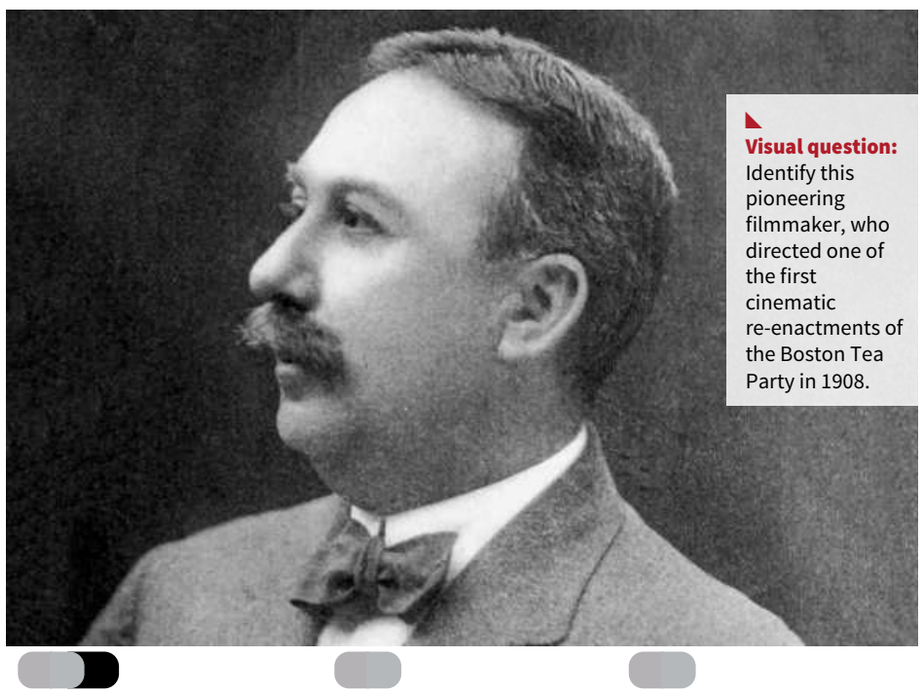
QUESTION 1
What British law was the immediate cause of the Boston Tea Party?

QUESTION 2
Why was the Tea Act seen as a constitutional threat despite lowering the price of tea?

QUESTION 3
Which organisation principally organised and carried out the Boston Tea Party?

QUESTION 4
What was the estimated monetary value of the destroyed tea in 1773?

QUESTION 5
Name the ships from which the tea was dumped during the Boston Tea Party.



Visual question: Identify this pioneering filmmaker, who directed one of the first cinematic re-enactments of the Boston Tea Party in 1908.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This legend fetched the highest price of $1.5 million in the inaugural auction. **Ans: M.S. Dhoni**
2. Apart from Andrew Flintoff, this England player was bought for $1.55 million in 2009. **Ans: Kevin Pietersen**
3. This Indian was bought in 2012 for $2 million. **Ans: Ravindra Jadeja**
4. Rising Pune Supergiant and Rajasthan Royals paid the maximum for this player in 2017 and 2018. **Ans: Ben Stokes**
5. The only South African who has the distinction of being the most expensive buy at an auction. **Ans: Chris Morris bought by Rajasthan Royals**
6. This player was the biggest winner in the last auction to be held in an Indian city. **Ans: Sam Curran in Kochi**
Visual: He was the biggest joint buy in 2010. **Ans: Shane Bond; purchased by Kolkata Knight Riders**
Early Birds: Sadhan Panda| Ambarin Aslam

Word of the day

Waggish:
witty or joking

Usage: *The house has been given that funny name by some waggish officer.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/waggishpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈwægɪʃ/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'